

**MINUTES OF TOURISM, ECONOMY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING -
THURSDAY, 21 JULY 2016**

Present:

Councillor Hunter (in the Chair)

Councillors

Mrs Callow JP
D Coleman

G Coleman
Galley

Matthews
Roberts

Ryan
L Williams

In Attendance:

Councillor Gillian Campbell, Deputy Leader of the Council

Councillor Mark Smith, Cabinet Member for Business and Economic Development

Mr Alan Cavill, Director of Place

Mr Andy Foot, Head of Housing

Ms Jo Parker, Transience Manager

Mr Mark Golden, Finance Manager

Mrs Ruth Henshaw, Corporate Development Officer

Mr Chris Kelly, Senior Democratic Governance Adviser (Scrutiny)

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors G Coleman and Galley declared personal interests with regard to item 5, 'Forward Plan', the nature of the interests being that they were Board Members of Blackpool Entertainments Company Limited.

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 16 JUNE 2016

The Committee agreed that the minutes of the Tourism, Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 16 June 2016, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3 PUBLIC SPEAKING

The Committee noted that there were no applications to speak by members of the public on this occasion.

4 EXECUTIVE AND CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS

The Committee considered the Executive and Cabinet Member decisions within the portfolios of the Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader of the Council, taken since the last meeting of the Committee.

Members raised a number of questions in regards to decision number EX33/2016 'Litter Strategy 2016 to 2020 and Litter and Dog Fouling Environmental Enforcement' and Councillor Campbell, Deputy Leader of the Council informed Members of the complaints process relating to enforcement action and advised that the evaluation of the 3GS

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Environmental Enforcement Solutions pilot would be undertaken later in the year. Councillor Campbell further reported that 3GS Environmental Enforcement Solutions had been successful in other areas of the country and that no targets had been established for enforcement activities. Members requested that an evaluation of the pilot be presented later in the year and that the objectives of 3GS Environmental Enforcement Solutions be circulated to Committee Members for further information.

The Committee noted decision number EX30/2016 'Local Transport Plan' and queried the rationale for extending the existing 2011 to 2016 Plan until April 2017, rather than creating a new Local Transport Plan. Mr Cavill, Director of Place, reported that a new plan had not yet been devised and, as a result of the potential implications arising from the development of the Combined Authority, a direct replacement Local Transport Plan may not be required. He added that a Pan-Lancashire Local Transport Plan would potentially be drafted in its place. Mr Cavill reported that the Fylde Coast Transport Masterplan had been approved by the Council in 2015 and set out the options for major changes to highways, public transport and pedestrian facilities to create conditions for economic growth and to prepare for predicted increases in traffic across the Fylde coast. He advised that the Fylde Coast Transport Masterplan would form the basis for future negotiations for any future Lancashire Local Transport Plan.

Members requested that in the event of the Combined Authority developing a Lancashire Local Transport Plan, the Committee had the opportunity to consider the impact of the Plan in Blackpool, before its final approval.

The Committee agreed:

- 1) To request that the evaluation of the 3GS Environmental Enforcement Solutions pilot be presented to the Committee once it had been completed.
- 2) To request that the objectives of 3GS Environmental Enforcement Solutions be circulated to Committee Members for further information.
- 3) To request that in the event of the Combined Authority developing a Lancashire Local Transport Plan, the Committee had the opportunity to consider the impact of the Plan in Blackpool, before its final approval.
- 4) To note the Executive and Cabinet Member Decisions.

5 FORWARD PLAN

The Committee considered the items contained within the Forward Plan, July 2016 – October 2016, relating to the portfolios of the Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader of the Council.

The Committee raised questions relating to decision reference 25/2015 'Social Housing Lettings' and Mr Foot, Head of Housing, advised that most issues facing hard to let properties had now been addressed, either through demolition or through the Decent Homes Programme. He reported that there were very few properties now held that would be considered hard to let, with the exception of a number of properties in Troutbeck Crescent in Mereside.

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The Committee raised questions relating to decision reference 9/2016 'Prudential borrowing to improve 1 Clifton Street' and Councillor Smith, Cabinet Member for Business and Economic Development advised that the building was being redeveloped and would be used by Health Works, a project that offered support and advice to patients to tackle social issues that were preventing them from leading a healthy lifestyle. He explained that Health Works was a three year project and in the event of it not remaining in the building following the end of the project, the building would have been improved to a level that would be more attractive to potential future business ventures. Councillor Smith advised that the building improvement work should be finished by the end of July or early August 2016.

In regards to decision reference 16/2016 'Redevelopment plans for South Shore Crescents' the Committee raised a number of questions relating to the financial details and the nature of the redevelopment. In response, Mr Cavill advised that there were no plans to remove the gardens in front of South Shore Crescent and that it was proposed that there would be a £4.5 million loan to Create Developments Ltd in order to develop a Hampton by Hilton Hotel. Mr Cavill provided further details of how the redevelopment would be financed and assured the Committee appropriate guarantees on the loan had been secured and that it was expected that the loan would be paid off in three to five years.

Members also raised questions in relation to decision reference 17/2016 'Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone Rates Relief Policy and Resource Equipment' and Mr Cavill advised of the plans to market the Enterprise Zone, which included having a marketing strategy now in place and having plans to attend the MIPIM UK property exhibition conference, which would take place in October and provide an opportunity to market to an international market.

The Committee agreed to note the Forward Plan items.

6 COUNCIL PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT 2015/2016

Mrs Ruth Henshaw, Corporate Development Officer presented the performance against the Council Plan 2015/2020 for the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 and highlighted the key exceptions.

Members raised a number of questions relating to the indicator 'Average number of days lost to sickness absence'. It was noted that the main reasons for absence were stress, depression and anxiety, closely followed by musculo-skeletal problems. Members queried the mechanisms in place for helping staff deal with stress and whether work place assessments were undertaken. In response, the Committee was advised that there was a lot of support available to staff, which included a mandatory ipool module for staff on the set up of their workstation and a training course on 'Coping with Pressure and Increasing Resilience'. The Committee noted that the role of being an elected Member was also stressful and recommended that the support for officers for dealing with stress also be provided for Members.

Members questioned whether data was available on sickness absence for over the past five years to demonstrate whether there had been any impact on the indicator as a result

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of budget cuts. Mrs Henshaw reported that she would investigate the availability of the data and circulate the information to Committee Members outside of the meeting.

The Committee raised concerns regarding the low completion rates of Individual Performance Appraisals in certain departments, with specific reference being made to the completion rate in Children's Services. Councillor Campbell advised that part of the reason for the low completion rate of Individual Performance Appraisals was due to a significant number of managers being too busy dealing with individual caseloads. She explained that work had been undertaken to address workloads and that it was hoped that an improvement would soon be demonstrated. Mr Cavill also advised that the performance being presented evidenced the number of Individual Performance Appraisals that had been measured on the system. However, he explained there had been some issues with managers recording IPAs onto the relatively new system to the extent that the number of IPAs completed would actually be slightly higher than what had been recorded.

Members noted the indicators relating to 'Visitor numbers' and 'Visitor satisfaction' and challenged the apparent contradiction with evidence of tourism performance that had been provided at the previous meeting of the Committee. Mr Cavill explained that a review of all indicators was due to take place to ensure that what was being measured was appropriate to achieving the plans for tourism. He considered that an indicator for the level of spend in the visitor economy would be more appropriate than the absolute number of visitors. With regards to visitor satisfaction, Mr Cavill advised that there was information collected at individual attractions and events that demonstrated a high level of satisfaction. However, the particular performance indicator data being presented was based on the omnibus survey that was conducted three times a year and that surveyed approximately 5,000 people. It was noted that over 50 per cent of visitors surveyed were from outside of the North West.

The Committee also queried the plans to increase the number of people registered on the electoral roll. Mrs Henshaw advised that the information would be sought and circulated to Members outside of the meeting.

The Committee agreed:

- 1) To recommend that the support for officers for dealing with stress also be provided for Members.
- 2) To request that data on sickness absence over the past five years be circulated to Members outside of the meeting.
- 3) To request that information on the plans to increase the number of people registered on the electoral roll be circulated to Members outside of the meeting.

Background papers: None.

7 TRANSIENCE PROGRAMME

Mr Foot, Head of Housing, presented a report updating the Committee on the progress of the Transience Programme and the work that had been completed since the last update report had been presented to the Committee in October 2015.

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Mr Foot explained that the Transience Programme built on a pilot undertaken in the South Beach area and that funding had been received from a Transformation Challenge Award bid for three years from April 2015. He reported that officers were now systematically recording information that would be used to inform a comprehensive formal evaluation report. The evaluation report would include a cost-benefit analysis and would be produced in summer 2017, to inform future approaches once the funding had come to an end.

Upon questioning from Members, Councillor Campbell explained the rationale for the choice of areas, noting that initially South Shore had been identified due to the prevalence of antisocial behaviour in the area.

The Committee challenged the proposals to make the programme sustainable in the future once the funding came to an end and considered that more could be done to promote the success of the programme. Mr Foot explained to Members that expenditure in the first twelve months of the programme had not been as high as had initially been expected, which could potentially help to extend the period of funding by six to nine months. He advised that through producing an effective cost-benefit analysis to demonstrate the benefits of the programme, it would be easier to bid for funding from partners and other organisations. Ms Parker, Transience Manager, provided details of the funding streams for the programme and advised that resources within the Communication Team were now available to better market success of the programme.

The Committee noted that the programme was to be rolled out into the Central area and questioned whether the roll out could be completed effectively without limiting resources in the areas it was already in place. Councillor Campbell assured the Committee that the level of service provision in the other areas remained at an appropriate level and that a key aim of the programme had been to increase the resilience of the community so that the demand on services would be reduced. Ms Parker also advised that there were two additional posts allocated within the Programme's budget, which were still vacant. Upon the appointments to the positions, there would therefore be additional resources to support the programme.

The Committee requested that the evaluation report be considered at a future meeting of the Committee once it had been completed. Members also requested that future reports include a section on how the programme was being marketed.

The Committee agreed:

1) To request that the evaluation report with a section on how the programme was being marketed be considered at a future meeting of the Committee once it had been completed.

Background papers: None.

8 SCRUTINY WORKPLAN

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The Chairman presented the Tourism, Resources and Economy Scrutiny Committee Workplan for the remainder of the Municipal Year. It was noted that it was a flexible, working document. Members could submit items for consideration by the Committee at any time through the Chairman.

The Committee noted that the Monitoring Committee Recommendations table had been included that enabled Members to monitor how their recommendations had been implemented.

The Committee agreed:

- 1) To approve the Workplan
- 2) To note the Monitoring Committee Recommendations table.

9 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee agreed to note the date of the next meeting as Thursday, 15 September 2016, at 6.00 p.m.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 7.20 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:
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