

**BOROUGH OF BARROW-IN-FURNESS**  
**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Meeting:- 6th December, 2012  
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 on 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 Substitutes.
6. Confirmation of Minutes of the meeting held on 25th October, 2012 (copy attached).
- (D) 7. Tenants' Co-regulation.
- (D) 8. Flood Protection.

(D) 9. Street Cleansing.

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

**Membership of Committee**

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

**For queries regarding this agenda, please contact:**

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**BOROUGH OF BARROW IN FURNESS**  
**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Meeting, Thursday, 25th October, 2012  
at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT:- Councillors Derbyshire, Doughty, Hamilton, Husband, Johnston, Opie and M. A. Thomson.

**17 – Appointment of Chairman**

In the absence of the Chairman, nominations had been invited for Chairman for this meeting only.

It was moved by Councillor Husband and seconded by Councillor Derbyshire that Councillor M. A. Thomson be appointed as Chairman for this meeting only.

RESOLVED:- To agree to appoint Councillor M. A. Thomson as Chairman for this meeting only.

COUNCILLOR M. A. THOMSON IN THE CHAIR

**18 – Apologies for Absence/Attendance of Substitute Members**

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors Roberts (Chairman), Biggins, R. McClure, Murphy and C. Thomson.

**19 – Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13th September, 2012 were taken as read and confirmed.

**20 – Tenants' Co-Regulation**

The Policy Review Officer reported that as agreed at the last meeting, a work group had been set up to which the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Tenants' Forum along with the Housing Manager had been invited. At that meeting they had developed proposals for a new framework for the Tenants' Forum and the Housing Management Forum which had been circulated at today's meeting. The proposals were as follows:-

Tenants' Forum

It was proposed that the remit of the Forum be expanded, in addition to considering all matters appertaining to the Housing Stock it would also act as a 'Think Tank' to generate improvement ideas. It was proposed that the Tenants' Forum would set up a

number of Sub-Groups to look at specific operational and strategic/policy areas. The Forum would continue to make recommendations to the Housing Management Forum and in addition they would set up a Scrutiny Group to monitor the performance of the Housing Service and the Housing Management Forum. The Scrutiny Group would receive directions from the Tenants' Forum initially and would be provided with information and the opportunity to hold the Housing Management Forum to account. In taking on those different responsibilities, the Tenants' Forum would take over the role currently filled by the Tenants' Compact Working Group. The Forum would retain a training budget (currently £10,000) and an Environmental Improvement Budget (currently £25,000). The Forum would be made up of representatives from Tenants' and Residents' Groups, Street Voices and the Tenants' with Disabilities Forum.

### Housing Management Forum

It was proposed that the membership of the Housing Management Forum should be changed to reflect the accountability that Elected Members had for supporting effective service delivery. It was proposed that the Forum be made up of seven Elected Members and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Tenants' Forum. The Housing Management Forum would have the responsibility for managing housing standards and would continue to make recommendations to the Executive Committee. It was proposed that the Chairman of the Forum be appointed as one of the Executive Committee Members from the administrating group. To ensure that the Housing Management Forum had the capacity to focus on delivery of the Housing Service, it was proposed that the responsibility for homelessness be removed from the Housing Management Forum's remit and should be managed directly from the Housing Service.

It was noted that the proposals outlined above would require adjustments to the Constitutions of the Tenants' Forum. In view of that, the Policy Review Officer agreed to seek advice from the Housing Manager on the ability to specify that Tenants must be representatives on the Tenants' Forum.

Members of the Committee stated that they had previously requested a copy of the criteria for spending the Tenants' Forum training budget and the environmental improvement budget. They had also requested a breakdown of expenditure over the last five years.

RESOLVED:- (i) To agree that the proposed new framework for the Tenants' Forum and the Housing Management Forum were suitable and that they would be taken to the next meeting of the Tenants' and Residents' Forum; and

(ii) To note that the Policy Review Officer would seek advice from the Housing Manager on the ability to specify that that Tenants must be representatives on the Tenants' Forum; and

(iii) To note that the Policy Review Officer would request the Housing Manager for the criteria for spending the Tenants' Forum training budget and the environmental improvement budget as well as requesting a breakdown of expenditure over the last five years.

## 21 – Coastal Protection

The Policy Review Officer advised that Members of the work group had met with the Technical Services Manager who had explained the risk assessment process for coastal protection assets. He had identified the higher risk assets and explained the Council's approach to mitigating those risks. He had informed the work group that he had applied for capital funding to undertake some repairs.

The Policy Review Officer reported that at a meeting of the Executive Committee on 17th October, 2012, the budget for the Coastal Protection Capital Works had been approved as follows:-

### Coastal Protection Capital Works

Budget	2012-13	£25,000
	2013-14	£25,000

<b>Roa Island</b>		
<b>Watch Tower</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Prices</b>
	<b>Square metres</b>	<b>Ian Shaw</b>
Relay existing stones	30	£1,380.00
Pointing	30	£1,068.00
Lay imported stones	5	£274.00
Total		£2,722.00
<b>Bosun's Locker</b>		
Relay existing stones	30	£1,380.00
Pointing	30	£1,068.00
Lay imported stones	5	£274.00
Patch Concrete	5	£175.00
Total		£2,897.00
Mobilisation, welfare etc.		£200.00
<b>Roa Island Grand Total</b>		<b>£5,819.00</b>

<b>Piel Island</b>		
Relay existing stones	50	£2,500.00
Pointing	50	£2,250.00
Lay imported stones	10	£600.00
Patch concrete	10	£390.00
Total		£5,740.00
Mobilisation, welfare etc.		£200.00
<b>Piel Island Grand Total</b>		<b>£5,940.00</b>

<b>Wylock Marsh</b>		
Replace floodgate		tbc

<b>Walney Channel – Waterside House</b>		
Slope Stability Investigation	Pro Fees	£7,475.00
Slope Stability Investigation	Works	£8,900.00
Reinstatement of Revetment	Works	tbc
<b>Total</b>		<b>£28,134.00</b>

RESOLVED:- To note the information and agree to sign the scrutiny review off as completed.

## **22 – Street Cleansing**

The Policy Review Officer advised that the Council had received notification from Cumbria County Council of the future level of payments for recycling credits beyond October 2012. He reported that the current scheme offered the Council a reward of £83.20 per tonne to incentivise higher levels of recycling. Payment had been maintained at this level for the first two quarters of the 2012/13 financial year, but would fall to the statutory minimum rate of £58.64 per tonne from 1st October, 2012 to 31st March, 2013. To assist the transition from current levels to full year statutory minimum payments, the County Council had agreed to cap the reduction of any Authority in 2012/13 to £60,000.

Beyond 1st April, 2013 statutory minimum payments of £60.40 per tonne would apply. The implications of that change on the Council's budget were significant. Firstly, the Council would have a shortfall in income of £60,000 in the current year which would have to be met from other sources and secondly, the reduction in income for 2013/14 had been estimated at £230,000.

It was noted that the Council had submitted an application to the Weekly Collection Support Scheme, which would offset the losses for a three year period allowing the current contract to be renegotiated. The Council was still awaiting the decision regarding that application.

In respect of side waste, the Council was continuing to work with its waste collection contractor, Biffa, to manage the amount of side waste that was being presented on collection days. Excessive quantities of side waste was being presented by only a small number of residents but this was still having an adverse effect on waste collection and recycling tonnages.

It was moved by Councillor Hamilton and seconded by Councillor M. A. Thomson that a letter of appreciation from the Chairman on behalf of this Committee be sent to Barry Brooks, Streetcare Officer who was due to retire on 9th November, 2012 to thank him for his hard work during his employment.

RESOLVED:- (i) To note the information; and

(ii) To agree that a letter of appreciation would be sent to Barry Brooks, Streetcare Officer from the Chairman on behalf of the Committee.

The meeting closed at 2.36 p.m.

<b>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	<b>(D) Agenda Item 7</b>
<b>Date of Meeting: 6th December, 2012</b>	
<b>Reporting Officer: Policy Review Officer</b>	
<b>Title: Tenants' Co-regulation</b>	
<b>Summary and Conclusions:</b>	
To provide Members with an update of the scrutiny review into Tenants' co-regulation.	
<b>Recommendation:</b>	
Members are invited to consider the information.	

**Report**

From 1st April 2012, the Housing Communities Agency took over the housing regulation role. Co-regulation remains at the heart of the framework which means having a solid partnership between Tenants, Landlords and those who govern the organisation to deliver positive results for Tenants. Specifically, for Barrow Borough Council, it means that Councillors who govern housing services are responsible for:-

1. Meeting the standards set out in the framework;
2. Delivering the organisations social housing objectives, including being transparent and accountable; and
3. Supporting Tenants to both shape and scrutinise service delivery and to hold Councillors to account.

To ensure that we can support these changes members of the work group have discussed options with the Housing Manager and worked closely with representatives from the Tenants' Forum. In addition they have met with a representative from Lancaster City Council to understand their perspective.

Working with representatives from the Tenants' Forum the work group has developed a governance framework that will consider Tenants' expectations and deliver a robust housing service. We are continuing to work with the Housing Department to ensure the new arrangements are robust.

I have asked the Housing Manager to provide the financial information that was requested at our last meeting and I will table the information at this meeting.

**Background Papers**

Nil



<b>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	<b>(D) Agenda Item 8</b>
<b>Date of Meeting: 6th December, 2012</b>	
<b>Reporting Officer: Policy Review Officer</b>	
<p><b>Title: Flood Protection</b></p> <p><b>Summary and Conclusions:</b></p> <p>The Executive Committee has requested that this Committee adds flooding to its current work programme.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>Members are invited to consider whether this should be added to the work programme and determine when the review should be carried out.</p>	

### Report

At its meeting the 17th October 2012, the Executive Committee requested that the Scrutiny Committee add flooding to its work programme. We currently have a work programme up to 2015 however, there is capacity to add additional urgent items.

I have attached the current work programme below.

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 and 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 the 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 Government's 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 social housing and consider partnership arrangements to ensure that the availability of housing in the borough meets demand.

### Background Papers

Nil.

<b>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	<b>(D) Agenda Item 9</b>
<b>Date of Meeting: 6th December, 2012</b>	
<b>Reporting Officer: Policy Review Officer</b>	
<b>Title: Street Cleansing</b>	
<b>Summary and Conclusions:</b>	
To provide Members with an update of the scrutiny review into street cleansing.	
<b>Recommendation:</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Members are invited to consider the information and determine how this review should be progressed; and</li><li>2. Members are invited to monitor the waste collection service to ensure that residual waste is collected on a weekly basis for at least five years.</li></ol>	

**Report**

**Recycling credits:**

The Council has received notification from Cumbria County Council of the future level of payments for recycling credits beyond October 2012.

The current scheme offers the Council a reward of £83.20 per tonne to incentivise higher levels of recycling. Payment has been maintained at this level for the first two quarters of the 2012/13 financial year, but will fall to the statutory minimum rate of £58.64 per tonne from 1st October 2012 to 31st March 2013. To assist the transition from current levels to full year statutory minimum payments, the County Council have agreed to cap the reduction of any Authority in 2012/13 to £60,000.

Beyond 1st April 2013 statutory minimum payments of £60.40 per tonne will apply.

The implications of this on the Council's budget are significant. Firstly, the Council will have a shortfall in income of £60,000 in the current year which will have to be met from other sources. Secondly, the reduction in income for 2013/14 is estimated at £230,000.

The Council has been successful with its bid for funding from the Weekly Collection Support Scheme so that we can retain the current weekly collection

of residual waste for at least five years. In a letter from the Department for Communities and Local Government the Council has been offered the full £900,000 that it bid for. The Bid was robustly assessed against strict criteria including: cost effectiveness, environmental benefits and feasibility. The letter stated that our bid was one of those that scored highly enough in its assessment against the published criteria to be awarded funding.

The money will be allocated in three tranches £250,000 in the current year, £400,000 next year and a further £250,000 in 2014/15. The funding will be used to offset the reduction in the recycling credit payments that was announced by Cumbria County Council earlier this year.

It is a requirement of the funding that we maintain a weekly waste collection for at least five years and it is recommended that this Committee monitors the waste collection service to ensure this happens.

#### Background Papers

Nil.