

BOROUGH OF BARROW-IN-FURNESS
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting:- Thursday 23rd October, 2014
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 11th September, 2014 (copy attached).
- (D) 7. Street Cleansing.
- (R) 8. Annual Report.
- (D) 9. Policy and Strategy.

**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

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Published: 15th October, 2014.

BOROUGH OF BARROW IN FURNESS

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting, Thursday, 11th September, 2014
at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT:- Councillors Roberts (Chairman), Cassidy (Vice-Chairman), Hamilton, Husband, Maddox, Opie, C. Thomson, M. A. Thomson and Wall.

Officers Present:- Keith Johnson (Assistant Director – Community Services), John Penfold (Corporate Support Manager) and Keely Fisher (Democratic Services Officer).

10 – Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors Derbyshire, Johnston and R. McClure.

11 – Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd July, 2014 were taken as read and confirmed.

12 – Street Cleansing

The Corporate Support Manager reported that Members of the work group had visited a number of bring sites to observe the presentation of waste. Side waste had been left at all but one of the bring sites. It was clear that some members of the public were using the bring sites to deposit residual waste which should be disposed of at the Household Waste Recycling Centre on Walney Road. Members of the work group met with Biffa's local management on 5th September and the Corporate Support Manager provided a verbal update at the meeting.

The Corporate Support Manager had appended a list of bring sites which Biffa currently serviced. The list contained some locations which were not bring sites and these were clarified at the meeting with Biffa on 5th September. The Corporate Support Manager tabled a revised list of bring sites which had been agreed with Biffa.

The Community bring sites were as follows:-

Tesco Metro, Barrow (3 containers);
Park Car Park, Barrow (4 containers);
Hall Street, Barrow (3 containers);
Greengate Working Mens Club, Barrow (1 container);
Town Hall, Barrow (4 containers);
Morrisons, Barrow (6 containers);
Co-op Barrow Island, Barrow (2 containers);

Tesco, Barrow (10 containers);
Asda, Barrow (10 containers);
Tudor Square, Dalton (2 containers);
Newton Pub, Dalton (2 containers);
Forum 28, Barrow (3 containers);
Golf Club, Barrow (2 containers); and
Ormsgill Library, Barrow (1 container);

There were also recycling facilities at Council venues for the use of those venues as follows:-

Park Leisure Centre, Barrow (1 container);
Dock Museum, Barrow (1 container);
Craven House, Barrow (1 container); and
Burlington House, Barrow (1 container)

The following residential recycling sites had also been agreed:-

Flats Greengate Street, Barrow (1 container);
Station Flats, Barrow (3 containers);
Ramsey Park Flats, Barrow (2 containers);
Rusland Court, Barrow (1 container)
Tay Court, Barrow (7 containers);
Dalton Town Hall, Dalton (1 container); and
Farm Street, Barrow (1 container).

The following were also listed as Schedule 2 recycling:-

Dane Ghyll, Barrow (1 container); and
Ramsden Infants, Barrow (2 containers).

The Corporate Support Manager reported that Biffa had agreed that they would collect from all of the above sites.

Members raised the issue with regards to potential problems regarding segregated recycling. It was understood that segregated recycling needed to be put into place by January 2015 and Members felt that a plan of action and a decision needed to be made as soon as possible. The Corporate Support Manager's view was that segregated recycling could be looked into at the end of the current contract.

The Corporate Support Manager also reported that the Council was considering a possible extension to the contract with Biffa but negotiations were at an early stage.

In going forward Members would like to look at figures for recycling, segregation and the Mechanical Biological Treatment plant.

Members also raised an issue regarding residents putting their bins out into the backstreet from one week to the next and also hypodermic needles being disposed of

in backstreets. The Committee felt that a review of enforcement should be made with regards to this matter and agreed that this item be put on the Agenda for the next meeting and best practice from other Authorities be sought.

RESOLVED:- (i) That the information be noted; and

(ii) That Street Cleansing be placed on the Agenda for the next meeting.

13 – Crematorium - Update

The Corporate Support Manager reported that at the last meeting Members had requested that the service delivered at the Crematorium be discussed.

The Assistant Director – Community Services attended the meeting to provide Members with an update.

He reported that Barrow Crematorium was opened by the Borough in 1963. The chapel seating capacity was, and remained at 94. There was capacity for a further 30 mourners to stand in the foyer.

In the early years of its operation, the ratio of cremations to burials was 35:65. This had now risen to around 85:15 in recent years, with the actual figure for 2013/14 being 89:11.

In 2013/14 there were 1,015 cremations at Barrow Crematorium which was a little higher than in previous years. Of late there were on average 960 cremations per annum.

In addition, the chapel was used on approximately 25 occasions in 2013/14 for services prior to burials in Barrow Cemetery.

The Cemetery Manager had reported that in 2013/14, approximately 85% of services held in the chapel did not make use of all the available seating capacity (884 services).

In the same period, approximately 13% of services used all the available seating in the chapel and some mourners were required to stand in the foyer (135 services).

In the same period, approximately 2% of services used all the available seating in the chapel and also filled the standing capacity in the foyer, requiring other mourners to stand outside the building (21 services). On these occasions a public address system was used to allow the service to be followed.

There had been no complaints, formal or informal from members of the public to the Cemetery Team about the capacity of Barrow Crematorium chapel.

Nationally, there were around 270 crematoria in the UK accounting for around 75% of all funerals (Barrow was higher than the national average).

The Federation of Burial and Crematoria Authorities had produced, and were consistently reviewing "Recommendations for the Establishment of Crematoria". This document was used by Local Authorities and private providers in planning to build new, or develop existing crematoria.

The most recent iteration of this document stated:-

"It is estimated that no more than 30 mourners (nationally) will attend in 50% of cremation services. It seems therefore that seating accommodation should be provided for some 80-100 people. A chapel of this size will accommodate the majority of services without destroying that intimate atmosphere desirable with a small congregation".

The average seating capacity of the 270 UK Crematoria Chapel was 100.

An earlier report to Scrutiny identified the seating capacity at 20 other crematorium chapels in the UK. These were as follows:-

St Helens – 150;
Newcastle – 124 and 108 (two chapels);
Durham – 120;
Carlisle – 110;
Burnley – 108;
Distington (Copeland) – 100;
Torrisholme (Lancaster) – 100;
Eltham – 100;
Harrogate – 100;
York – 90;
Warrington – 90;
Leamington – 85;
Atherton – 82;
Preston – 80;
Accrington – 80;
Portchester – 80;
Woking – 80;
Southport – 80;
Wigan – 66; and
Darlington – 58

Of the above 20, only 3 (Distington, Atherton and Accrington) held fewer services annually than Barrow.

The Assistant Director also informed Members of current pricing at the Crematorium which were all available for the public to view on the Barrow Borough Council's website.

The Committee asked the Assistant Director – Community Services about the remaining capacity for burials in Barrow Cemetery.

The Assistant Director stated that at the current rate of burial there was approximately 130 years of capacity left at Barrow Cemetery.

The Committee also asked whether there were any foreseeable problems at the Cemetery. The Assistant Director – Community Services reported that the standard of accommodation at the Gatehouse for the office staff was in a poor state of repair and suggested that this may be looked into in the financial year 2015/16.

Another issue raised was with regards to vandalised graves. Although very distressing for the families involved and whilst not dismissing their concerns, the Assistant Director stated that this was a very tiny occurrence at Barrow Cemetery.

RESOLVED:- That the information received be noted.

The meeting closed at 2.56 p.m.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE		Part One
Date of Meeting:	23rd October, 2014	(D) Agenda Item 7
Reporting Officer:	Corporate Support Manager	
<p>Title: Street Cleansing</p> <p>Summary and Conclusions:</p> <p>Provide Members with an update of the scrutiny review into street cleansing.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>Members are invited to consider the information and determine how this review should be progressed.</p>		

Report

Drug related waste

At the meeting of this Committee in September Members raised an issue regarding hypodermic needles being disposed of in backstreets. The Committee felt that we should undertake a review of enforcement with regards to this matter and agreed that this item be put on the Agenda for the next meeting. A work group was established and member of the group met with Streetcare Manager. The group were informed that there were arrangements in place for recording incidents of drug related waste but the number of incidences is very low. In most cases drug related waste originates from to prescription medicine although there is a mechanism in place for engaging Cumbria Police if any illegal drug material is discovered. The Streetcare Manager agreed to undertake a monitoring exercise for three months to determine whether this is a significant issue.

Presenting waste in advance of collection day

At the meeting of this Committee in September Members raised an issue regarding residents putting their bins out into the backstreet from one week to the next. This is being addressed as part of Streetcare's on-going enforcement activity.

Background Papers

Nil.

		Part One
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE		(R)
Date of Meeting:	23rd October, 2014	Agenda
Reporting Officer:	Corporate Support Manager	Item
		8
<p>Title: Annual Report</p> <p>Summary and Conclusions:</p> <p>To present the Scrutiny Annual Report for 2013/14.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Members are invited to note the Annual Report; and 2. To agree to present the annual report to full Council. 		

Report

Annual report from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

2013/14

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 2013/14:

Councillors Roberts (Chairman)

Cassidy (Vice-Chairman)

Derbyshire

Hamilton

Husband

Johnston

R. McClure

Maddox

Opie

C. Thomson

M. A. Thomson

Wall

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.

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

The Cultural Services review was completed within 2013/14 and the output is detailed below. The Asset Management Review was suspended because the department was involved in a significant restructure of services.

In 2013/14 the Scrutiny Committee invited representatives from the University Hospitals Trust of Morecambe Bay to attend the meeting. Philip Woodford (Deputy Director of Corporate Affairs) and Joanne Borthwick (Assistant Chief Executive Officer) attended the meeting and provided Members with a briefing regarding the improvements that were being delivered at Furness General Hospital.

Members asked a number of detailed questions relevant to the business of the meeting and requested information regarding the future of Furness General Hospital.

Philip Woodford and Joanne Borthwick responded to the questions and addressed the concerns raised.

In 2013/14 the Scrutiny Committee, having reviewed the requirements for retaining Fairtrade status, agreed that there is continuing demand for Fairtrade products in the Borough and recommended that we retain our Fairtrade town status. This was endorsed by the Executive Committee.

Cultural Services

The Scrutiny Committee established a work group to review the delivery of Cultural and Leisure Services and agreed the following Terms of Reference:-

1. Gain a clear understanding of the leisure services we provide at our three 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; and
4. Identify areas where potential improvements in performance value for money and public satisfaction can be achieved.

Members think that there needs to be a forum to discuss these suggestions.

Members are aware that Management Board is developing a framework for implementing efficiency improvements to support making savings required in the budget strategy. Members welcome this initiative as a mechanism for engaging staff in delivering improvements and reducing costs.

Members concluded that formal discussions with Senior Managers should take place to clarify the Council's strategic approach to delivering Leisure Services. Members think that it would be appropriate to re-establish the Cultural Services Board as a forum for these discussions. It is envisaged that the Board will provide strategic guidance based on the Members perspective.

Background Papers

Nil.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	(D) Agenda Item 9
Date of Meeting: 23rd October, 2014	
Reporting Officer: Corporate Support Manager	
Title: Policy and Strategy	
Summary and Conclusions:	
Provide Members with an update of the scrutiny review into policy and performance.	
Recommendation:	
Members are invited to consider the information and determine how this review should be progressed.	

Report

At the meeting of this Committee in May it was agreed that a review of Policy and Strategy take place in the current year to enable assessments to be made on how well strategies had worked over the last three years.

At a work group meeting members reviewed the Council's plan. Members agreed that the Council's Vision; to enhance the economic and social future of the Borough to meet the needs and aspirations of the community is appropriate.

To deliver this vision, the Council has agreed the following priorities to deliver tangible benefits to the community and address the headline issues for the Council and its staff:

- Housing
- Regeneration and Public Realm
- Local Economy
- Service Delivery

Members of the work group agreed that these priorities are appropriate but think that in addition consideration should be given to how we can enhance the natural environment.

Members of the work group considered a number of the Council's strategies and policies. They agreed that the work group should review the effectiveness of the Budget strategy and assess its strengths and weaknesses.

They also request that we develop additional performance indicators so that Members can monitor how the Council is performing.

The work group suggested that the Leader of the Council be co-opted onto the work group and that the Director of Resources be invited to the next meeting.

Background Papers

Nil.