



SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

BURNLEY TOWN HALL

Monday, 9th December, 2019 at 6.30 pm

PRESENT

MEMBERS

Councillors A Tatchell (Chair), M Johnstone (Vice-Chair), H Baker, D Ferrier, S Khan, G Lishman, S Lone, L Mehanna, A Newhouse, L Pate and M Townsend

OFFICERS

Rob Dobson	– Head of Policy and Engagement
Asad Mushtaq	– Head of Finance and Property
Amy Johnson	– Principal Accountant
Jayne Enright	– Principal Environmental Health Officer - Food Safety
Imelda Grady	– Democracy Officer

35. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Bea Foster.

36. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 28th October 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

37. Notice of Key Decisions and Private Meetings

Members commented on the length of time that some key decisions had been on the forward plan, in particular the Use of Glyphosate and the Local Development Scheme and asked that the Executive look at this.

In respect of the Dog Fouling Working Group members felt that there should be a process whereby Scrutiny was involved in the final report and recommendations of any Working Group before being taken to the Executive.

IT WAS AGREED

That the Executive be informed of the above comments and the notice of key decisions and private meetings be noted.

38. Leisure Trust Annual Report

The Chief Executive of the Leisure Trust was unable to attend the meeting and the item was deferred to a special meeting of Scrutiny to be held in January 2020.

39. Revenue Budget Q2

The Principal Accountant presented a report on the Council's Revenue Budget 2019-20 Quarter 2 as at 30th September 2019 and highlighted the detailed savings to date and the proactive work being done within service areas to achieve the savings target of £400k.

IT WAS AGREED

That the report be noted.

40. Capital Budget Q2

The Head of Finance and Property presented a report on the Council's Capital Budget 2019-20 Quarter 2 as at 30th September 2019.

Members asked how the revenue contribution of £11k required for the purchase of a new waste vehicle could be reconciled with the overspend of £172k in the revenue budget. Asad Mushtaq explained that this had been factored into the revenue budget report.

IT WAS AGREED

That the report be noted.

41. Treasury Management mid-year update

The Head of Finance and Property reported on the Council's mid-year review and drew members' attention to the economic forecast provided by Link Asset Service and the increase in the cost of borrowing by the Treasury and the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) which could impact on the viability of the Councils' capital programme and future borrowing.

IT WAS AGREED

That the report be noted.

42. Fees and Charges 2020

The Head of Finance and Property presented a report on the Council's proposed fees and charges for 2020/21 and outlined the key areas of change.

Councillor Townsend agreed that the increase in fines for dog fouling would act as a deterrent but said that increasing the car parking fixed penalty notices by just £1 was not administratively efficient and felt that this would have been better frozen for a period of time and then increased more substantially. The Head of Finance and Property explained that all Heads of Service had been asked to incorporate a 2% increase for services, in line with increased costs, with the exceptions as outlined in the report.

Councillor Pate asked if the freeze on cemeteries and crematoria fees would prevent residents going out of the Borough for these services and asked that the impact of this be monitored.

IT WAS AGREED

That the report be noted.

43. Quarter 2 Performance Report

The Head of Policy and Engagement presented the quarter 2 performance results and focused on those areas that were off target, explaining the reasons for this.

In respect of missed bin collections members asked if there was an underlying trend. The Head of Policy and Engagement said that 75 missed bins out of every 100,000 collection was not significant in real terms and, other than when crews missed whole streets, it would be difficult to identify a reason for a trend in missed collections given the numbers involved.

Members also commented that the information in the report was brief and asked if more indicators could be included in future.

In respect of Liberata and calls answered within target time, a member reported her concerns over the use of answering machines and said that councillors often had sensitive information which they did not feel comfortable leaving on an answer machine, especially where no recipient's name was given. Members suggest that the criteria needed to be looked at rather than the outturn of calls, whether there was customer satisfaction after the call rather than how quickly the call was answered.

The Head of Policy and Engagement said he would pass these comments on to Liberata.

IT WAS AGREED

That the report be noted.

44. Food Safety Delivery Plan Annual Update

The Principal Environmental Health Officer presented the annual update for the Food (Official Controls) Delivery Plan 2019/20 and highlighted some of the the work carried out to date and the plans for the future delivery of Food Safety Services which was a requirement of the Food Standards Agency. She reported that the team had performed well against the inspection programme and compliance levels of food business had been maintained at 97%.

Members asked why there was no requirement for businesses to display the hygiene rating scores and the Officer explained that this was mandatory in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland but wasn't a requirement in England and could not be enforced. She did however inform members that businesses could not display a rating that wasn't correct or trading standards would act. She also said that many outlets such as markets and events would only take businesses with a 5 star rating and this helped drive up standards. She also said that food delivery services such as 'Just Eat' and 'Deliveroo' were now only working with outlets of a score of 3 and above.

Members also asked how call outs and complaints were prioritised and the Officer explained that the programme of inspections was audited and monitored centrally by surveillance, some interventions were reactive and some planned to be acted on within 28 days.

Members thanked the officer for the report and the good work being done in keeping the public safe.

IT WAS AGREED

That Full Council be recommended to approve the Food (Official Controls) Plan 2019/20.

45. Health and Safety intervention Plan Annual Update

The Principal Environment Health Officer presented the Health and Safety Intervention Plan 2019/20 and outlined the health and safety regulation duties undertaken by Burnley Council's health and safety team. She gave examples of where interventions had taken place at a sunbed salon and at a nursery school.

Councillor Ferrier asked if wood dust was being monitored at premises and the officer explained that the Health and Safety Executive carried out checks on higher risk premises such as large warehouses and the Council did lower risk businesses but she would check if this was happening and report back.

Councillor Gordon Lishman asked if gas safety checks on catering outlets, especially those with accommodation above, included carbon monoxide emissions. The officer responded that advice was always given on visits to premises in line with that of the Health and Safety Executive.

IT WAS AGREED

That Full Council be recommended to approve the Health and Safety Intervention Plan 2019/20.

46. Scrutiny Review Groups

Members considered the current position in respect of the scrutiny review into Burnley Manchester Road Railway Station and noted that a meeting with representatives from Lancashire County Council and Northern Rail would take place on 16th January 2020.

The second review on Housing needs would also commence on 16th January where members would scope the parameters of the review.

47. Work Programme 2019/20

The work programme was noted with the addition of an additional meeting being held in January to consider the Leisure Trust Accounts.

Members also asked that the Authority's Annual Monitoring Report be added to the work programme