

## Chair of Scrutiny Report -8 December 2021 Full Council

Since the last Council meeting the Scrutiny Committee has met twice, once for an Extraordinary Meeting on 21 October 2021 and secondly for an Ordinary Meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

At the Extraordinary Meeting we were able to scrutinise the Pioneer Place construction programme and costs, and following questions from Members and responses from Officers the Committee was able to endorse the recommendations for submission to the Executive.

At the Ordinary Meeting a number of reports were scrutinised and endorsed by the Committee relating to the Gambling Policy statement for Jan 2022-Dec 2024, and the Household Support Fund which targets fuel poverty in households with school age children.

The Committee was also able to scrutinise and note a number of budgetary reports relating to Q2 2021-22 Revenue and Capital Monitoring, as well as Treasury Management during 2021-22, and proposed Fees and Charges for 2022-23 based on a 2% increase.

In addition the Committee scrutinised a number of performance reports, firstly from Liberata on an annual update on their partnership with the Council as at November 2021, and then on Q2 2021-22 Performance including both Council and Liberata services.

An update on homelessness was received following on from a previous report in June 2021, which showed an increase in the number of requests from June to September 2021 compared to the same period in 2019, and a further update will be received in June 2022.

The Housing Review Group plans to meet with Calico again in December 2021, and will then review how it will proceed with the information and evidence that it has gathered.

During a further general discussion on Review Groups going forward, the Committee recognised the need for clear objectives to be agreed at the outset of a Review.

I am also pleased to report that the remote training session on constructive and productive scrutiny was provided on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2021, hosted by Dr Dave McKenna, and the session was attended by Scrutiny, Executive, and other Members. The training session highlighted both the challenge and support which Scrutiny can provide to the Executive, and also highlighted effective questioning techniques. Following further consideration of the current Scrutiny and Executive relationship, it has been agreed that a number of pilots be implemented over the next 6 months relating to reports, questioning, and Member/Officer meetings to promote a closer working relationship between Scrutiny and the Executive.

Cllrs Howard Baker & Ann Royle, Scrutiny Committee Chair & Vice-Chair – December 2021