



SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

BURNLEY TOWN HALL

Thursday, 15th September, 2022 at 6.30 pm

PRESENT

MEMBERS

Councillors H Baker (Chair), G Barton, G Birtwistle, S Hall, M Hurt, M Ishtiaq, L Khan, J Launer, A Lewis, G Lishman, S Lone, J McGowan and D Whitaker

OFFICERS

Lukman Patel	– Chief Operating Officer
Rob Dobson	– Head of Policy and Engagement
Howard Hamilton-Smith	– Head of Finance and Property
Amy Johnson	– Finance Manager
Karen Davies	– Environmental Health and Licensing Manager
Richard Brown	– Community Safety Officer
Alison McEwan	– Democracy Officer

IN ATTENDANCE

A Anwar, S Graham and S Cunliffe

41. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors A Hosker, A Royle, and C Sollis

Minutes Silence

A minutes silence was held to pay respects to Her Majesty The Queen.

42. Minutes

The minutes of the special meeting held on 15 July 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

43. Notice of Key Decisions and Private Meetings

Alison McEwan reported on the Notice of Key Decisions and Private Meetings (NKDPM) published on 22 August 2022.

Members were informed that when they received notification of each NKDPM being published, if there were any items of interest, they should notify the Chair to request the item be brought to committee.

44. Liberata Presentation

Simon Miller, Liberata Regional Operations Director provided a performance update for the strategic partnership with the Council.

Overall performance was good, and Mr Miller highlighted targets that were being exceeded.

Members raised concerns on customer telephone calls not being answered in a timely manner. It was noted that whilst the Council receives service credits where performance targets are not met, this did not benefit the customer experience when trying to contact the Council.

One of the reasons for this is that calls are now taking longer to complete than pre-Covid due to being more complicated due to the current economic situation and COVID.

Members discussed staffing levels and recruitment, rotas, wellbeing, turnover and salaries.

They were keen to assert that residents deserved a good service, and that whilst they acknowledged the challenges facing Liberata, they expected residents to receive this.

It was clear that there was no consensus to change the current Liberata targets.

An offer was made to give Members the opportunity to visit the contact centre. There was also the potential for this to be considered as a topic for future review.

45. Town Centre Public Space Protection Order

Richard Brown presented the report which set out the proposal to renew the Town Centre Public Space Protection Order (PSPO). The new order contained additional elements to extend the range of the current prohibitions to address issues relating to alcohol, drugs, use of amplifiers and youth disturbance at night.

There has been a small increase in the area covered by the PSPO including areas on Trafalgar Street, the Manchester Road Train Station and the current cinema site.

Enforcement action would be undertaken by the Council supported by the Police and the Pennine Lancashire CCTV Hub. Performance would be measured through MATAAC.

Members discussed enforcement of the PSPO. Some aspects would be delivered by Police, others by Council officers.

Members endorsed the report and requested that the Executive to enforce the PSPO.

46. Statement of Licensing Policy 2022-2027 (Licensing Act 2003)

Karen Davies reported on the responses to the statutory consultation on the Councils' Draft Statement of Licensing Policy considering recent commercial development and acquisitions, its ambition to support licensed premises, residents and businesses to co-exist in harmony and also to take steps towards achieving Purple Flag status for Burnley Town centre.

Members asked that the term 'gold-plating' be explained and discussed staggered closing times and irresponsible drinks promotions.

Members endorsed the report and recommended its approval by Full Council.

47. Revenue Budget Monitoring 2022-23 Quarter 1

Amy Johnson reported a forecast net budget deficit of £149,00 for year end 31 March 2023 based upon actual spending and income to 30 June 2022.

She further reported that the budget position was fluid due to the ever-changing financial environment but that it is continually monitored and reviewed. More detailed forecasts would be provided throughout the year through the budget monitoring reporting cycles. There was an expectation that the budget gap would be closed over the remainder of the financial year.

In response to a question on energy costs he reported that although the energy market was volatile the Council currently had fixed tariffs until 31st March 2023. It has also set up an energy volatility reserve, and that the Council was also awaiting details of financial support from central Government on fuel costs during the fiscal event next week.

Members noted the report.

48. Capital Budget Monitoring 2022-23 Quarter 1

Amy Johnson provided an update on capital expenditure and reported a recommendation to Full Council to approve a net capital budget increase of £25,000, revising the budget for 2022/23 to £41,433,311.

She also confirmed that £120,000 housing emergency repairs related to grant funding.

Members noted the report.

49. Revenue Budget 2023-24 and Savings Proposals

Howard Hamilton-Smith reported on the latest position regarding balancing the Council's 2023/26 revenue budgets. Savings of £23,000 had been approved by Full Council in August 2022 to assist in balancing the 2024/25 revenue budget. Further savings proposals had now been provided totalling £198,000 to assist in balancing the 2023/26 revenue budgets.

There were no questions.

Members noted the report.

50. Scrutiny Review Groups

Members confirmed that a meeting date had been confirmed for the Queensgate review.

Further updates would be provided at the next meeting.

51. Work Programme

Members noted the Work Programme.