

WESTMORLAND AND FURNESS SHADOW OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the **Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held on **Wednesday, 15 June 2022 at 10.00 am at Committee Room 1, County Hall, Kendal**

PRESENT:

Cllr J Batty
Cllr H Chaffey
Cllr W Clark
Cllr P Dew
Cllr H Hodgson
Cllr V Hughes (Vice-Chair)
Cllr H Ladhams
Cllr B McEwan
Cllr B Morgan (Chair)
Cllr N Phillips
Cllr G Simpkins
Cllr D Taylor

Officers in attendance:

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| Mrs J Currie | Democratic Services Officer |
| Ms L Fisher | Interim Monitoring Officer |
| Mr A Lea | KPMG on behalf of the LGR Programme Board |
| Mr D Stephens | Policy and Scrutiny Advisor |

**PART 1 ITEMS CONSIDERED IN THE PRESENCE
OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor S Evans.

2. MEMBERSHIP

There were no changes in membership for this meeting.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/DISPENSATIONS

Members asked if they were required to declare an interest if they were elected members of sovereign councils.

The Interim Monitoring Officer informed members that the Code of Conduct was in the process of being amended to state that being a member of another council in the area would not stop Westmorland and Furness members from taking part in meetings.

She confirmed that there a nothing on the agenda today specific to any of business of the sovereign councils, so members were not required to declare any interests.

4. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED, that the press and public be not excluded from any items of business on the agenda today.

5. REFERRALS FROM THE SHADOW AUTHORITY AND SHADOW EXECUTIVE

None for this meeting.

6. REFERRALS FOR ADVICE IN RELATION TO CALL INS

None for this meeting.

7. RESPONSE TO THE SHADOW EXECUTIVE ON REPORTS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

None for this meeting.

8. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Westmorland and Furness Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report from the Interim Monitoring Officer, which asked them to note the Terms of Reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Interim Monitoring Officer referred to Section 3.3 of the report, detailed the Terms of Reference.

The recommendation was moved and seconded and put to a vote, which was unanimous.

RESOLVED, that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the Terms of Reference.

9. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION (LGR) IMPLEMENTATION PLAN UPDATE

Members received a presentation from Mr Andrew Lea, on behalf of the LGR Programme Board, which covered the following:-

- Vision and ambition for Cumbria
- Two new Councils for Cumbria
- Implementation Approach – values
- Implementation Approach – design principles
- Timeline and phasing
- Democratic and programme governance
- Implementation Phase
- Blueprints, service plans and strategic financial planning
- Next steps

Scrutiny Members asked who had developed and decided on the 'vision'.

Mr Lea responded to say the vision had been developed from the programme perspective, and had been seen by both the Programme Board and also Cumbria Leaders Oversight Forum (CLOF). He said that once the Shadow Authority agreed the Council Plan there would then be an opportunity to establish a unique vision for the Westmorland and Furness Unitary Council.

Members were concerned about the lack of transparency about where changes in service delivery were required. Some services would be new, some would be separated and some would be combined, and they wondered when Scrutiny members would have the opportunity to see the details.

Mr Lea said there was absolute recognition that changes were required but he said this was a collaborative endeavour and all of the sovereign councils were working together to get this resolved. He then took members through the design principles and timelines.

Over the summer members would have the time to consider the service design and draft process.

Members asked about the timeline and checklist for moving services across to the new unitary. The officer responded to say that quarterly readiness reviews have been developed to examine the critical paths.

Members were very concerned about the timelines and wondered if it would be possible for any pre-scrutiny before Cabinet considered the draft blueprints in July. There then followed a debate about how pre scrutiny may be undertaken.

The Interim Monitoring Officer said she understood that the draft blueprints being presented to Cabinet in July would just be high level documents, but she would speak to the Programme Director and pass on the concerns of the Scrutiny Committee members.

Mr Lea confirmed that the blueprints for Cabinet in July would be high level, and the work over the summer would be looking at the cost pressures and service designs.

A discussion then took place on possible options for service design and the Interim Monitoring Officer said officers would look at the options for pre scrutiny either informal or formal and would check any option with the chair before confirming. This was **AGREED**.

Mr Lea then took members through the possible design options and said most of the design option appraisals had been considered through Cumbria Leaders Oversight Forum.

Members asked about current contracts and how these would be managed going forward.

The Interim Monitoring Officer then gave a detailed explanation on how contracts would be dealt with during transition, and members asked specific questions about current contracts, which the Interim Monitoring Officer answered.

Scrutiny members asked if this information could be made known to existing contractors, some of which had already started raising concerns.

The Interim Monitoring Officer agreed to pick this up with the County Council's Contracts and Commissioning Team and also the Communications Team.

One of the Scrutiny Members asked specifically about any SWOT analysis that had been carried out, and whether each service blueprint would include an evidence based SWOT analysis. If so, she hoped the

analysis was looking at how 'better' services could be provided as it would be a loss to lose this ambition for services going forward.

Members accepted that initially the new unitary had to be 'safe and legal' on day 1, but said they hoped the ambition of members would not be forgotten.

One of the sovereign Council members asked what the plans were for the new committee structure for the new unitary, and hoped that the current Area Committee structure of the County Council would be adopted.

The Interim Monitoring Officer said this would be looked at by the Constitution Review Group in the near future.

One of the members asked when the final decision on options for service delivery would be taken, and the Interim Monitoring Officer said this would be taken by Cabinet. Scrutiny members reiterated that at the very least the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny needed to be engaged in this.

One of the members asked how the benefits would be captured going forward, and it was agreed these would be added to the Scrutiny work programme.

Members asked for details on the proposals for the Task and Finish Groups and for confirmation if these groups would be 'executive'. The Interim Monitoring Officer agreed to investigate.

It was **AGREED** that,

- (1) Officers would look at the options for pre scrutiny either informal or formal and would check any option with the chair before confirming;
- (2) The Interim Monitoring Officer would speak to colleagues in the County Council's Contracts and Commissioning Team and also the Communications Team about messaging about contracts going forward.

10. SCRUTINY OVERVIEW REPORT

The meeting then broke at 11.35am and reconvened at 11.40am

Members had before them a report from the Policy and Scrutiny Team which informed them of new or updated items of significance to the Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee as well as providing an opportunity to review the Shadow Authority's Forward Plan and consider the Committee's Work Programme.

Members agreed that a half hour pre-meeting before all OSC meeting be scheduled into the diary.

Members asked whether the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would have the opportunity to consider the Council Plan before it was agreed. The Strategic Policy and Scrutiny Advisor said this was programmed to take place in August.

The Policy and Scrutiny Advisory said the County Council's Scrutiny Management Board had held a Task & Finish Group on Locality Models and Structures, which the OSC may find helpful. He agreed to circulate this to all members of the committee, for information.

The recommendations were moved and seconded and voted upon unanimously.

RESOLVED, that

- (1) the Shadow Authority's Forward Plan be received and noted;
- (2) The work programme be received and noted.

11. INDUCTION AND TRAINING PROGRAMME

Members considered a report from the Interim Monitoring Officer which informed them of the Induction and Training Programme to the 15 June 2022. An up to date copy of the programme was tabled at the meeting.

The Interim Monitoring Officer said work had started on a member development strategy to cover the remainder of the year and the commencement of the 2 new Unitary Authorities.

RESOLVED, that members note the updated Induction and Training Programme to 18 July 2022.

12. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was currently scheduled to take place on 10 August 2022 at 10am in County Hall, Kendal.

The meeting ended at 12.00 pm