

Appendix 6

Scrutiny Management Board Briefing from Chair of Communities and Place Scrutiny Advisory Board

1.0 Purpose of Update

- 1.1 This report updates Scrutiny Management Board (SMB) on the work of the Communities and Place Scrutiny Advisory Board and any issues and developments that have occurred since the last meeting of SMB.

2.0 Board Meeting Update

- 2.1 The Communities and Place Scrutiny Advisory Board met on 3 March 2020 and considered the following issues:

- the outcome of last year's inspection of the Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service and the related improvement planning;
- pre-decision scrutiny of the draft Highways Asset Management Strategy, with a focus on the emerging delivery planning;
- the progress and learning so far on the implementation of the Council's new Highways Permit Scheme; and,
- the proposed scope for a Task and Finish Group on the provision of infrastructure to support new development which is now subject to agreement by the Chair and Vice Chair of Scrutiny Management Board.

3.0 ADDITIONAL SCRUTINY ACTIVITY UNDERTAKEN BY THE BOARD

3.1 Shortly after the last meeting of the Board, the coronavirus pandemic and associated lockdown measures resulted in the standing down of Council meetings. During this period, the Chair of the Communities and Place Scrutiny Advisory Board has considered exemptions to Call-in in relation to the temporary closure of libraries and the suspension of contracts.

3.2 Also during this period the Chair has:

- Begun receiving regular briefings with the Executive Director – Corporate, Customer and Community Services and the Executive Director – Economy and Environment, and the Assistant Chief Fire Officer;
- Raised concerns about digital exclusion resulting from the temporary closure of libraries, particularly in respect of children without access to ICT at home;
- Received updates on additional capacity added to the Registration Service to support focus on registrations of death, and the establishment within 7 days of a Call Centre and Community Hubs to support the most vulnerable people needing support; and,
- Received updates on the reopening of Household Waste Recycling Centres and measures ensuring staff and the public can operate safely;

4.0 Conclusion

4.1 The Chair is continuing to receive updates from the Council's leadership team on key issues arising from the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. Engagement with Board Members on these issues and in the work to review the Scrutiny work programme and development plan are key activities over the coming weeks.

Chair: Cllr Stan Collins