

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES)

MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, BOOTLE
ON TUESDAY 17TH DECEMBER, 2013

Overview
& Scrutiny



PRESENT: Councillor McKinley (in the Chair)

Councillors Bennett, Crabtree, Gatherer, J. Kelly,
Lappin, P. Maguire, S. McGuire and Weavers.

Also Present: Councillor P. Dowd, Leader of the Council; and
Councillor I. Moncur, Cabinet Member for Children,
Schools, Families and Leisure.

Councillors Atkinson, Blackburn, Carr, Dorgan,
Dutton, Murphy, Papworth, Tonkiss and Robertson

28. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Prior to the Meeting apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dutton and Tonkiss. (Councillor Tonkiss exercised his right to make representations on the second call-in).

29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were received.

30. ITEM CALLED - IN - LIBRARY REVIEW - ALTERNATIVE LIBRARY PROPOSALS: SECOND GATEWAY ASSESSMENTS

Further to Minute No. 71 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 5 December 2013, the Committee considered (a) the report of the Director of Corporate Services, which set out the decision of the Cabinet on the above matter and the reasons given in the two requisitions for call-in; and (b) the report of the Director of Older People to the Cabinet in relation to this matter.

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor McKinley, reported on the procedure for consideration of the three petitions received and the first and second call-in requisition.

The Senior Democratic Services Officer, Mrs. Ruth Harrison, reported on the validity of the first and second call-in and highlighted that both the first and second call-in requisitions:-

- had been received within the specified call-in period in accordance with Chapter 6, paragraph 37 of the Constitution;
- had been signed by three Members of the Council who were not Members of the Cabinet, in accordance with Chapter 6, paragraph 38 of the Constitution; and

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- referred to a specific decision made by the Cabinet and provided a reason in accordance with Chapter 6, paragraph 40 of the Constitution.

The Committee considered the comments of Mr. Steve Deakin, Head of Health and Wellbeing, on the background to this matter and both Councillor P. Dowd, Leader of the Council and Councillor Moncur, Cabinet Member for Children, Schools, Families and Leisure, addressed the Committee in relation to the Cabinet decision.

The Chair reported that three public petitions had been submitted for consideration at the meeting prior to the two call-in requisitions.

The Committee heard representations from Mr. G. Winckles of the Friends of Carnegie Library on behalf of a deputation who had submitted a petition containing the signatures of 29 residents of the Borough which stated:-

“We the undersigned request that a spokesperson from the Friends of Carnegie Library, Crosby, (FOCAL) be permitted to address the above Committee with regard to the evaluation process and decision made by Cabinet on 5 December 2013 concerning the Library Review”.

The Committee then heard representations from Mr. M. Bleasdale, Secretary of the Aintree Library Action Group on behalf of a deputation who had submitted a petition containing the signatures of 27 residents of the Borough which stated:-

“We the undersigned request permission for Marcus Bleasdale, Secretary of ALAG, to address the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 17 December 2013 regarding the proposal to run the library services in Aintree, Melling and Surrounding Areas”.

The Committee then heard representations from Mrs. G. Bleasdale, Chair of the Aintree Library Action Group on behalf of a deputation who had submitted a petition containing the signatures of 27 residents of the Borough which stated:-

“We the undersigned, request permission for Gwen Bleasdale, Chair of ALAG, to address the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 17 December 2013 regarding the proposal to run the library services in Aintree, Melling and Surrounding Areas”.

Councillor Papworth, outlined and amplified the following reasons for the first call-in requisition which had been submitted by Councillor Dorgan, Dutton and himself:-

“We wish to call in the decision made by the Cabinet on 5th December 2013 in respect of Libraries (Item 10 on the Cabinet Agenda), in accordance with the terms of paragraph 40 (b) of the Chapter 6 in the Constitution, in that the decision was based on facts not taken into account, and is therefore unsound.”

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Mr. Deakin, Councillor P. Dowd and Councillor Moncur responded to the representations made by Councillor Papworth in relation to the first call-in.

Councillors P. Dowd and Moncur, Mr. Deakin and Mr. Kenah, answered questions posed by Members of the Committee in relation to the representations made by the three lead petitioners and Councillor Papworth under the first call-in requisition.

(At this point, the Committee agreed to adjourn the meeting at 7.30 pm and the meeting was reconvened at 7.50 pm.)

RESOLVED:

That the meeting be adjourned to enable officers to submit a report providing information on issues raised during the meeting, in relation to the first call-in, to a future meeting of this Committee to be held at a date and time to be determined.

Both Councillors Robertson and Tonkiss, outlined and amplified the following reasons for the second call-in requisition which had been submitted by Councillor Brodie-Browne and themselves, in a combined five minute presentation:-

“We wish to call-in the decision that the proposals from Aintree Library Action Group and Friends of Carnegie Library had failed the second gateway on the following grounds:

- (1) to seek more understanding of the decision that the proposals did not demonstrate financial sustainability;
- (2) to question the soundness of the decision on the grounds that not all the facts were taken into account in respect of the financial sustainability of the bids;
- (3) to recommend that Cabinet reconsiders the decision on the grounds that the proposals do, in fact, demonstrate adequate financial sustainability.”

Councillor P. Dowd responded to the representations made by Councillors Robertson and Tonkiss, in relation to the second call-in.

Councillor P. Dowd and Mr. Deakin answered questions posed by Members of the Committee in relation to the representations made by the three lead petitioners and Councillors Robertson and Tonkiss under the second call-in requisition.

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RESOLVED:

That the meeting be adjourned to enable officers to submit a report providing information on issues raised during the meeting, in relation to the second call-in, to a future meeting of this Committee to be held at a date and time to be determined.