

22. PETITION REVIEW REQUEST - PUBLIC EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS FORUM

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of People and Places advising that a review had been requested of the steps that the Council had taken in response to a petition received on behalf of the West Lancashire Pensioners' Forum (WLPF). The report, as circulated and contained on pages 75 to 86 of the Book of Reports, set out the steps taken to respond to the petition, the Council's response to the Petition's Organiser and the Petitioner's request for a review of that response.

The Petition's Organiser, the Secretary of WLPF, attended the meeting and at the invitation of the Chairman addressed the Committee and in his address gave reasons why he did not feel the Council had adequately responded to his petition.

Members discussed the points the Petition's Organiser had raised in his address and in the petition documentation, along with the comments of the Director of Transformation, as set down in the Director of People and Places report, including the mechanisms the Council already uses to gauge the views of its residents, including the elderly and disabled and its equalities practices and approaches.

Members sought additional information of the Petitioner, who consented to take questions and responded to those put to him.

The Older People's Champion informed the Committee of the cessation of the Older People's Partnership Board but the establishment of a new voluntary West Lancashire Older People's Partnership whose inaugural meeting had recently taken place. It was understood that that Partnership was in the process of preparing a new Constitution and that its meetings would be held at the Council Offices. It was further understood that the Partnership's membership also included two representatives of the WLPF.

Members welcomed the announcement. Certain offers of assistance were made to Mr Brookfield and the people he represents.

Mr Brookfield thanked Members for allowing him to address them and was grateful for the collaborative and conciliatory route offered. He concluded by saying that he hoped that the new Older People's Partnership, in which he would have an involvement, would be successful.

On behalf of the Committee the Chairman thanked Mr Brookfield for his attendance.

RESOLVED: That the steps taken by the Council in response to the petition are adequate.

(Note: Councillor Nolan left the Chamber during the discussion of this item, when the petitioner's comments referred to a transport subsidy for the elderly and disabled groups.)