

Council

Tuesday, 24th January 2023, 6.30 pm
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Chorley and YouTube

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at the above meeting of the Council, the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was published.

Agenda No	Item	
5	Executive Cabinet To consider a general report of the Executive Cabinet held on 19 January.	(Pages 67 - 68)
6	Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Task and Finish Groups To receive and consider the general report of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel held on 12 January.	(Pages 69 - 70)
7	Governance Committee To receive and consider the general report of the Governance Committee meeting held on 18 January.	(Pages 71 - 72)

Chris Sinnott
Chief Executive

Electronic agendas sent to Members of the Council

If you need this information in a different format, such as larger print or translation, please get in touch on 515151 or chorley.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

Executive Cabinet

1. Any Cabinet recommendations on the reports that require Council decisions appear as separate items on the agenda.

General Report of the Meeting Held on 19 January 2023

Draft 2023/24 Budget Update

2. Councillor Peter Wilson, Deputy Executive Leader and Executive Member (Resources) presented the report of the Director of Finance which set out the draft budget position for the council for 2023/24 and the forecast for 2024/25, reflecting the information contained within the Provisional Local Government Financial Settlement announced on 19 December 2022, which will be finalised in January/early February 2023.
3. Despite the continued pressures on council expenditure budgets, including the impact of rising inflation and increasing utility costs, combined with the real terms reduction in Government funding provided to the council since 2010, we supported the proposed council tax increase of 1.99% for 2023/24 as presented to Finance Council in February 2022. The proposal for an increase of 2.99% in 2024/25 will be revisited next year as part of the budget setting process.
4. We recognised the financial challenges the Council faces with regards to the £1.357m forecast budget deficit by next year but also recognised the need to keep council tax at a reasonable level due to the cost of living crisis whilst also maintaining strong service provision and providing support for residents. We supported the work already being undertaken to reduce the forecast deficit and supported the recommendations in the report.
5. Consultation on the proposed budget for 2023/24 will commence following approval of the proposals by Executive Cabinet. We approved the recommendations in the report.

Fees and Charges 2023-24

6. Councillor Peter Wilson, Executive Member (Resources) presented the report of the Director of Finance which set out the current position around fees and charges and proposals for 2023/24.
7. We noted the appendix which detailed the key fees and charges budgets across a number of different categories. Although not exhaustive, the list gave an indication of the core fees involved.
8. We recognised those charges over which the Council has no control in setting the amount that can be charged, including planning application fees. It was also recognised that the fees and charges that have been increased by the council are reflective of actual charges incurred through increasing costs and include no element of uplift for the council. We approved the recommendations within the report.

Select More Policy Review 2022

9. Councillor Terry Howarth, Executive Member (Homes and Housing) presented the report of the Director of Communities which sought permission to consult on the new draft policy following the review of the allocations policy by the Select Move Steering Group.
10. As part of the Select Move policy review, changes are proposed to improve how Social housing across the partnership is delivered. We noted the proposed changes, as

outlined in detail in the appendices, which will be subject to consultation for a period of 10 to 12 weeks.

11. On the 10 November 2022 we accepted all the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Select Move Task group. We recognised that this Executive Cabinet report was not the Executive Cabinet response to those recommendations, but the Select Move Partnership has taken into account the recommendations of the Task group when proposing amendments to the policy. The Task group were thanked for their thorough review. We approved the recommendations within the report.

Customer Access Policy

12. Councillor Adrian Lowe, Executive Member (Customer, Streetscene and Environment) presented the report of the Director of Customer and Digital which provided an overview of the proposed Customer Access Charter and Feedback Policy; including the principles and standards for customer access across the organisation.
13. We considered the contents of the report which included updates on the customer services principles, customer care standards, improvements to current customer access, proposed uniforms, proposed changes to processes to ensure that customers can access specialist services at the first point of contact, a refreshed Feedback Policy.
14. We noted the local indicator targets and the service standards as well as the proposed actions to be delivered in order to develop and implement aligned processes across the service. We welcomed the report and approved the recommendations within the report.

Shared Services Review – Property and Assets

15. I presented the confidential report of the Director of Change and Delivery which outlined the shared services review for Property and Assets. We considered the report and approved the recommendations within the report.

2023-25 Community Commissioning Procurement – Approval to Tender

16. Councillor Bev Murray, Executive Member (Early Intervention) presented the confidential report of the Director of Communities which sought approval to proceed to tender for services to be commissioned from the voluntary, community, faith social enterprise sector (VCFSE). It also provided details of commissioning review and overview of all planned commissioned services for 2023-25. We considered the report and approved the recommendations within the report.

Recommendations

17. To note the report.

Councillor Alistair Bradley
Executive Leader

NN

Overview and Scrutiny

1. This report summarises the business considered at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel held on 12 January.

Performance Focus - Communities

2. We welcomed Councillor Bev Murray, Executive Member for Early Intervention, and Councillor Terry Howarth, Executive Member for Homes and Housing presented the Communities Performance Focus.
3. The directorate includes the following services:
 - Communities,
 - Housing Solutions,
 - Public Protection.
4. The provisional outturn for Communities shows an overspend of £135k as of October 2022, giving a 7.27% variance against the current budget. This is due to the proposed pay award for 2022/23, an increase in the amount allocated towards Bed and Breakfasts and a reduction income. This is due to the NHS and Lancashire Constabulary confirming that they would not be contributing toward staffing costs in the Communities Team for the 2021/22 and 2022/23 periods.
5. A report is due to be considered at the Executive Cabinet the following week regarding the 2023-25 Community Commissioning Procurement.
6. Difficulties with recruitment and staffing capacity are acknowledged, particularly within Environmental Health and the Housing Solutions teams. We thanked the staff within the Directorate for their work during difficult circumstances.
7. We reviewed the performance indicator information and noted that the team has supported existing community groups, including those providing 'warm spaces'.
8. Positive performance for indicators relating to % of families in B&B for less than 6 weeks and % of positive outcomes in prevention and relief cases are noted, although some indicators are performing below target.
9. We discussed the work undertaken regarding digital skills, support given to community groups, volunteers and refugees.
10. We considered the Chorley Adaptations Grant (CAG) and Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's) regarding the process, budget and relating to Registered Social Landlords. Other grants, relating to energy efficiency and affordable warmth are noted.
11. The forthcoming recruitment of a Housing Standards Officer and new approach to 'grow our own' in terms of long term succession planning in the Housing Solutions team were supported by Members. We acknowledged the working patterns for the different teams.

Recommendation

12. To note the report.

Councillor John Walker
Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

RR

Governance Committee

1. This report summarises the business undertaken at the Governance Committee meeting held on 18 January 2023.

General Report of the Meeting Held on 18 January 2023

External Audit Findings Report

2. Georgia Jones, Grant Thornton presented the report of the External Auditor which summarised the key findings and other matters arising from the statutory audit of Chorley Borough Council and the preparation of the group and Council's financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022.
3. We recalled that the Audit Findings Report was considered at the previous meeting on 23 November 2022 with some work still being completed. We noted that this was the final version of the External Audit Findings Report.
4. We were advised of an additional recommendation in relation to Journals in the Action Plan which had been identified and Management had given their response. The audit adjustments were included as considered by the Committee at the previous meeting. The adjustments made no overall difference to the findings or to the Council's financial position. We noted that the audit opinion was signed on 10 January 2023 and the financial statements audit was subsequently complete.
5. Following queries, we were advised that the External Auditors financial statements work does not rely on the work of Internal Audit but considers it as part of the risk assessments. The Interim Audit report would be considered in the risk assessments for the 2022/23 Audit Findings and as the Value for Money (VfM) work was in progress this would be taken into account before the VfM is complete. We noted the report.

Annual Governance Statement Management Actions Update

6. Chris Moister, Director of Governance presented the update report to Members on the progress of implementation of the Management Actions supporting the Annual Governance Statement for 2021/22.
7. We recalled approving the Annual Governance Statement for the year 2021/22 in May 2022. Whilst no significant governance failings were identified, members approved a number of improvement actions to be undertaken. The report contains the key themes of process/system, staff development and corporate as well as actions and works done to date to progress them. A comprehensive update will be provided to Members in the next Annual Governance Statement. We noted the report.

RIPA Application Update

8. Chris Moister, Monitoring Officer reported that no RIPA applications had been made.

Work Programme

9. We considered the work programme for 2022/23 which set out the reports to be considered at each Governance Committee meeting throughout the Council year. We noted the work programme.

Exclusion of Press and Public

10. Councillor Sam Chapman registered an objection to the Audit and Risk Interim Report being considered fully in part two, and although recognised that there was a need for

some elements of the report to be considered this way it was suggested that the report could have been separated to allow for any part one information to be publicly debated. He also expressed disappointment at the Governance Committee's lack of advanced notice of the contents of the report prior to agenda publication.

Audit and Risk Interim Report as at 31st December 2022.

11. Dawn Highton, Head of Audit and Risk presented the confidential report which advised members of the work undertaken in respect of the Internal Audit Plan from September 2022 to December 2022 and gave an appraisal of the Internal Audit Service's performance to date. The report also provided information for members regarding wider work of the Audit and Risk Service.
12. Following discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Debra Platt and seconded by Councillor Sam Chapman that the report be taken for consideration at Full Council at the earliest opportunity. This proposal was put to the vote and recorded as follows:

For: Councillors Debra Platt and Sam Chapman
Against: Councillors Gordon France, Margaret France, Michelle Le Marinel, Dedrah Moss and Neville Whitham

The vote was lost (2:5:0).
13. Subsequently, it was proposed that the Governance Committee write to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for it to consider the report as a matter of urgency. The proposal was put to the vote and approved. We noted the report.

Recommendations

14. To note the report.

Councillor Debra Platt
Chair of the Governance Committee

NN