

Council

Tuesday, 28th January 2025, 6.30 pm
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Chorley and [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/user/ChorleyCouncil)

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 The report for the meeting held on 23 January is enclosed.	(Pages 153 - 156)
6	Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Task and Finish Groups The report for the meeting held on 16 January is enclosed.	(Pages 157 - 158)
7	Governance Committee The report for the meeting held on 22 January is enclosed.	(Pages 159 - 160)

Chris Sinnott
Chief Executive

Electronic agendas sent to Members of the Council

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Executive Cabinet – Report to Council

1. This report summarises the business considered at the meeting of the Executive Cabinet held on 23 January 2025.
2. Please note that the report may not reflect the wording used in the minutes, as they have yet to be formally agreed. The You Tube stream and documents relating to the meeting can be found here: [Chorley Council - YouTube](#)

23 January 2025

Draft 25/26 Budget Update

3. Councillor Peter Wilson, Executive Member for Resources presented the report of the Director of Finance which set out the draft budget position for the council for 2025/26 and the forecast for 2026/27.
4. In summary, the council would continue to deliver services outlined within the report, address the needs of its residents and achieve its corporate priorities through a mixture of external funding, revenue and capital budgets. We recognised that although a balanced budget position could be achieved for 2025/26, this was subject to increasing council tax by 2.99%.
5. It was acknowledged that there was a budget gap of £1.932m for the year 2026/27 and plans would be refined and developed over coming months to address this. We recognised the challenges faced and the uncertainty around the council's future funding streams beyond 2025/26 and therefore the projection and assumptions underpinning the MTFs for 2026/27 would be kept under review. It was hoped that the government will deliver a multi-year settlement for 2026/27 to help with forward planning.

Fees and Charges 25/26

6. Councillor Peter Wilson, Executive Member for Resources presented the report of the Director of Finance which set out the current position around fees and charges and proposals for 2025/26. If agreed, the increases would be implemented from 1 April 2025, or the most suitable date after.
7. We considered the report which set out the key fees and charges budgets and the income generated from each. It also set out an estimate of the financial impact in 2025/26 of the proposals made, if they were to be adopted.
8. We recognised the need to increase the majority of fees and charges in line with inflation rates to avoid them falling below the cost of providing that service.

This would allow the council to continue to strive to achieve value for money for residents.

9. With regards to cemetery fees, we commended the proposal to not charge for burials of a stillborn baby or a child under the age of 16, and recognised Chorley was the only borough in Lancashire to do this.

Equality Objective and Equality Strategy

10. Councillor Margaret France, Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Partnerships presented the report of the Director of Change and Delivery which sought approval of the proposed equality objectives, Equality Strategy and action plan.
11. The council's equality objectives required a refresh in line with the Equality Act 2010. The new Equality Strategy would help to ensure that equality is considered within decision-making, policy and service delivery. This would help strengthen the council's commitment to addressing inequalities and ensure that its Public Sector Equality Duty is met. We considered the five proposed equality objectives for 2025 – 2029 as outlined in the report.
12. We welcomed the creation of a dedicated Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Board, the reinvigoration of the Equality Forum and the relaunch of the staff Equality Champions Network to help promote a diverse, supportive and inclusive workplace. Mandatory training for staff and councillors, as well as the inclusion of health inequalities in the Equality Action Plan for 2025/26 was also supported. We thanked officers for their work in producing this Strategy.

Chorley Town Hall Improvement Works – Procurement Strategy

13. I presented the confidential report of the Director of Property and Planning, which sought approval of the procurement strategy to procure a contractor to undertake Chorley Town Hall improvement works.
14. We recognised the need for the improvement works outlined in the report, following the results of the condition survey on the Town Hall.

Councillor Alistair Bradley

Chair, Executive Cabinet

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Overview and Scrutiny – Report to Council

1. This report summarises the business considered at the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel held on 16 January 2025.
2. Please note that the report may not reflect the wording used in the minutes, as they have yet to be formally agreed. The You Tube stream and documents relating to the meeting can be found here: [Chorley Council - YouTube](#)

Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel – 16 January 2025

Performance focus: Communities and Leisure Directorate

3. The Executive Member for Early Intervention, Councillor Bev Murray, presented a report providing members with a performance update for the Communities and Leisure directorate. The Executive Member (Homes and Housing), Councillor Terry Howarth, was also in attendance. Both Executive Members were assisted by Jennifer Mullin, Director of Communities and Leisure.
4. The performance report included:
 - a. An overall directorate summary and budget position of services,
 - b. An overview of key performance measures at quarter two 2024/25, and
 - c. An update on the Corporate Strategy project delivery.
5. A number of issues were raised at the meeting, including:
 - £8k net overspend on temporary accommodation compared to budget following an inspection of a block of flats which will involve an emergency prohibition notice resulting in additional costs of temporary accommodation;
 - Increasing membership of Chorley Leisure via greater promotion / awareness and improvements to leisure centre facilities;
 - The Handyperson Service;
 - Homelessness and Housing Strategies currently out for consultation;
 - Current issues of concern for the Executive members which included the cost of living and homelessness.

Councillor Roy Lees

Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel 16 January 2025

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Governance Committee

1. This report summarises the business undertaken at the Governance Committee meeting held on Wednesday 22 January 2025. Please note that the report may not reflect the wording or detail included in the minutes once they are published.

General Report of the Meeting Held on 22 January 2025

2. Reports presented, and the link to the recording of the meeting can be found here:

<https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=688&MId=10624&Ver=4>

External Audit Findings Report Update

3. The Council's External Auditors, Grant Thornton, presented their updated audit findings report to us. The update related to the completion, and findings, of work around the valuation of the council's land and assets. We were also advised that the 2023/2024 audit work was being finalised, with completion expected before the February backstop date. We noted the report.

Internal Audit Interim Report

4. The findings of six internal audit reviews that had been completed and an update on implementation of agreed actions on previously reported internal audits undertaken were presented to us by the Senior Auditor. Of the six completed reviews, two had been given an assurance rating as 'substantial', two 'adequate' and two 'limited'. We asked a number of questions, particularly on fuel management and CCTV, that had been given a limited assurance rating and subsequently noted the report.

Governance Committee Effectiveness

5. The Head of Audit and Risk presented a report that evaluated the committee's compliance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) guidance. We were pleased that all actions identified in the last assessment had been addressed and that the committee operated in line with best practice guidance. We encouraged further training for committee members to maintain its high standards and highlighted the benefits of consistent membership of the committee. We noted the report.

Annual Governance Statement: Management Actions Update

6. The Head of Legal and Procurement presented us with a progress update on management actions agreed and included within the Annual Governance Statement. We asked a number of questions and noted the report.

Recommendations

To note the report.

Councillor Alan Platt

Chair of the Governance Committee

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