

14 January 2010

Dear Councillor

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - MONDAY, 18TH JANUARY 2010

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at the above meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

Agenda No Item

7. **Crime and Disorder Scrutiny (Pages 21 - 42)**

To consider and receive the enclosed report of the Director of People and Places.

a) **Exclusion of the Public and Press**

To consider the exclusion of the press and public for the following items of business on the ground that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

8. **Performance of Key Partnerships (Pages 43 - 44)**

To consider and receive the enclosed report of the Director of Transformation.

12. **Overview and Scrutiny Inquiries - Highways issues (Pages 45 - 54)**

This item has been accepted by the Chair as urgent to enable the report to be considered by the Executive Cabinet in February and therefore negotiations to commence with Lancashire County Council as soon as possible on the recommendations.

1. To consider and receive the enclosed report of the Highways issues task and finish group.
2. To delegate power to the Chair of the Task and Finish Group Councillor Mike Devaney to make any slight amendments to the report

Yours sincerely



Donna Hall
Chief Executive

Ruth Rimmington
Democratic and Member Services Officer
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Distribution

1. Agenda and reports to all Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Councillor Dennis Edgerley (Chair), Councillor Alan Cullens (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Nora Ball, Mike Devaney, Marie Gray, Harold Heaton, Adrian Lowe, Rosie Russell, Edward Smith, Iris Smith, Joyce Snape and Peter Wilson for attendance.

This information can be made available to you in larger print or on audio tape, or translated into your own language. Please telephone 01257 515118 to access this service.

આ માહિતીનો અનુવાદ આપની પોતાની ભાષામાં કરી શકાય છે. આ સેવા સરળતાથી મેળવવા માટે કૃપા કરી, આ નંબર પર ફોન કરો: 01257 515822

ان معلومات کا ترجمہ آپکی اپنی زبان میں بھی کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ یہ خدمت استعمال کرنے کیلئے براہ مہربانی اس نمبر پر ٹیلیفون

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Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of People and Places	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	18 January 2010

CRIME AND DISORDER SCRUTINY

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To outline options to the Committee for the future scrutiny of crime and disorder and receive information requested at the last meeting.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- To recommend that:
 - Training on the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and crime and disorder issues be delivered via several Member Learning sessions, including topics like:
 - alcohol misuse,
 - domestic violence,
 - anti-social behaviour.
 - To investigate the provision of joint training with South Ribble Council Members.
 - Members views are requested on the potential for future scrutiny of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership jointly with South Ribble Council.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Put Chorley at the heart of regional economic development in the Central Lancashire sub-region		Develop local solutions to climate change.	
Improving equality of opportunity and life chances		Develop the Character and feel of Chorley as a good place to live	√
Involving people in their communities		Ensure Chorley Borough Council is a performing organization	

BACKGROUND

- The Police and Justice Act 2006, as amended by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, requires every local authority to have a crime and disorder committee with the power to scrutinise the arrangement for preparing and implementing the crime and disorder strategy.
- The committee must also have the power to scrutinise local crime and disorder matters. This Council decided in July 2009 that the function of scrutiny crime and disorder matters would be undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the first meeting to scrutinise the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership took place on 1 December 2009.



6. At that meeting which provided information on the Safer Chorley and South Ribble Partnership the Committee requested a report outlining options for the future scrutiny of crime and disorder.

TRAINING

7. A key element of this new area for scrutiny is the provision of information about the work of the partnership. This could usefully be provided to all Members, (not just Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members), via Member Learning sessions.
8. Three sessions are proposed for the Member Learning programme in 2010:
 - a) alcohol misuse,
 - b) domestic violence,
 - c) anti-social behaviour.
9. An additional option to undertake training jointly with South Ribble Council Members. This would be more efficient use of partnership officer time and would start to build relationships with South Ribble scrutiny members.

JOINT SCRUTINY

10. There are benefits to undertaking scrutiny of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership jointly with South Ribble. These include more efficient use of officer and partner time, sharing of ideas and solutions and the reduction in risk of conflicting recommendations.
11. A protocol would have to be agreed to ensure the effectiveness of the process. If the Committee agree in principle, officers will draft a protocol to be presented to a future meeting.
12. Members views are requested on undertaking joint scrutiny.

INFORMATION REQUESTED AT THE LAST MEETING

13. Information requested at the last meeting which has been appended to this report and includes the Sanctuary scheme, Families First and a performance update.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

14. There are no implications in the following areas:

Finance		Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal		No significant implications in this area	√

JAMIE CARSON
DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE AND PLACES

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Ruth Rimmington	5118	18 December 2009	CrimeDisorderScrutiny

Sanctuary Scheme

A scheme for victims of Domestic Abuse and repeat domestic burglary, providing security measures for the home.

CHORLEY AND SOUTH RIBBLE SANCTUARY SCHEME....Another option.

What is Sanctuary Scheme

Many people live in fear in their own homes. Survivors of domestic Violence and other violent crimes often have to leave their homes as a result of the abuse or burglary that has happened or the threat of repeat incidents.

Chorley and South Ribble Sanctuary scheme aims to offer another option to those who otherwise would have to move house and leave everything and everyone behind at a time when they need their support networks the most.

The Sanctuary Scheme aims to help survivors of domestic violence and those at risk of repeated domestic burglary to remain in their own homes and feel safe. This is done by providing additional security to their property. There are three levels of Sanctuary which can be installed depending on the level of risk faced. These can range from installing panic alarms and securing ground floor windows and doors to the installation of a 'Sanctuary room'.

Each Sanctuary will be based on individuals needs.

Who can apply to the Scheme?

To be eligible to apply to the Sanctuary Scheme, you must:

- be a survivor of domestic violence or be a victim of repeat domestic burglary
- live within the Chorley and South Ribble area
- Have rights to occupy your property. The scheme is open to people who own their own property and to people who rent their property. However, in some cases, we do need to ask the landlord's permission for work to go ahead.

Sanctuary is not an emergency measure and if the client is at risk during the process then temporary alternative accommodation should be sought whilst Sanctuary measures are put in place.

The primary aim of the Sanctuary scheme is to increase options available to victims of domestic violence and domestic burglary and is not suitable when the perpetrator lives within the property.

How do I refer someone onto the scheme?

All referrals should be made directly to the Sanctuary scheme co-coordinator. Referrals are accepted from any agencies and survivors can also refer themselves to the scheme.

[A referral form to be completed on-line](#) or over the phone with the Sanctuary co-ordinator (07824597234).

What happens next

If the applicant meets the criteria, they will then be contacted by a representative of the Sanctuary team who will make an appointment to meet with them. During the appointment the worker will ask for more detailed information about the applicant, and the history of the case. This information is used to make an assessment as to whether or not a Sanctuary intervention can offer a satisfactory level of protection.

At the appointment the client will need to sign a consent sheet allowing the scheme to contact other agencies in relation to their security.

If the assessment shows that the scheme is not suitable then the applicant and referring agency will be notified.

If the applicant is accepted onto the scheme, an appointment is then made for their property to be assessed by the Sanctuary plus team.

In addition to the security measures each Sanctuary household will be advised on fire safety measures and personal safety planning. Both practical and emotional support will also be available through domestic violence services, floating support workers and victim support, the most appropriate of which will be contacted by the scheme on the applicants' behalf.

Please note

The scheme will monitor the effectiveness of its interventions quarterly.

Lifeline equipment will be removed if it is assessed that it is no longer required, however other works done will be left once installed. Sanctuary will be only be fitted to a property once.

Sanctuary will only be installed at a property once the scheme has confirmation that the applicant has the right to occupy that address and has permission from the owner of that property.

All Sanctuary properties will be flagged with the emergency services as 'at risk'.

Please note if Sanctuary has been installed into a property the scheme cannot guarantee the safety of the household.

Sanctuary should always be the choice of the client; referrals will not be accepted if the client is unsure.

Families First - Chorley

Number of Children	Date Ref	Open * Closed =	Reason for referral							
			H O U S I N G	E D U C A T I O N	H E A L T H	C R I M I N A L /ASB	F I N A N C E	P A R E N T I N G	DV	D R U G / A L C O H O L
1	26.06.09	= Closed due to Children's integrated services involvement	+	+		+		+		+
2	18.09.09	= Closed due to non engagement				+		+		
2		= Closed due to non engagement						+		
4	18.09.09	*	+					+	+	+
4	17.08.09	Closed due to successful outcomes	+			+		+		+
3		= Children's integrated services involvement required	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	

September 2009

Families First - Chorley

1	28.09.09	Closed and referred to Adult Mental Health Team	+		+	+	+			+	
					Reason for referral						
Date Ref	Open * Closed =	H O U S I N G	E D U C A T I O N	H E A L T H	C R I M I N A L / A S B	F I N A N C E	P A R E N T I N G	D V	D R U G / A L C O H O L		
15.11.09	*	+	+	+	+	+	+	+			
18.02.09	Closed due to successful outcomes		+		+						
15.09.09	*	+		+	+	+	+	+			
22.04.09	*	+	+		+	+	+		+		

September 2009

Families First - Chorley

Number of Children	Date Ref	Open * Closed =	Reason for referral							
			H	E	H	C/ASB	F	P	DV	D/A
2	20.05.09	= Closed due to non engagement	+			+			+	
2	27.07.09	= Closed due to non engagement	+			+			+	+
3	25.06.09	= Closed due to Children's integrated services involvement								
2	17.08.09	*	+	+	+			+	+	
3	15.11.09	*		+	+				+	
5	27.08.09	*	+			+			+	
4		= Closed due to Children's integrated services involvement	+	+	+	+		+	+	+
1	18.05.09	= Closed due to Children's integrated services involvement		+	+	+		+	+	+

September 2009

Families First - Chorley

Number of Children	Date Ref	Open * Closed =	Reason for referral								
			H O U S I N G	E D U C A T I O N	H E A L T H	C R I M I N A L / A S B	F I N A N C E	P A R E N T I N G	D V	D R U G / A L C O H O L	
2	16.08.09	= Closed due to non engagement	+						+		
1	15.12.09	*		+		+			+	+	
2	27.08.09	*		+		+					
2	24.08.09	= Closed due to non engagement	+			+			+		+
1	15.08.09	= Closed due to Children's integrated services Involvement									
4	17.07.09	Family Moved to Oldham	+					+			
2	18.09.09	= Closed due to Children's integrated services Involvement	+			+		+	+		+

September 2009

Families First - Chorley

Number of Children	Date Ref	Open * Closed =	Reason for referral								
			H O U S I N G	E D U C A T I O N	H E A L T H	C R I M I N A L /ASB	F I N A N C E	P A R E N T I N G	DV	D R U G / Alcohol	
1	18.10.09	Signposted to Key housing	+								
1	17.06.09	Closed due to successful outcomes		+		+			+		+
1	30.07.09	*	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
1		= Closed referral made to Children's integrated services		+		+			+		+
1	21.04.09	Closed = Due to successful outcomes		+					+		
2	18.07.09	= Closed Family moved to Oldham	+			+			+		
2	15.06.09	*		+		+			+		+

September 2009

Families First - Chorley

Number of Children	Date Ref	Open * Closed =	Reason for referral							
			H O U S I N G	E D U C A T I O N	H E A L T H	C R I M I N A L / A S B	F I N A N C E	P A R E N T I N G	D V	D R U G / A l c o h o l
1		Referred for SF programme only								
4		Closed = Referral made to Children's integrated services	+	+	+	+	+	+		+
		= Refused to engage				+				
4	06.05.09	*	+			+	+	+	+	+
2	17.09.09	*		+				+		
4	18.06.09	Closed = Referred to Children's integrated services	+	+	+	+	+	+		+
1	27.04.09	Closed = Children's integrated services already involved	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

September 2009

Families First - Chorley

SUMMARY

Cases Closed	12
Refused support	8
Other	4
Successfully Closed	4
Current Live Cases	14
Total Families who have received support to date	42

September 2009

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SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES – FAMILIES FIRST

Number of Children	Date Ref	Open * Closed =	Reason for referral							
			H O U S I N G	E D U C A T I O N	H E A L T H	C R I M I N A L /ASB	F I N A N C E	P A R E N T I N G	DV	D R U G / A L C O H O L
4	17.08.09	Closed due to successful outcomes	+			+		+		+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family referred to DISC for extra Family Support • Housing reported a big improvement had been made in the household – no noise nuisance • Father referred to Drug/Alcohol services for support with his alcohol misuse. 										
1	18.02.09	Closed due to successful outcomes		+		+				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education provision now in place for YP • Engaging with YPS with appropriate activities • No further reports of ASB 										

SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES – FAMILIES FIRST

Number of Children	Date Ref	Open * Closed =	Reason for referral								
			H O U S I N G	E D U C A T I O N	H E A L T H	C R I M I N A L /ASB	F I N A N C E	P A R E N T I N G	DV	D R U G / A L C O H O L	
1	17.06.09	Closed due to successful outcomes		+		+			+		+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education / college provision now in place • ASB / Criminal activity addressed and supervision order successfully completed/ no further complaints. • Alcohol/Drug misuse addressed with support from Addaction • 1:1 Parenting support from Lancashire Parenting Service • Full engagement with YPS – appropriate activities 											
1	21.04.09	Closed = Due to successful outcomes		+					+		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back in fulltime education • Parenting issues addressed with Families First support 											

By virtue of paragraph(s) 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Transformation	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	18 January 2010

SCRUTINY OF KEY PARTNERSHIPS

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To discuss how in the future the Committee would like to scrutinise the performance of key partnerships and change the current arrangements.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- That the Committee identify the criteria to be used for future partnership scrutiny.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Put Chorley at the heart of regional economic development in the Central Lancashire sub-region		Develop local solutions to climate change.	
Improving equality of opportunity and life chances		Develop the Character and feel of Chorley as a good place to live	
Involving people in their communities		Ensure Chorley Borough Council is a performing organization	√

BACKGROUND

- At the meeting on 9 November 2009 Members received a copy of the performance of Key Partnerships - 2008/09 Year End Progress report as one of the topics raised at the "review of the year" event in March was outsourcing and the effectiveness of subcontractors.

CURRENT REPORT HEADINGS

- The current report sets out
 - The performance of the Council's key partnerships against targets set for the current year;
 - An assessment of key partners financial strength and stability;
 - The outcome of the first round of equality monitoring as part of the key partnerships contract management process.
 - An update to the partnership working framework to more clearly capture the requirement regarding partner's business continuity arrangements.
- In addition to this Executive Cabinet agreed to try to include alternative solutions to monitor and reassess financial strength of key partners using recent, relevant information as opposed to last published financial accounts.

POTENTIAL CHANGES

7. The Committee essentially has a number of choices which include:

- Adding additional issues such as, customer satisfaction and performance indicator information which could be included within this report?
- Leaving the reporting as it is but then focusing in more details on key partnerships and/or contacts. This is similar to some of the task and finish work done on for instance Chorley Community Housing or the Local Strategic Partnership and the current review of the Highways function.
- Focusing on particular key aspects of certain partnerships / contracts rather than taking a holistic approach, for instance the missed bins element of the waste contact or the contribution of a partner to a particular key corporate target say Active Nation and their work on encouraging participation.

8. There are clearly a number of ways in which the scrutiny approach could be amended. The starting point however should be for the Committee to determine their key objectives from the scrutiny of partnerships/contacts and then to create a programme of work to deliver those objectives which might include any one of or a combination of the approaches discussed above.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

9. The report has no consequential implications at this time as the points are for discussion only.

Finance		Customer Services	√
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	√
Legal		No significant implications in this area	

GARY HALL
DIRECTOR OF TRANSFORMATION

Background Papers			
Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
Key Partnerships - 2008/09 Year End Progress report	25 June 2009	http://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/Published/C00000117/M00002115/A100016926/\$KeyPartnershipsnolib.docA.ps.pdf	www.chorley.gov.uk

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Gary Hall / Ruth Rimmington	515480 / 515118	23 December 2009	ScrutinyOfKeyPartnerships

Highways

Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

In March 2009 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee undertook a “review of the year event”, part of which was suggestions for topics to scrutinise the following municipal year. The topic of Highways was selected as one of the top two issues and the Task and Finish Group was set up in June 2009.

The desired outcomes of the inquiry were to improve the delivery of the highways service delivered by Lancashire County Council and Chorley Council for the residents of Chorley. This could be achieved through delivering the service more efficiently and the enhancement of communication and performance monitoring between Lancashire County Council, Chorley Council, Lancashire Locals and utility companies.

The basis of the relationship between Chorley Council and Lancashire County Council is set out in the Streetscene Services Agreement. This may shortly be superseded by a Public Realm Agreement.

There was a lot to consider within a short space of time and there was overlap between this inquiry and the ongoing Town Centre inquiry.

Objectives

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Provision of information | 2. Communication cycles |
| 3. Consulting and influencing | 4. Anomalies |

Group Membership

Councillor Michael Devaney (Chair)	Councillor Alan Cullens (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Ken Ball	Councillor Nora Ball
Councillor Doreen Dickinson	Councillor Roy Lees
Councillor Adrian Lowe	Councillor Marion Lowe
Councillor June Molyneaux	

Officer Support

Martin Walls (Head of Streetscene Services)
Ruth Rimmington (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

Meetings

The meeting papers of the Group can be found on the Council’s website:
www.chorley.gov.uk/scrutiny

Contribution of Evidence

The Group would like to thank all those who have provided evidence and contributed to the Inquiry.

Recommendations	Financial Implications
<u>Objective 1: Provision of information</u>	
<u>Lancashire County Council:</u>	
1. To set in place a formal information sharing system between Councillors and officers on a strategic level, for example, changes to gritting routes and policy changes, utilising email and other communication tools.	Officer time.
2. To use “intheknow” to notify Members of practical information, such as, roadworks, highways and neighbourhoods information.	Officer time.
3. To identify and introduce meaningful performance indicators to enable both County and District officers and Members to scrutinise the performance of the Streetscene Services Agreement. This is subject to the development of the Public Realm Strategy that could supersede the Streetscene Services Agreement.	Officer time.
4. To present an update report to the relevant County Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee every six months on the inquiry recommendations to ensure robust performance monitoring.	Officer time.
5. That key information relating to inspections frequencies, highway intervention levels and key performance indicators are extracted from the Highway Maintenance Plan and provided in a simpler format to Members and Key Officers.	Officer time.
<u>Chorley:</u>	
6. To make available to Members current street cleaning schedules and the maintenance schedule for the car parks.	Officer time.
7. To utilise intheknow to cascade highways and Neighbourhoods information to Members.	Officer time.
<u>Objective 2: Communication cycles</u>	
<u>Lancashire County Council:</u>	
8. To provide a separate reporting mechanism for officers and Councillors rather than the current single telephone number.	To be confirmed.
9. To communicate with the public more, for example, by improving information on the Lancashire County Council website with the detail of the highways maintenance plan.	Officer time.
10. To reduce avoidable contact with the contact centre (NI14) by keeping customers updated, with text messaging, email alerts or use of postcards for “work in progress” or “work completed”.	To be confirmed.
11. To implement an information sticker to be used on grit bins, street lights and generally which displays contact telephone numbers and location information to enable easier fault reporting.	To be confirmed.
<u>United Utilities</u>	
12. To reduce avoidable contact (NI14) by keeping customers updated, with text messaging, email alerts or use of postcards for “work in progress” or “work completed”.	To be confirmed.

Recommendations	Financial Implications
Objective 3: Consulting and influencing	
<u>Lancashire County Council:</u>	
13. To introduce meetings between the county (Environment) and district (Neighbourhoods) portfolio holders at appropriate times, perhaps April and October, and to report back relevant information to Members via intheknow.	Officer time.
14. To introduce regular meetings between Lancashire County Council (Environment Directorate) and Chorley Council (People and Places Directorate) officers.	Officer time.
15. To streamline existing meeting arrangements (including co-ordination meetings with utility companies and highways schemes) to make them more effective and ensure the correct people are in attendance and the information from meetings is cascaded down.	Officer time.
16. Officers to enter into negotiations with respect to Chorley delivering some enforcement functions, such as advertising boards, highway encroachment and overhanging vegetation.	To be confirmed.
<u>Chorley Council</u>	
17. To include performance monitoring information on enforcement activities on the quarterly report presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee and forwarded to LCC as the Highway Authority.	Officer time.
18. To enter into negotiations with Lancashire County Council to provide certain enforcement services such as advertising boards, highway encroachment and overhanging vegetation and seek a level of devolved budget to support this function.	To be confirmed.
19. To further develop Chorley's Pavement Café Policy to ensure it is fit for purpose and serves the needs of the traders and other town centre users and has an element of clear regulation built into to prevent abuse.	Officer time.
Objective 4: Anomalies	
<u>Lancashire County Council:</u>	
20. To enter into an agreement whereby the County has responsibility for maintaining roads and pavements and Chorley Council has responsibility for grass verges, weed control, tree and shrub maintenance, leaf sweeping and enforcing overhanging vegetation.	To be confirmed.
21. The Lancashire County Council call out officer to notify, by the most appropriate means, Members and the Head of Streetscene Services when gritting wagons are dispatched.	Officer time.
22. <i>To formalise arrangements and resources to enable Chorley Council to deliver gritting services in an agreed town centre area on behalf of Lancashire County Council.</i>	<i>To be confirmed.</i>
23. To investigate and resolve the anomaly of gully cleaning just one side of the road rather than both sides.	Officer time.
<u>Chorley:</u>	
24. To enter into an agreement whereby the County has responsibility for maintaining roads and pavements and Chorley Council has responsibility for grass verges, weed control, tree and shrub maintenance, leaf sweeping and enforcing overhanging vegetation.	Within existing budgetary provision.
25. The Head of Streetscene Services to set in motion the gritting of Chorley car parks on receipt of the above notification.	Officer time.
26. <i>To formalise arrangements and resources to enable Chorley Council to deliver gritting services in an agreed town centre area on behalf of Lancashire County Council.</i>	<i>To be confirmed.</i>

2. METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

Evidence

The Group received and considered several reports and documents, these included:

1. Streetscene Services agreement.
2. Lancashire County Council and Chorley Council current responsibilities.
3. The remit of the Lancashire Local Chorley Committee.
4. Extract showing an overview of the work of the Environment Directorate from Lancashire County Council Sustainable Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 15 July 2009.
5. Customer Contact information from Lancashire County Council and Chorley Council.
6. Highways maintenance plan.
7. Public Realm Integration Project report considered by the Lancashire County Council Executive Cabinet on 8 October 2009.

During the course of the inquiry the Group considered highways scrutiny inquiries undertaken by other Lancashire Authorities.

1. Highways trees and verges undertaken by Lancashire County Council.
2. Making inroads: the way ahead - a scrutiny review into the condition of roads & pavements undertaken by South Ribble Borough Council.
3. Scrutiny review of value for money of the residual highways agreement with Lancashire County Council undertaken by Pendle Borough Council.
4. The issues that have arisen following the termination of the Lancashire Highways Partnership undertaken by Hyndburn Borough Council.
5. Highways undertaken by Rossendale Borough Council.

Witnesses

Jo Turton (Executive Director for the Environment, Lancashire County Council).

Rick Hayton (Traffic and Safety Network Manager, Lancashire County Council).

Sarah Palmer (District Partnership Officer, Lancashire County Council).

Councillor Eric Bell (Executive Member (Neighbourhoods), Chorley Council).

Ishbel Murray (Corporate Director (Neighbourhoods), Chorley Council).

3. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Objective 1: Provision of information

Members discussed the need for improved communication between Chorley and Lancashire County Council. On a practical level this included the notification of roadworks in the area and officer contacts and on a strategic level the highways maintenance plan, gritting routes and grit bins. A review had been undertaken of grit bins in Chorley to ensure they were in the ideal locations and were used. A key issue was when highway defects were noted the criterion for repair etc and the expected timelines for repair.

When considering the Streetscene Service Agreement the lack of performance indicators in respect of most of the functions made an assessment of performance difficult. In addition, the current split where Lancashire County Council and Chorley Council both attend to verges. These thoughts were echoed by an inquiry undertaken by Pendle Council. These points were discussed with Jo Turton.

The quality and timescales of Lancashire County Council in commenting on planning applications was raised as an issue. The Corporate Director (Business) has reviewed this with the Executive Director for the Environment at Lancashire County Council and a revised code has been introduced. Pendle Council expressed similar concerns.

Recommendations:

Lancashire County Council:

1. To set in place a formal information sharing system between Councillors and officers on a strategic level, for example, changes to gritting routes and policy changes, utilising email and other communication tools.
2. To use "intheknow" to notify Members of practical information, such as, roadworks, highways and neighbourhoods information.
3. To identify and introduce meaningful performance indicators to enable both County and District officers and Members to scrutinise the performance of the Streetscene Services Agreement. This is subject to the development of the Public Realm Strategy that could supersede the Streetscene Services Agreement.
4. To present an update report to the relevant County Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee every six months on the inquiry recommendations to ensure robust performance monitoring.
5. That key information relating to inspections frequencies, highway intervention levels and key performance indicators are extracted from the Highway Maintenance Plan and provided in a simpler format to Members and Key Officers.

Chorley:

6. To make available to Members current street cleaning schedules and the maintenance schedule for the car parks.
7. To utilise intheknow to cascade highways and Neighbourhoods information to Members.

Objective 2: Communication cycles

Members agreed that the perception and communication to the public is a key issue for consideration. South Ribble Council shared this view.

All Councillors and members of the public should be encouraged to use the Lancashire County Council contact centre to register highways faults to enable central collation of information and monitoring of performance.

When considering customer enquiries in July 2009 highways repeat calls are the second highest with the highest being flooding on the highways. Street lighting and potholes followed although it was noted that during the winter months 'gritting' joins the top ten. Year to date the most enquires Lancashire County Council have received were regarding 'street lighting'.

Members identified several issues with the current reporting arrangements in discussion with Jo Turton. There is no escalation available to Members or officers through the Lancashire County Council call centre. No feedback arrangements are offered routinely – this leaves the customer with no notification when the job has been completed or if the defect is not serious enough to warrant a repair. This results in avoidable contact and frustration as the customer has to call the contact centre for a progress report.

This is a particular problem where there is a street light problem. The key issue is that a standard repair may only take 72 hours, however when the (DNO) United Utilities are involved it may take considerably longer. South Ribble also highlighted this in their review, as there is no feedback loop to explain the delay that has a negative impact on reputation

Members had used the online fault reporting facility and found this fit for purpose.

Recommendations:Lancashire County Council:

8. To provide a separate reporting mechanism for officers and Councillors rather than the current single telephone number.
9. To communicate with the public more, for example, by improving information on the Lancashire County Council website with the detail of the highways maintenance plan.
10. To reduce avoidable contact with the contact centre (NI14) by keeping customers updated, with text messaging, email alerts or use of postcards for “work in progress” or “work completed”.
11. To implement an information sticker to be used on grit bins, street lights and generally which displays contact telephone numbers and location information to enable easier fault reporting.

United Utilities

12. To reduce avoidable contact (NI14) by keeping customers updated, with text messaging, email alerts or use of postcards for “work in progress” or “work completed”.

Objective 3: Consulting and influencing

The introduction of quarterly meetings between the county and district portfolio holders and also between Lancashire County Council and Chorley Council officers will enhance two-tier working. This could include planned maintenance, emergency works and consultation on decisions about highways trees. This current arrangement exists in terms of the New Roads and Street Works Act consultation meetings so there is a model that could be used to cover other areas.

This issue of information being cascaded with Police, in particular between meetings was considered, between PACT, road safety and other meetings. There was liaison with the Police, with regular road safety liaison meetings, although feedback could be improved. A further discussion would be needed on how PACT and Lancashire Locals could work together, for example, a regular bulletin could be produced.

Members would like a formal consultation mechanism with Borough Council Ward Members as well as County Councillors on proposed schemes to be undertaken and feedback on completion. Rossendale supported this proposal.

A major source of complaints to Members has been vegetation that encroaches onto footpaths, street lights and signage and advertising boards on pavements. It was felt that a more robust approach was required to enforcement. In particular, health and safety issues arising from vegetation that encroaches onto footpaths, street lights and signage and advertising boards on pavements. This could be incorporated into the duties of Neighbourhood Officers, enabling them to provide a wrap around service to the residents of Chorley. The group felt strongly that discussions take place to ensure that enforcement is consistent, positive and effective. Currently, the responsibility for some enforcement matters rests with Lancashire County Council. It would be better served if this was delivered by Chorley officers.

Of major concern is the issue of market stalls and pavement cafés encroaching. As this is currently a District function there is no reason for this and a more robust approach needs to be taken.

Discussions were undertaken as to whether Chorley Council should or could undertake minor repairs on roads and pavements and it was agreed this would not be appropriate at this time.

Recommendations:Lancashire County Council:

13. To introduce meetings between the county (Environment) and district (Neighbourhoods) portfolio holders at appropriate times, perhaps April and October, and to report back relevant information to Members via intheknow.
14. To introduce regular meetings between Lancashire County Council (Environment Directorate) and Chorley Council (People and Places Directorate) officers.
15. To streamline existing meeting arrangements (including co-ordination meetings with utility companies and highways schemes) to make them more effective and ensure the correct people are in attendance and the information from meetings is cascaded down.
16. Officers to enter into negotiations with Lancashire County Council with respect to Chorley delivering some enforcement functions, such as advertising boards, highway encroachment and overhanging vegetation.

Chorley Council

17. To include performance monitoring information on enforcement activities on the quarterly report presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee and forwarded to LCC as the Highway Authority.
18. To enter into negotiations with Lancashire County Council to provide certain enforcement services such as advertising boards, highway encroachment and overhanging vegetation and seek a level of devolved budget to support this function.
19. To further develop Chorley's Pavement Café Policy to ensure it is fit for purpose and serves the needs of the traders and other town centre users and has an element of clear regulation built into to prevent abuse.

Objective 4: Anomalies

Currently Lancashire County Council, Districts and Parish Councils cut grass in certain areas. Many districts, including Pendle Council and South Ribble Council, believe that urban grass cutting standards should be set locally. In fact, a pilot project between Lancashire County Council and South Ribble Council is underway to enhance public service delivery of streetscene related functions. This involves the County having responsibility for maintaining roads and pavements and the District Council having responsibility for the grass cutting.

Chorley would like to undertake a similar pilot. This would ensure that tasks be carried out in a logical order, for example, litter picking before grass cutting.

Gritting

*The Priority Road Network of 2350 km (34% of the Lancashire total highway network) is treated from 11 depots using 48 front line gritters with over 150 trained drivers & 40 supervisors spreading, on average, 18,000 tonnes of salt per season. During the inclement weather experience over Christmas 2009 Lancashire County Council were spending £100,000 a day to run the winter maintenance programme. **

Other anomalies do need to be considered by Lancashire County Council, for example, gully cleaning both sides of the same road rather than just one.

Recommendations:Lancashire County Council:

20. To enter into an agreement whereby the County has responsibility for maintaining roads and pavements and Chorley Council has responsibility for grass verges, weed control, tree and shrub maintenance, leaf sweeping and enforcing overhanging vegetation.
21. The Lancashire County Council call out officer to notify, by the most appropriate means, Members and the Head of Streetscene Services when gritting wagons are dispatched.
22. *To formalise arrangements and resources to enable Chorley Council to deliver gritting services in an agreed town centre area on behalf of Lancashire County Council. **
23. To investigate and resolve the anomaly of gully cleaning just one side of the road rather than both sides.

Chorley:

24. To enter into an agreement whereby the County has responsibility for maintaining roads and pavements and Chorley Council has responsibility for grass verges, weed control, tree and shrub maintenance, leaf sweeping and enforcing overhanging vegetation.
25. The Head of Streetscene Services to set in motion the gritting of Chorley car parks on receipt of the above notification.
26. *To formalise arrangements and resources to enable Chorley Council to deliver gritting services in an agreed town centre area on behalf of Lancashire County Council. **

** The points in italic text have been added following a meeting with the Chair and officers and are subject to agreement by the other members of the task and finish group.*

Chorley Council



2008-2009
*Transforming Services:
Citizen Engagement
and Empowerment*



2009-2010
Cohesive and resilient communities



2009-2010
Better outcomes for people and places