

Council

Tuesday, 19th September 2023, 6.30 pm
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Chorley and [YouTube](#)

Agenda

Apologies

1 Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 18 July 2023 of Council

(Pages 5 - 12)

2 Declarations of Any Interests

Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any pecuniary interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda.

If you have a pecuniary interest you must withdraw from the meeting. Normally you should leave the room before the business starts to be discussed. You do, however, have the same right to speak as a member of the public and may remain in the room to enable you to exercise that right and then leave immediately. In either case you must not seek to improperly influence a decision on the matter.

3 Mayoral Announcements

4 Public Questions

Members of the public who have requested the opportunity to ask question(s) on any item(s) on the agenda will have three minutes to put their question(s) to the relevant Councillor. Members of the public will be allowed to ask one short supplementary question.

[To view the procedure for public questions/ speaking click here and scroll to page 119](#)

5 Executive Cabinet

(To Follow)

To consider a general report of the Executive Cabinet held on 13 September.

6 Governance Committee

(Pages 13 - 18)

To consider a general report of the Governance Committee held on 2 August.

7 Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Task and Finish Groups

(Pages 19 - 24)

To receive and consider the general report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 1 August, the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel held on 27 July and Task Group update.

8	Scrutiny Reporting Back - Chorley Council's Annual Report on Overview and Scrutiny 2022/23	(Pages 25 - 34)
	To receive and consider the report of the Director of Governance.	
9	Committee appointments	
	To appoint to the following vacant seats	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overview and Scrutiny Committee• Planning Committee• Licensing and Public Safety Committee• Local Plan Working Group	
10	Polling station relocation	(Pages 35 - 38)
	To receive and consider the report of the Chief Executive and Returning Officer.	
11	Members Allowances - Appointment of Independent Remuneration Panel	(Pages 39 - 42)
	To receive and consider the report of the Director of Governance.	
12	Change of Working Group Name and Updated Terms of Reference	(Pages 43 - 46)
	To receive and consider the report of the Director of Governance.	
13	Leisure Company Additional Support	(Pages 47 - 52)
	To receive and consider the report of the Director of Finance.	
14	Questions Asked under Council Procedure Rule 8 (if any)	
15	To consider the Notices of Motion (if any) given in accordance with Council procedure Rule 10	
16	To consider petitions (if any) presented in accordance with Council procedure Rule 23	

17 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 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act.

By Virtue of Paragraph 3: Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)
Condition:

Information is not exempt if it is required to be registered under-

The Companies Act 1985

The Friendly Societies Act 1974

The Friendly Societies Act 1992

The Industrial and Provident Societies Acts 1965 to 1978

The Building Societies Act 1986 (recorded in the public file of any building society, within the meaning of the Act)

The Charities Act 1993

Information is exempt to the extent that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Information is not exempt if it relates to proposed development for which the local planning authority may grant itself planning permission pursuant to Regulation 3 of the Town & Country Planning General Regulations 1992(a).

18 Plan Making

To receive and consider the report of the Chief Executive.

19 Any urgent business previously agreed with the Mayor

(To Follow)

Chris Sinnott
Chief Executive

Electronic agendas sent to Members of the Council.

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Minutes of Council

Meeting date Tuesday, 18 July 2023

Committee Members present: Councillor Tommy Gray (Mayor), Councillor Gordon France (Deputy Mayor) and Councillors Sarah Ainsworth, Aaron Beaver, Julia Berry, Alistair Bradley, Michelle Brown, Mark Clifford, Alan Cullens, Karen Derbyshire, Margaret France, Danny Gee, Christine Heydon, Alex Hilton, Terry Howarth, Hasina Khan, Samir Khan, Zara Khan, Michelle Le Marinel, Roy Lees, Adrian Lowe, Matthew Lynch, Samantha Martin, Pauline McGovern, June Molyneaux, Alistair Morwood, Beverley Murray, Alan Platt, Aidy Riggott, Jean Sherwood, Chris Snow, Craige Southern, Kim Snape, Ryan Towers, Jenny Whiffen, Neville Whitham, Alan Whittaker, Joan Williamson and Peter Wilson

Officers: Chris Sinnott (Chief Executive), Chris Moister (Director of Governance/Monitoring Officer), Asim Khan (Director of Customer and Digital), Jennifer Mullin (Director of Communities), Victoria Willett (Director of Change and Delivery), Neil Halton (Principal Management Accountant) and Ruth Rimmington (Democratic Services Team Leader)

Apologies: Councillors Dedrah Moss and Arjun Singh

5 members of the public

A video recording of the public session of this meeting is available to view on [YouTube here](#)

16 Minute's silence

The Mayor invited Members to observe a minute's silence in memory of Councillor Keith Iddon.

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Alan Cullens, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Alistair Bradley and Councillors Alistair Morwood and Craige Southern paid tribute and sent their condolences to the family.

17 Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 16 May 2023 of Council

Resolved (unanimously) that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 16 May 2023 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Mayor.

18 Declarations of Any Interests

Councillor Aidy Riggott declared a personal interest in item 17. Asset Acquisition in Chorley Town Centre, as a Cabinet member at Lancashire County Council.

19 Mayoral Announcements

The Mayor updated members on his fundraising activities and charity events, including a cricket match and nature walk.

20 Public Questions

There were no public questions for consideration.

21 Executive Cabinet

Members considered a general report of the meetings of Executive Cabinet held on 15 June and 13 July.

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley proposed and the Deputy Leader, Councillor Peter Wilson seconded, and it was **Resolved (unanimously) that the report be noted.**

22 Governance Committee

Members considered a general report of the Governance Committee meeting held on 24 June.

The Chair of the Governance Committee, Councillor Alan Platt proposed the report and the Vice Chair of Governance Committee, Councillor Mark Clifford seconded, and it was **Resolved (unanimously) that the report be noted.**

23 Committee appointments

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Alan Cullens proposed and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Alan Platt seconded, and it was **Resolved (unanimously) that Councillor Aidy Riggott be appointed Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

24 Chorley Council Annual Performance Report 2022/23

On behalf of the Council, the Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley, thanked Vicky Willett, Director of Change and Delivery, for her hard work and commitment to the Council, and wished her all the best in her new role.

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley presented the Council's Annual Report which summarised the council's achievements during 2022/23.

The report detailed performance against each of the council's key priority areas, highlighting successful delivery of key projects. These include:

- Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all
- Clean safe and healthy communities
- A strong local economy

- An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area

Despite the challenging period due to the cost of living crisis and inflation affecting the economy, the Council had continued to deliver against its priorities and provided support to local residents and businesses that have been most impacted.

Looking ahead, challenges for the Council include continuing to support residents and businesses to recover from unprecedented challenges within the economy, including the cost of living crisis and managing the increase demand on services that the Council provides.

The Corporate Strategy for 2023/24 has been fully refreshed with new priorities and action, building on the work undertaken in 2022/23.

The Deputy Leader, Councillor Peter Wilson, thanked officers of the council for their work on projects and their delivery of services for the residents of the Borough.

Councillors Mark Clifford and Jean Sherwood contributed to the debate.

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley proposed and the Deputy Leader, Councillor Peter Wilson seconded, and it was **Resolved (unanimously) that the report be noted.**

25 Chorley UKSPF Programme

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley presented the report of the Director (Change and Delivery).

The report provided members with an overview of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) framework for Chorley Council.

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Alan Cullens, supported the proposals, particularly in rural areas.

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley proposed and the Deputy Leader, Councillor Peter Wilson seconded, and it was **Resolved (unanimously)**

1. **To approve the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Delivery Framework for Chorley, in order to progress delivery of the fund, and to begin commissioning of the programmes within it.**
2. **To accept £4,212,901 of the UKSPF and £400,000 of the Rural Economic Prosperity Fund (REPF) from the UK Government**
3. **To approve a rural capital grants scheme utilising the REPF to enable eligible rural businesses to bid for funds to make capital improvements to their operations.**
4. **To note the allocation of the funds would be administered by the Executive in accordance with the terms of the scheme.**

26 Homes for Ukraine funding

The Executive Member (Homes and Housing), Councillor Terry Howarth presented the report of the Director (Communities).

The report provided a breakdown of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) funding committed to the council to assist with the costs of supporting Ukrainian refugees (also known as guests) and local sponsors under the Homes for Ukraine (HfU) Scheme.

The Executive Member (Homes and Housing), Councillor Terry Howarth proposed and the Executive Member (Early Intervention), Councillor Beverley Murray seconded, and it was **Resolved (unanimously)**

1. **To receive the Ukrainian guest funding allocation of £476,000 and create a budget to allocate the funding.**
2. **To receive further Ukrainian guest grant funding allocations and create an equivalent level of budget to allocate the funding for subsequent financial years.**
3. **To note the funds would allocated by the Executive Member for Homes and Housing in accordance with the requirements of the scheme.**

27 **Questions Asked under Council Procedure Rule 8 (if any)**

No questions were asked under Council Procedure Rule 8.

28 **To consider the Notices of Motion given in accordance with Council procedure Rule 10**

The Mayor noted there were two Notices of Motion for consideration.

Councillor Ryan Towers presented a Motion submitted in accordance with Procedure Rule 10 relating to Local Government Pay. This was seconded by Councillor Kim Snape.

Councillors Michelle Le Marinel, Alan Cullens, Aidy Riggott, Joan Williamson, Karen Derbyshire and Alistair Bradley contributed to the debate.

Councillor Ryan Towers proposed, Councillor Kim Snape seconded, and it was **Resolved (by majority 35:4:0) that the motion be supported.**

Councillor Samantha Martin presented a Motion submitted in accordance with Procedure Rule 10 relating to the closure of rail ticket offices. This was seconded by Councillor Sarah Ainsworth.

Councillors Alan Cullens, Aidy Riggott, Jean Sherwood, Kim Snape and Matthew Lynch contributed to the debate.

Councillor Samantha Martin proposed, Councillor Sarah Ainsworth seconded, and it was **Resolved (unanimously) that the motion be supported.**

29 **Exclusion of the Public and Press**

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley proposed and the Deputy Leader, Councillor Peter Wilson seconded and it was **Resolved (unanimously) that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the disclosure of exempt information**

as defined by paragraph 3 of Part 1 of schedule 12A to the Local Government Act.

30 Grant of a Lease - Offices 33a 34 35 36 37 Strawberry Fields Digital Office Park

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley presented the confidential report of the Chief Executive.

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley proposed and the Deputy Leader, Councillor Peter Wilson seconded, and it was **Resolved (unanimously)**

- 1. To accept the terms and approve the issue of a 12-year lease to Panache Cruises.**
- 2. To grant authority to instruct the Director of Governance to complete the legal formalities.**
- 3. To delegate authority to the Chief Executive and the Executive Member for Resources to agree any subsequent variations to the terms reported.**

31 Grant of a lease - Unit 4b/5 Market Walk Extension, Market Walk

The Deputy Leader, Councillor Peter Wilson presented the confidential report of the Chief Executive.

The Deputy Leader, Councillor Peter Wilson proposed and the Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley seconded, and it was **Resolved (unanimously)**

- 1. To approve the terms and grant authority to issue instructions to the Director of Governance to complete the Lease to the CFH (North West) Limited, subject to:**
 - a) Financial checks on CFH (North West) Limited being undertaken by finance and signed off by the Chief Executive;**
 - b) Parent company guarantee being provided to cover risk of council capital expenditure at lease outset;**
 - c) Net income after incentives equates to £58,000 per annum, in line with comparable properties on Market Walk and occupies a previously vacant unit.**

32 Queens Road Car Park - Enhancement Works

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley presented the confidential report of the Chief Executive.

Members discussed the timescales for completion, the width of spaces, the future installation of Electric Vehicle charging points and considerations around CCTV.

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley proposed and the Deputy Leader, Councillor Peter Wilson seconded, and it was **Resolved (unanimously)**

- 1. To vire a budget of £321,000 from the existing, approved, Public Realm Town Centre capital budget to the Queens Road car park enhancement scheme.**
- 2. To approve the final design as shown in Appendix A.**

33 Asset Acquisition in Chorley Town Centre

Councillor Aidy Riggott declared a personal interest as a Cabinet member at Lancashire County Council.

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley presented the confidential report of the Chief Executive.

In response to a query from the Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Alan Cullens, queried Councillor Bradley confirmed a condition survey had been undertaken and not that the building was not complex in design. Risks associated with the proposals had been considered.

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley proposed and the Deputy Leader, Councillor Peter Wilson seconded, and it was **Resolved (by majority 35:3:1)**

- 1. To approve the transfer of Chorley Bus Station and its associated staffing and operation from Lancashire County Council to Chorley Council.**
- 2. To delegate to the Director of Governance, in consultation with the Executive Member for Resources, the authority to finalise and agree the heads of terms for the transfer.**

34 Relocation of the Bengal Street depot - budget and progress update

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley presented the confidential report of the Chief Executive.

Members debated the proposals, with Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Alan Cullens and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Alan Platt. It was noted that the future plans for the Bengal Street depot would be considered at the Wholly Owned Company working group. The constraints of the former depot at Yarrow were acknowledged.

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley proposed and the Deputy Leader, Councillor Peter Wilson seconded, and it was **Resolved (unanimously)**

- 1. To approve an overall capital budget of £3,750,000 to re-locate the Bengal Street depot to the Common Bank Industrial Estate site.**
- 2. To approve a new revenue budget for the associated borrowing costs of £192k per annum from 2024/25 onwards.**
- 3. To approve the re-location of the Bengal Street depot and Streetscene function to the Common Bank Industrial Estate site.**
- 4. To approve the purchase of the long lease hold interest at Common Bank Industrial Estate site.**
- 5. To note the commencement of HR procedures to consult with employees regarding the change of working location.**
- 6. To note a further report will be brought forward and delegated for the Executive Members attention to review and approve the costs attributed to staff impacted with regards to the relocation of the workplace.**

35 Tatton Gardens - Project Completion Report

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley presented the confidential report of the Chief Executive.

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Alan Cullens, supported the proposals, particularly the medical facility.

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley proposed and the Deputy Leader, Councillor Peter Wilson seconded, and it was **Resolved (unanimously)**

1. **To approve the increase of the capital budget by £980,000 to £17,130,000 covering the contractor's claim and additional fees incurred throughout the negotiation process.**
2. **To delegate authority to the Director of Governance in consultation with the Executive Leader to agree the final construction cost with the contractor within the approved capital budget.**

36 New hospital proposal

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

Mayor

Date

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Governance Committee

1. This report summarises the business undertaken at the Governance Committee meeting held on 2 August 2023.

General Report of the Meeting Held on 2 August 2023

External Audit Progress Report

2. Georgia Jones, Grant Thornton presented the report which provided an update on progress in delivering their responsibilities as the Council's External Auditor.
3. We noted the updates on the Financial Statements Audit, Value for Money (VfM) work and other areas including certification of claims and returns, meetings and events.
4. The External Auditors had not received the financial statements from the council but understood that these were being worked on, once received Grant Thornton would commence the audit for 22/23. The Value for Money work for 2022/23 would commence following receipt of the accounts too and the aim is to report back to the Committee in November.
5. The audit plan for 2022/23 had been completed and brought to the Committee previously. The audit findings report, auditors report and auditors annual report is expected to be presented to the Committee in November 2023. We noted the report.

External Audit Annual Report 2021/22

6. Georgia Jones, Grant Thornton presented the External Auditors report for 2021/22 which reported on the Value for Money work undertaken and provided key recommendations. The three areas considered were financial sustainability, governance and improving economy, efficiency, and effectiveness.
7. Following consideration of the criteria, no significant weaknesses were identified with regards to financial sustainability, but improvement recommendations were made. Significant weaknesses were identified in relation to governance and improving economy, efficiency, and effectiveness. We were reminded that this was a retrospective analysis in relation to the 2021/22 audit and therefore, a lot of the issues had already been addressed and reflected in the detailed Internal Audit Report on procurement, previously considered by Members.
8. We considered the four key recommendations around ICT/digital safeguards, council governance, and procurement. Six improvement recommendations had been made which focused on best practice in relation to finance processes, council governance, conflicts of interest, council management of the case and the commercial services directorate. Senior Management had accepted these recommendations and Grant Thornton considered the management responses to be reasonable and addressed the recommendations raised.

9. Following queries regarding the deadline dates in the recommendations, we were advised that the dates were included as part of the management responses and were considered reasonable in order to deliver the key and improvement recommendations. These would be reviewed both internally and externally.
10. We thanked internal audit for identifying the procurement issues and were advised that both officers and Grant Thornton were satisfied that safeguards were now in place to prevent this happening again, but this would be tested going forward. We noted the report.

Treasury Management Outturn Report 2022/23

11. Jean Waddington, Principal Financial Accountant presented the report of the Director of Finance which outlined Treasury Management performance and compliance with Prudential Indicators for the financial year ended 31 March 2023.
12. The Treasury Strategy for 2022/23 to 2024/25 was approved by Council on 22 February 2022. A mid-year review of Treasury Management activity was presented to the Governance Committee on 23 November 2022.
13. It was reported that capital expenditure in 2022/23 was at £13.4 million. The progression of the 2022/23 programme, which included the Strawberry Meadows and Tatton Gardens developments, was affected by rising construction costs, rising interest rates and global supply chain issues. External finance of £4.6 million was required to fund the 2022/23 capital programme spend.
14. We noted that the average daily investment was at £6.1 million in 2022/23, which was down from £9.3 million in 2021/22 due to the reduction in Covid Grants. From historically low levels of interest rates in 2020/21 and 2021/22, following a number of increases the average yield for 2022/23 was significantly higher than previous years at 1.72%, above the benchmark of 1.22%.
15. The Council continued to achieve budget savings by maintaining a position of under borrowing, which means that it has used its own cash balances to finance capital expenditure rather than taking additional external loans.
16. We discussed how to get the best return on investments and were advised that the council the best return, or saving, was in using cash balances instead of borrowing; we were advised that the council would only borrow externally if cash balances required this as it was cheaper to use internal resources. If investing, the council would consider where money is placed and in what form. If the council could get a better interest rate by placing money for longer, this would be considered but only if it was certain that there would be readily available cash flow over the course of the investment period. We noted the report.

CIPFA Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police

17. Dawn Highton, Head of Audit and Risk presented her report which presented the latest CIPFA Position Statement: Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police 2022 and CIPFA guidance – Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police 2022. The report also presented proposals to assess the skills and knowledge of the Committee to ensure a comprehensive training plan can be developed.
18. The guidance represented best practice and CIPFA expected that all local authorities make their best efforts to adopt the principles contained within the guidance, aiming for effective audit/governance committee arrangements. We noted that the guidance contained a suggested Terms of Reference and a Self-Assessment of good practice.
19. We were requested to complete and return the self-assessment to Democratic Services by the 31 August 2023. The results of the self-assessment would be collated by Internal Audit and used to inform the Member Development Programme to ensure we were in the best position to fulfil our role on the Committee. Both the Terms of Reference and Self-Assessment would be brought back to the Committee at the meeting in September for consideration.
20. We were encouraged to have a look at the guidance and complete the self-assessment in order to make sure the correct training was being delivered to the Committee. It was also proposed that the Committee Members meet to consider the way the council approaches the governance process. We approved the recommendations in the report.

Chair of Governance Committee Response to External Audit Planning Enquiries

21. Dawn Highton, Head of Audit and Risk presented her report which outlined the Chair of the Governance Committee responses provided to the planning enquiries made by the External Auditors, Grant Thornton as part of the 2022/23 statutory accounts.
22. In line with Auditing Standards and to support the Audit Planning process, the External Auditor needed to establish the risk of fraud or error. We considered the questions and responses provided by the Chair of the Governance Committee which were appended to the report. We requested that the responses be made more explicit to have a more meaningful dialogue.
23. Following queries, reassurances were made that high-risk fraud areas were considered within the audit plan and reviewed regularly. Fraud awareness training for members was requested.
24. We were also advised that laws and regulations were complied with through training and regular updates on legislation change and council decisions were moderated through a two-stage process to ensure legal compliance. We approved the recommendations in the report.

Strategic Risk Review

25. Caroline Winstanley, Transformation Co-ordinator presented the report of the Director of Change and Delivery which provided an updated Strategic Risk Register, setting out the strategic risks to the council, control measures and actions planned to help manage risk.
26. The annual update of the risk register included updates identified by the Shared Senior Management team through interim reviews conducted throughout the year.
27. Many of the highest scoring risks focused on delivering Council priorities, including service delivery, large scale capital projects, and working with strategic partners to deliver outcomes. These reflected the key challenges facing the organisation such as the budgetary pressures and financial uncertainty. ICT and cyber security also remained a high risk to the council due to the potential impact on service delivery and reputational damage which was being managed through the delivery of the ICT plan.
28. There were strong control measures in place to mitigate these risks, including as part of the Council's governance framework and budget setting and monitoring processes. We noted that there were 17 risks included on the strategic risk register. Since the previous review, 1 risk had decreased (failure of shared services arrangements) and 1 risk had increased in score (incidents affecting service delivery), 1 risk had been removed (failure to manage the recovery from COVID-19 effectively) and 1 new risk had been identified (failure to address the impact of climate change).
29. We queried the removal of the failure to manage recovery from COVID-19 effectively risk and were advised that the risk relating to service delivery and business continuity captures the impact of pandemics and other significant incidents.
30. We also queried whether lessons learned were taken into account when reviewing the risk register and were advised that if specific incidents had occurred, such as Covid-19, there would be specific reviews but this was not undertaken as part of the review of strategic risk register. We noted the strategic risks, controls in place and actions planned to further mitigate risks as set out in the report.

RIPA Application Update

31. Chris Moister, Monitoring Officer advised that there were now internal and external processes in place in relation to getting RIPA authorisations. It was reported that no RIPA applications had been made. We noted the update.

Work Programme

32. We considered the work programme for 2023/24 which set out the reports to be considered at each Governance Committee meeting throughout the Council year. An additional item to consider the CIPFA self-assessment results would

be added to the work programme for September. We noted the work programme.

Recommendations

33. To note the report.

Councillor Alan Platt
Chair of the Governance Committee

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Overview and Scrutiny

1. This report summarises the business considered at the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 1 August 2023, the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel held on 27 July 2023, and an update on the Task Group: Recruitment and Staff Retention which met for the first time 6 September 2023.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 1 August 2023

Health Scrutiny

2. We welcomed Councillor Margaret France to provide the update from the Lancashire County Council Health and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee that took place 12 July 2023.
3. Three substantive items were on the agenda, the Lancashire and South Cumbria New Hospital Programme, Virtual Wards, and Integrated Neighbourhood Teams.
4. Two new hospitals to be built on two sites, the estimated start time for the project is delayed to 2030. The locations of the new sites are yet to be known, but they are required to be within 10 miles of the existing sites.
5. The cost to maintain Royal Preston is considerable, and there is not the certainty extra funding will be provided for ongoing upkeep and maintenance.
6. It is the expectation that modern technology will allow single rooms with effective patient monitoring.
7. There are 393 virtual beds across Lancashire and are utilised to free up beds at hospital while monitoring the patients in the comfort of their own homes.
8. The focus behind the Integrated Neighbourhood Teams is to allow services to work closer to the community to achieve better results and outcomes.
9. NHS England told the Integrated Care Board to reduce their budget by 30%.
10. The cost of using agency staff is significant, but a necessity to cover a skills, knowledge, and staff gap. The Trust does have a bank of doctors and nurses that are prioritised over agency staff.
11. We noted the update.

Cycling Project Update

12. We welcomed Matt Evans, Air Quality and Climate Change Officer to present the update and highlighted that the work is a recommendation from the Sustainable Public Transport Task Group. Following the unsuccessful formation of a cycling task group, the work has been picked up, and actioned by the Climate Change Working Group.
13. The council uses social media to communicate and direct the public to information and to promote various means of active travel in the borough.
14. An external consultation took place. The public feedback that improved cycling infrastructure and facilities are desired and would be a positive for the town.

15. Internally, efforts were made to understand the failure in the uptake in the number of staff cycling to work following the implementation of requested facilities and provisions. It was due to the lack of familiarity, and distance between Bengal Street and the Town Hall, in addition to concerns with damaging the newly provided ICT equipment. It has been decided that the bike pods are to be moved to Portland Street Car Park as a benefit to commuters, workers, and visitors to the town centre.
16. The council will continue its work with the County Council to ensure that Chorley is well represented in the Lancashire Cycling, Walking, and Infrastructure Partnership.
17. Work towards the new local plan aims to promote active travel, with an emphasis on walking, wheeling, and cycling when planning applications are considered.
18. We noted the report.

Scrutiny Reporting Back – Chorley Council’s Annual Report on Overview and Scrutiny 2022/23

19. We appreciated the good work that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee achieved in the last year, we thanked Members and Officers involved, however we raised a concern that it was frequently reported to the Committee and Performance Panel’s that there were issues with recruitment, and retention within the council.
20. We noted the report.

Overview and Scrutiny Task Group – Empty Properties Final Report

21. Councillor Sarah Ainsworth, the Chair of the Empty Properties Task Group presented the final report to the Committee.
22. The recommendations and their reasons were explained and rationalised. It was discovered that the position of the empty properties within the organisation structure needs to be evaluated. There also needs to be consideration for a position of Empty Properties Officer to be recruited or to adjust an existing staff members job description to cover the role.
23. The Task Group encouraged an update to the Empty Homes Policy, which was last updated in 2015.
24. We amended a recommendation to ensure that figures of empty properties are presented by ward, rather than by parish. We also felt that further information could be shared on long term empty properties that were subject to long standing legal disputes, or where the ownership is in question.
25. We noted the report.

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

26. We agreed for the following topics to come to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee this municipal year,
27. – Antisocial Behaviour in the Town Centre

28. – Cost of Living
29. – Water Safety
30. – Wheelchair accessibility
31. – Youth Services Outreach.
32. We agreed that the first Task Group to be set up and starting in September will be 'Recruitment and Staff Retention'. Following the completion of the first task group, the next will be exploring mental health support following suicide bereavement.
33. We agreed the work programme and it was noted.

Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel – 27 July 2023

Performance Focus – Customer and Digital

34. We welcomed Executive Member (Customer, Streetscene and Environment) Adrian Lowe, with Asim Khan, Director (Customer and Digital) and Chris Walmsley, Head of Streetscene and Waste to present the report.
35. We were informed that there were inaccuracies within the report and a corrected report would be distributed following the meeting.
36. 11 of the directorate's performance indicators are on or above target. Of the 39 Business Plan Projects, 25 are rated green or completed, and 14 are rated amber, with both Corporate Strategy Projects rated green.
37. There is an underspend of £35,000 within the directorate.
38. A decline in performance for in the 'average days to process a new council tax support and housing benefit claim' is explained by the increase in complex cases throughout the year and there were matters outside the control of the council which impacts performance.
39. The council owns 83 bus shelters, and in accordance to the Corporate Strategy Project to improve the public transport network, there is a 5-year plan to make improvements to them all.
40. The contract with Dial-a-Ride is near its conclusion, and consideration is underway to review and evaluate options available to ensure that the community car scheme is attractive and accessible to users.
41. 18 vacancies are filled, but there remain vacancies which includes 4 apprenticeships and 3 other posts.
42. There is no correlation between the increase in online services and dissatisfaction with the service received.
43. The figures for recycling have stagnated and is impacting the figure for '% of waste recycled'. There are also operational issues present. For the figure to improve, there

needs to be behavioural changes from residents and further certainty from central government. In the absence of a firm central government position, the council is drafting its own waste and recycling strategy.

44. We noted the report.

Quarter Four Performance Report

45. We welcomed Victoria Willet, Director of Change and Delivery to present the report, which covers the period January to March 2023.
46. Of the 19 projects, 2 (11%) are completed, 16 (84%) are rated green, and 1 (5%) is rated amber.
47. Key measures of organisational performance have 4 (67%) performing at or above target, 1 (17%) performing below target but within the 5% threshold and 1 (17%) below target and outside of threshold
48. Following the completion of Tatton Gardens, the council is committed to the corporate strategy of developing further options for high quality, affordable and green housing.
49. The delivery of the local plan is rated yellow, this is due to the vacancies within the team, the complexity of the project, and working in close collaboration with two other local authorities. We were informed that despite the issues and difficulties, the project is not rated red as there is a plan in place to bring the project on track.
50. 117,000 trees have been planted in the borough which exceeds the target. A key priority of the council is to improve parks, open spaces and to enhance the natural environment. All five of the projects under the strategy are green and progressing according to plan and time scales.
51. The council held a development and job programme event in partnership with local schools and was attended by 500 students and 30 local businesses.
52. A cost of Living Action Plan is underway to support families that are struggling due to the price of food and energy. The project is extended over the summer and in total 6,744 households are being supported through the fund.
53. We noted the report.

Overview and Scrutiny Task Group Update – Recruitment and Staff Retention

54. The Task Group held its first meeting Wednesday 6 September.
55. Councillor Michelle Le Marinel is appointed Chair, and Councillor Ryan Towers is appointed as Vice Chair.
56. Hollie Walmsley, Head of HR, presented background information to the Task Group and aided the group to scope the review and outline the goals and objectives.

Recommendations

57. To note the report.

Councillor Aidy Riggott
Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

MP

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Scrutiny Reporting Back

Chorley Council's Annual Report on
Overview and Scrutiny

2022/23



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1. Membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2022/23



Councillor John Walker

Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2022/23



Councillor Roy Lees

Vice Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2022/23

Councillors:

- Sarah Ainsworth
- Hasina Khan
- Samir Khan
- James Nevett
- Aidy Riggott
- Kim Snape
- Jenny Whiffen
- Michelle Le Marinel
- Dedrah Moss
- Alan Platt
- Arjun Singh
- Ryan Towers

2. Introduction by the Chair and Vice Chair of Overview and Scrutiny

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had a busy year undertaking a varied and extensive work programme that featured two task group reviews. Councillor John Walker and Roy Lees were re-appointed Chair and Vice Chair respectively for the year. There were also several new members welcomed to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel, which consisted of six members and met five times monitored the business planning and performance of the council along with a focus on each of the Directorates in turn.

Over the year, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee observed the completion of the Select Move and Empty Properties Task Group.

Following the approval at Executive Cabinet, the committee continued to receive six monthly monitoring reports which included information about implementation and success of previous scrutiny reviews, these were:

- Quality of Housing Provided by Social Landlords
- Sustainable Public Transport

3. Challenging Performance

The Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel scrutinised the performance of the council with all monitoring information considered. Scrutinising performance is essential to ensure key details are examined, questioned and that consistency prevailed.

The panel for the 2022/23 consisted of:

- Councillor John Walker (Chair)
- Councillor Roy Lees (Vice Chair)
- Councillor Sarah Ainsworth
- Councillor Michelle Le Marinel
- Councillor Arjun Singh
- Councillor Kim Snape (replaced Councillor James Nevett December 2022)

Customer and Digital

The Customer and Digital portfolio covered Chorley's Neighbourhoods, Streetscene, and Waste Services Teams, in addition to the shared services of ICT and Customer Services. Three quarters of the corporate service level performance measures performed at or above target at the end of Quarter Four. Of the eight business plan projects, five were completed, and three were amber. The reason for the amber was due to challenges faced by ICT and customer services.

Good performance led to increased targets for street cleaning and ground maintenance. There were acknowledged issues with customer services and the contact centre, but efforts were underway to correct and improve.

Covid-19 did not result in a decrease in staff, but there were ongoing difficulties with recruitment, however 12 apprenticeships were created. Financially, the directorate had 1.6% variance in the budget.

Commercial and Property

The cost of living crisis, and increase cost of staffing, energy and construction caused considerable challenge and delays to the directorate. The financial position of the directorate was a concern with a 165% overspend. It was hoped that the Shared Services arrangement with South Ribble would assist with recruitment. It was noted that there was a concern that the council could face succession issues with the large number of staff at the start or the end of their careers.

A significant loss of income came from the delay with Tatton Gardens following the fire and subsequent fungal contamination. Income from car parks were down due to the continuation of the Covid charges, but a new car park strategy was due to be introduced.

Town centre and market footfall, in addition to visiting coaches started to indicate a return to normality following the pandemic. Voids on the covered market met the target. Actions were in place to collect outstanding rent.

Thirty-five projects were green, four amber and five rated red. Some of the red rated projects were due to the pandemic and implemented supportive measures.

Policy and Governance

The directorate covered five services, Communications and Visitor Economy, Finance, Governance, Transformation and Partnerships and Business Support.

The directorate had a variance in the budget of 0.6% equalling £33,000, and the overspend was due to the increase in the cost of utilities, the increase in audit fees and the pay award against the budgeted 2%. Half of the indicators were at or above target and better than Quarter 2 2021/22.

Work was ongoing with the Youth Zone and the Department for Work and Pensions to identify the barriers in place causing young people to not be in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).

All four of the Communications and Visitor Economy indicators were at or above targets. Two thirds of the finance performance indicators were at or better than target. 80% of Governance indicators were on or above target. Of the twelve indicators for Transformation and Partnership, eight were on or above target, one was within the 5% threshold and three were below target.

The percentage of shared services staff satisfied was below target and worse than Quarter 2 2021/22. It was understood that organisation change of any kind created uncertainty, roles were changed, and workplace culture adjusted. The council frequently held opportunities for feedback, discussion and offered support to staff.

Vacancies remained throughout the council, and the vacancy rate had decreased, but there were ongoing recruitment issues. Interim appointments were made to fill required roles.

The typical council employee worked on a hybrid basis with an average of two to three days a week in the office, but this was dependent on role and levels of productivity with management discretion. The council understood that there were advantages to office working, particularly for younger and more inexperienced staff, as training and mentoring was more successful in an office environment while surrounded by experience. The council also appreciated the appeal of flexibility and was aware that they were competing in a more

flexible labour market. The health and wellbeing of employees was taken seriously with a high value placed on employees maintaining a healthy work-life balance.

Communities

The directorate included Communities, Housing Solutions and Public Protection.

The directorate overspent £135,000 which was a 7.27% variance against the budget. This was due to the proposed pay award for 2022/23, an increase in the allocated amount towards Bed and Breakfasts, and an overall reduced income from the NHS and Lancashire Constabulary.

There were difficulties with recruitment and staffing capacity, but there was the recruitment of a Housing Standards Officer.

The performance indicators were reviewed, with positive performance related to percentage of families in B&B's for less than six weeks, and the percentage of positive outcomes in prevention and relief cases.

Planning and Development

Financially, there was an overspend of £37,346 due to the increased costs of professional fees, statutory notices, legal fees and staffing.

Covid witnessed the suspension of the pre-application advice service that was replaced with improvements made to the planning portal and supplementary guidance.

Staffing remained a challenge within the council, failed recruitment attempts required the use of agency staff. Efforts to train staff from within risked departure to the private sector.

As the Local Plan neared its conclusion and the process underway for the new one, there were fewer allocated housing sites. The council was negotiating with a developer to purchase a number of affordable homes in its role as a registered provider.

Of the three projects within the directorate, two were on target, with one slightly off track.

4. The Overview and Scrutiny Task Groups

Select Move – Chaired by Councillor June Molyneux

The final report of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group – Select Move was presented to the Committee in October 2022. The Task Group was formed due to concerns that the recommendations made in the 2014 Task Group were no longer being adhered to.

Throughout the process, the Task Group engaged with Local Authorities within the partnership, users of Select Move via a survey, Registered Providers within the partnership, the Allocations Policy Consultant, the MP, the Select Move Coordinator and Officers within the Council.

The recommendations within the report were identified over the duration of the investigation, and it was hoped that the recommendations provide positive momentum and change within the partnership.

The first monitoring report to update Members of the progress of the recommendations will be due at the October Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Empty Properties – Chaired by Councillor Sarah Ainsworth

The final report of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group – Empty Properties was presented to the Committee in July. The Task Group formed as a result of the Overview and Scrutiny agenda setting workshop as the committee felt a task group would be more effective in building and developing understanding of long term empty properties in the borough instead of an officer report.

The task group engaged with various officers within the local authority and reached out to neighbouring authorities to compare and contrast figures.

The recommendations within the report were identified over the duration of the Task Group and hoped that the investigation, report and recommendations will enable a greater and more accessible understanding of long term empty properties in the borough.

The first monitoring report to update Members of the progress of the recommendations will be due at Committee in 2024.

5. Budget Scrutiny

At the time of the Scrutiny review, the budget deficit was reported to be £1.17m, and it was believed that the budget could be balanced without cuts to services or staffing. Significant income had been gained since the purchase of Market Walk in 2014, and there was optimism for Strawberry Fields and Strawberry Meadows, in addition to future investments.

The priorities of the council were considered during the creation of the budget.

There was long term uncertainty around the funding from central government, due to the decreased figure received and the increased costs and pressures.

Council tax and special expenses proposed to increase by 1.99%, at this figure, Chorley would have the second lowest rate of Council Tax in Lancashire.

6. Topics presented to the Committee

Chorley Leisure Company

Following a procurement exercise in 2019, the preferred bidder withdrew their bid due to the challenge caused by Covid. The decision was made for the council to take on the operation of the leisure facilities.

The Leisure Company was established in April 2021, and operation commenced August 2021. The entity was separate from the council and held its own objectives. The governance structure of the company included the board of directors made up from the Directors of Chorley Council. The position of Managing Director would be the Director of Commercial Services, but due to vacancy, the Director of Governance held this position.

Chorley Council was the sole shareholder in the Leisure Company, and the functions were fulfilled by the Executive Cabinet.

To deliver the objectives of the Leisure Company, a single year business plan was adopted to reflect the imminent priorities of the council.

The Leisure Company faced a challenge financially, despite this, to ensure accessibility and affordability for the community, the decision was made not increase the price of membership.

Following the single year business plan, a five-year business development strategy was to be introduced with the objective to become financially self-sustained. Surplus and profits would be reinvested into the company and facilities.

Turnover of staff was high, but this was not unusual for the leisure industry.

Renovations of Brinscall Baths was not yet underway, although £600,000 was allocated for work as additional surveys were required. All three of the Leisure Company buildings required investment and modernisation.

Crime and Disorder – Community Safety Partnership

Background information, the role and purpose of the Community Safety Partnership was shared. Key topics included youth anti-social behaviour and the actions, interventions and support available to alleviate the issues present.

There were good working relationships within the Partnership. The Inspector was happy for Members to reach out and report any concerns or issues. Resources were available to increase presence of PCSO's and Neighbourhood Officers, in addition to providing roadshow and engagement stalls as required.

Concern was raised with the proposed move of the police station from the Town Centre to Exton Lake Campus, however, there was consideration for a satellite office with Officers still stationed within the town centre.

Open Space, Sports and recreation Strategy

The Open Space, Sports and Recreation Strategy was approved by Executive Cabinet in 2021.

The presentation provided highlighted the scope and remit of the work that was undertaken with the programme in addition to the issues that caused delays, which were primarily due to sourcing and securing funding.

Locations were identified for five green bus stops in the borough, and funds were made available to repair the worst sections of towpaths in the Borough.

The urban wildflower corridors were highlighted, and it as reiterated that there was no risk of introducing invasive species or damaging the local ecology due to their location.

Period Poverty

The borough was said to have a good provision of products available. Students in school were offered a good supply, but there were noted additional opportunities to expand the scope and range, and was acknowledged that there were gaps in what was provided in council owned buildings for staff and visitors.

Only Morrisons provided free products. Provisions that were available were not localised within the town centre, but wide across the borough, and were provided by a range of charities and groups.

Cycling

Work was being completed to gain the views of cycling and promote the activity in the borough.

A consultation was completed to manage expectations and to sign post the councils needs to the County Council. 180 responses were received, and comments from social media were collated and included. The results of the consultation would be incorporated into the objectives going forward.

There was also interest in gaining an understanding into the cycling habits of staff, it was noted that the cycle pods at Bengal Street were not being used as much as desired.

Work was underway with Lancashire County Council to ensure that Chorley was well represented within the Lancashire Cycle and Walking Infrastructure Partnership, it was noted that District Councils were not eligible for active travel funds.

The forthcoming Local Plan was believed to contain an emphasis on walking and wheeling for new developments.

Updates from the Lancashire County Council's Health and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee

Over the course of the year, the Committee were periodically provided updates from the Lancashire County Council's Health and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee that was attended by Councillor Alex Hilton or Councillor Margaret France.

The Government directive was to build 40 new fit for purpose, and state of the art hospitals. Both the Royal Preston Hospital and Lancaster Royal Infirmary were identified as having aged infrastructure, increased maintenance costs and struggled to meet the demands of modern health care.

A shortlist of four options was published, and it was decided for two brand new hospitals to be built, one in Preston and one in Lancaster. It was estimated that construction would start in 2025 with plans to open in 2030.

Chorley Hospital was to continue to receive investment by Lancashire Teaching Hospital Trust and there were no plans to close Chorley Hospital.

The Social Care Reform that was announced in September 2021 and due to be introduced in October 2023 was now delayed to 2025.

Reforms considered to streamline the financial and needs assessment online and despite assurances, there were concerns that those with complex needs would be disadvantaged

Information around virtual wards was provided, their use, purpose, and eligibility.

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to write to the Health and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee to request the addition of tender and procurement for the Integrated Care Boards to the work programme.

Monitoring Reports

Quality of Housing provided by Social Landlords

Member Learning Sessions had been held around housing issues. Work was undertaken with various housing providers in the borough to increase the uptake of disabled facilities grants. The County Council employed additional occupational therapists to work across Central Lancashire to ease the backlog caused by Covid 19. The Select Move Coordinator was in post at Chorley Borough Council to work with registered providers, the Steering Group and the partnership to progress improvements and assist with implementation of the Charter

The Good Homes Charter had been delayed due to the pandemic and new legislation.

Two recommendations had not progressed, and they were for a residents association and a social housing sector, it was believed that due to the delays caused by the pandemic, and with the placement of the Select Move Coordinator, the aims of both recommendations would be met.

Sustainable Public Transport

The final monitoring report observed that 18 of the recommendations were completed, five were in progress and a number were ongoing with the development of the new Local Plan, which would be monitored at the Local Plan Working Group and the Central Lancashire Strategic Planning joint Advisory Committee.

7. Conclusion and the Year Ahead

It had been an interesting year for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, scrutinising, reviewing, and exploring topics that were of interest and concern to Members and to the public.

The Committee is committed to working closely with Members, partners, Officers, and the Executive and will continue to challenge and hold the Executive to account while remaining a critical friend to ensure positive outcomes.

In the forthcoming municipal year, there will be four meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and four meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel.

A third of the Council is up for election in May 2023, four of the fourteen members of the Committee are either standing down or contesting their seats. There is to be a significant change to the Committee's Membership, with Councillor John Walker standing down after 25 years on the Council.

In late June, the Committee will partake in a workshop to draft the upcoming work programme, which will be presented and confirmed at the first Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the year.



Report of	Meeting	Date
Returning Officer Introduced by (Executive Member (Resources))	Council	19 September 2023

Polling station relocation

Is this report confidential?	No
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Is this decision key?	No
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Purpose of the Report

1. To inform members of a request for the relocation of polling station 31 in the Chorley North and Astley ward.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that polling station 31 which relates to polling district CHN&A04 currently hosted at St Peter's CE Primary School, Eaves Lane, Chorley be relocated to St Joseph's Parish Centre, Harpers Lane, Chorley.

Reasons for recommendations

3. Due to increasing pupil numbers, the headteacher at St Peter's CE Primary School has asked that an alternative venue be found to site polling station 31. This is due to the room, that would normally be used as a polling station, has been turned into a permanent classroom.

Other options considered and rejected

4. Three other alternative options were considered and rejected -
 - The air cadet hut, Heapey Road, which was rejected due to the distance from the original polling station.
 - Hire of a portacabin was rejected on the grounds that it would be difficult to find an appropriate location to site it on.
 - Remain at St Peter's CE Primary School, which ward members chose to reject as they preferred the school to remain open if a suitable alternative venue could be found.

Corporate priorities

5. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Housing where residents can live well	A green and sustainable borough
An enterprising economy with vibrant local centres in urban and rural areas	Healthy, safe and engaged communities

Background to the report

- 6. In March 2023, the headteacher at St Peter’s CE Primary School asked if the council could seek an alternative venue to host polling station 31. The room used for the polling station was no longer available as it had been turned into a permanent classroom.
- 7. Due to the timing of the request, it was not possible to change the venue for the May 2023 election as preparations were already at an advanced stage, with poll cards being printed and due to be sent out.
- 8. So that the school could remain open on the day of poll, a compromise was reached, and the polling station was moved into a smaller room situated towards the back of the building. Although the room was manageable for that election, it would not be a suitable long-term solution. If the polling station remained at the school, it would be highly likely that the school would have to close on future polling days.

Relocation of polling station

- 9. The Chorley North and Astley ward members were informed of the request from St Peter’s CE Primary School on 10 July and were consulted on potential alternative venues.
- 10. As part of their deliberations, ward members considered both appropriateness of the location and ease of accessibility.
- 11. After careful consideration, St Joseph’s Parish Centre, which is an existing polling station, was identified as the preferred option. It has a large function hall which would easily accommodate a second polling station. It is 0.3 miles from St Peter’s CE Primary School which is approximately a 5-minute walk. There is parking at the front of the building, including disabled parking bay, and a large car park at the rear.

Climate change and air quality

- 12. There is no overall impact on the Councils Carbon emissions and the wider Climate Emergency and sustainability targets of the Council.

Equality and diversity

- 13. St Joseph’s Parish Centre, Harpers Lane, has been used successfully as a polling station for the last three years, and meets the requirements for disabled access.
- 14. The Returning Officer is also required to implement the Elections Act 2022 (The Act) which introduced provisions to assist blind, partially sighted and other disabled voters at all polling stations. The Act -:

- creates a requirement for the Returning Officer to provide each polling station with such equipment as it is reasonable to provide for the purposes of enabling, or making it easier for, relevant persons to vote independently and in secret,
 - requires the Returning Officer to have regard to the Electoral Commission’s guidance on the equipment to provide at polling stations.
15. The Act also introduced the requirement for voters to produce valid photographic identification prior to their ballot paper being issued, with the option for any voter to have their identification checked in private on request, and without explanation.

Risk

16. The only foreseeable risk would be voters presenting at St Peter’s CE Primary School on the day of poll instead of St Joseph’s Parish Centre.
17. To minimise the risk -
- All poll cards contain the name and address of the voter’s polling station.
 - A poster will be placed on the railing of the school (subject to the headteacher’s approval) in the days leading up to the day of poll informing residents of the change of polling station.
 - The communications team will be creating social media posts asking all residents to check their poll card in case their polling station venue has changed.
 - There is a facility for the voters to type in their postcode on the council’s website, which will provide the name and address of the polling station which they need to go to.
18. Even with the above measures in place, there is a likelihood that some voters may still present at St Peter’s CE Primary School first before realising the polling station has moved.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

19. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

20. No comments.

Background documents

There are no background papers to this report

Report Author:	Email:	Telephone:	Date:
Cathryn Filbin (Electoral Services Team Leader)	cathryn.filbin@chorley.gov.uk	5123	15/08/23

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Report of	Meeting	Date
Director (Governance) Introduced by (Executive Member (Economic Development and Public Service Reform))	Council	Tuesday, 19 September 2023

Members Allowances - Appointment of Independent Remuneration Panel

Is this report confidential?	No
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Is this decision key?	Not applicable
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Purpose of the Report

1. The Council is required to appoint and instruct the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) to review the current Members Allowances Scheme and make recommendations on any changes to the Scheme for determination by Council.

Recommendations

2. That Council be recommended to appoint
 - Lorraine Norris, former Chief Executive of Preston City Council
 - Phil Davies, former Elections Manager at Chorley Council
 - Diane Gradwell, Chief Executive Officer, Citizens Advice Lancashire West as members of the Independent Remuneration Panel for a period of three years.
3. To reappoint Dennis Benson as the Chair of the Panel for the next three years.
4. That the Panel be requested to consider particularly a new role within the Members Allowances Scheme, to review the annual uprate mechanism and make recommendations on any changes to the Scheme for Council approval.

Reasons for recommendations

5. The Panel are required to be appointed in line with the requirements of the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

Other options considered and rejected

6. Not to comply with the Regulations.

Corporate priorities

7. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Housing where residents can live well	A green and sustainable borough
An enterprising economy with vibrant local centres in urban and rural areas	Healthy, safe and engaged communities

Background to the report

8. The current Members Allowances Scheme was agreed in May 2021 following a full review.

Issues to be reviewed

9. Some minor changes have been requested relating to the new role of Deputy Portfolio Holder.
10. Allowances are uprated on an annual basis at the same rate as the officer annual pay increase. However, the increase with effect from 1 April 2022 was a lump sum, meaning an appropriate mechanism for members needs to be reviewed.
11. The Independent Remuneration Panel will meet and make recommendations which are then put forward for Council's consideration.

Independent Remuneration Panel

12. The Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) must be comprised of at least 3 members who are independent of the Council.
13. They must not be a member of the authority or a member of a committee or sub-committee of the authority or be disqualified from being or becoming a member of an authority.

Climate change and air quality

14. The work noted in this report has no impact on the Councils Carbon emissions and the wider Climate Emergency and sustainability targets of the Council.

Equality and diversity

15. An Impact Assessment will be completed as part of the review of the Scheme.
16. It is positive that the IRP itself will now have male and female members.

Risk

17. The council needs to take account of the recommendations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel when determining the Members Allowances Scheme.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

- 18. There are no financial implications at this stage. Any recommendations from the panel in respect of changes to the scheme would be costed at that time to allow a decision to be made.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

- 19. The position is set out in the body of the report.

Background documents

The current members allowances scheme.

Report Author:	Email:	Telephone:	Date:
Ruth Rimmington (Democratic Services Team Leader)	ruth.rimmington@chorley.gov.uk	01257 515118	14 August 2023

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Report of	Meeting	Date
Chief Executive (Introduced by the Leader)	Council	19 September 2023

Change of Working Group Name and Updated Terms of Reference

Is this report confidential?	No
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Is this decision key?	Not applicable
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Purpose of the Report

- To change the name of the Wholly Owned Company and Projects Working Group, to the Development and Assets Working Group, and update the Terms of Reference.

Recommendations

- To approve the change of name of the Wholly Owned Company and Projects Working Group, to the Development and Assets Working Group
- To approve the updated Terms of Reference for the Working Group.

Reasons for recommendations

- To ensure the Working Group is providing tangible and justified transparency, up to date information and political oversight for the ongoing projects and assets maintained by the Council.

Other options considered and rejected

- To not change the name and keep the existing Terms of Reference.

Corporate priorities

- The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Housing where residents can live well	A green and sustainable borough
An enterprising economy with vibrant local centres in urban and rural areas	Healthy, safe and engaged communities

Background to the report

6. The Working Group was originally established in 2013 to oversee the work leading up to the Council's decision to purchase Market Walk Shopping Centre. It was then agreed the Group would continue to provide oversight of the asset and its performance. In 2015, the Group's terms of reference was revised to allow the group to look at the feasibility of an extension to Market Walk. In November 2020, it was agreed that the Group would be updated to oversee all ongoing projects and future development projects.

Climate change and air quality

7. The work noted in this report has no impact on the Councils Carbon emissions and the wider Climate Emergency and sustainability targets of the Council.

Equality and diversity

8. There are no equality implications arising from this decision

Risk

9. There are no risks relating to this decision.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

10. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

11. As this is an internal group there are no legal implications in the proposed changes.

Background documents

There are no background papers to this report

Appendices

Appendix A Updated Terms of Reference

Report Author:	Email:	Telephone:	Date:
Matthew Pawlyszyn (Democratic and Member Services Officer)	matthew.pawlyszyn@chorley.gov.uk	01257 515034	10 August 2023

Development and Assets Working Group – Terms of Reference

Background:

The Group was originally established in 2013 to oversee the work leading up the full Council decision to purchase Market Walk Shopping Centre. It was then agreed that the Group would continue in order to provide elected member oversight of the asset and its performance. A decision was taken in September 2015 to look at the feasibility of an extension to Market Walk and the terms of reference were revised accordingly to allow this Group to undertake that work. Since the full Council decision in September 2016 to go ahead with the Market Walk Extension, the Group was given additional responsibility to oversee the development work and the new terms of reference were set out. It was agreed at Council on 17 November 2020 that the group would be updated to oversee all ongoing and future development projects.

In August 2023, it was agreed that terms, scope and parameters of the group needed to be updated to reflect the desire to not just oversee the development of projects, but assess and monitor the performance of the completed projects against their original aims.

It is intended that the same Terms of Reference are adopted. This report sets out the updated Terms for the Working Group.

Membership:

The Development and Assets Working Group has a membership of 7 Councillors (each political group to also appoint two substitute Members) to be appointed at the Annual Council Meeting, including the appointment of a Chair of the Working Group.

Any Councillor may attend the Working Group as an observer, but numbers may be limited by the Chair to two from each political group.

Business of the Committee: The work of the Development and Assets Working Group is to:

- **Receive reports concerning the performance management of the development projects.**
- **Receive updates concerning the financial performance of the development projects.**
- **Undertake analysis of any proposals brought before them.**
- **Make recommendations to Full Council as to the future development proposals.**
- **Review the terms of any proposed contract award and the proposed framework in which the contract is to be awarded under (if any).**
- **Oversee the development projects.**
- **Receive annual reports that featured financial and target performance from development projects and assets.**
- **Receive prioritised reports of the asset register according to a red, amber, green (RAG) categorisation.**

For clarity, the DAWG will have no decision-making functions and may only make recommendations to full Council or the Executive Cabinet as appropriate.

Voting:

Voting will be done on a simple majority, with each member of the Steering Group having a single vote. In the event of equal votes, the Chair of the meeting will have a second or casting vote. Observer Councillors and officers do not have any voting rights.

Calendar of Meetings:

Meetings will be scheduled in the Council's annual calendar of meetings, but additional or alternative meeting dates may be scheduled in consultation with the Chair and in line with the need to progress development proposals.



Report of	Meeting	Date
Director (Finance) (Introduced by Executive Member (Resources))	Council	19 September 2023

Leisure Company Request for Financial Support

Is this report confidential?	No
Is this decision key?	Yes
Savings or expenditure amounting to greater than £100,000	Significant impact on 2 or more council wards

Purpose of the Report

1. This report details the request from the Council's wholly owned subsidiary company, Chorley Leisure Ltd, for financial support due to the extraordinary and unbudgeted increases in energy costs, an assumed increase in salary costs over the 5% budgeted (based on the latest offer made in the 2023/24 LJNCC pay negotiations), and a shortfall in income levels.

Recommendations

2. To approve the request from Chorley Leisure Ltd for financial support of £1.122m, a breakdown of which is included in the body of the report.

Reasons for recommendations

3. To ensure the Council is fully aware of the financial position of Chorley Leisure Limited and to request financial support for the company due to the extraordinary increases in energy costs, the pending 2023/24 pay award and the reduced levels of income compared to budget.

Other options considered and rejected

4. To await further forecasts – this option is not viable given the pressures on the cashflow of the leisure company, driven by the increase in the cost of utilities, the reduction in levels of income compared to forecast, and the pending payment of the pay award, which once agreed will be paid to staff as quickly as possible with the arrears due from 1 April 2023. As the company does not hold reserves, it does not have any surplus cash balances to cushion the impact on cashflow of any adverse variances against budget.

Corporate priorities

6. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Housing where residents can live well	A green and sustainable borough
An enterprising economy with vibrant local centres in urban and rural areas	Healthy, safe and engaged communities

Background to the report

- 7. Although Chorley Leisure Limited overspent by £12k against the first budget set for the company for the 8 months to 31 March 2022, since then there has been a global increase in the cost of utilities. This has put a major cost pressure on the company as utilities form a significant element of the budget and as such, there was a significant overspend against the working budgets for gas and electricity for 2022/23; this is now forecast to continue in 2023/24.
- 8. The original forecast overspend on utilities in 2022/23 was £263k but in addition to this, following the Local Government pay negotiations, a further unbudgeted cost pressure of £56k arose as the settlement resulted in a pay award of £1,925 per employee which was in excess of the 2% budget provision made.
- 9. Chorley Leisure Limited requested £681k in funding in November 2022 due to increased utility costs of £263k and reduced income levels of £418k. By March 2023, whilst income levels had improved by approximately £150k, utility costs had increased in excess of this, as volatility in the energy markets continued and rising prices were quickly passed through to the company through the variable rate utility contracts in place.

Request for Financial Support for 2023/24

- 10. Based on the forecast for 2023/24, and the need to ensure sufficient cashflow over the coming months, the company is requesting additional financial resources of £1.122m from the Council, as its parent company, comprising; £100k on a recurring basis as part of the cost of the Leisure Contract payment, and £1.022m on a non-recurring basis as detailed below:
- 11. **£626k in respect of the forecast increase in the cost of utilities** over budget – this is assumed to be a non-recurring cost at this point but will be reviewed for 2024/25 as part of the budget setting process as it appears unlikely that energy costs will now return to previous levels, i.e. prior to the war in Ukraine. Since the budget was set the government has stated that energy caps will no longer apply and therefore costs will increase. Furthermore, as the company is on variable rate contracts, any changes in prices are quickly passed through by the utility companies. However it is also possible with variable contracts that if costs reduce over the year then any reductions will be quickly passported through; as such, the position will be monitored and if the financial support proves to be more than the leisure company requires, then any surplus will be returned to the Council.

12. **£100k in respect of the estimated cost of the pay award** above the level budgeted, based on the current settlement offered of £1,925 per employee, irrespective of grade; this is the offer made by the Employers and so is not expected to fall below this amount, although at present this offer has been rejected by the Trade Union. This will be a recurring cost and will require a permanent increase in the Council's financial support within the Leisure Contract, unless this can be offset by income.
13. **£65k in respect of irrecoverable VAT** – this is assumed to be non-recurring cost at this point. The level of irrecoverable VAT has increased beyond that budgeted in the leisure company as a result of the increased cost of utility bills, as this has led to an increase in the overall VAT liability of the company.
14. **£331k in respect of reduced income levels** compared to those budgeted when the three-year budget was set on the creation of the company, including the withdrawal of the Council subsidy in 2023/24.
15. Whilst patronage across the Chorley Leisure Centres has continued to increase in 2023/24, as seen in the rise in income levels from £1.743m in 2022/23 to a forecast for 2023/24 of £1.867m, this is less than the three year income budgets set on the inception of the company. Memberships have continued to increase and are now at 73% of pre-pandemic figures and Swimming lessons are at 104% of these levels and it is hoped to continue in this direction.
16. In the original three year budget it was assumed that the level of financial contribution from the Council would reduce over the period as plans to secure increased income through leisure centre improvements were implemented, however due to slippage in capital works, income has not reached the targets set.
17. Given the economic volatility and uncertainty at the time the Council's 2023/24 Budget was set, a general budget provision of £680k was included to support the risk of any additional costs arising, such as those relating to inflation and utilities and the impact of the cost of living crisis, both in the council and the leisure company; the additional funding requested of £1.122m will be met from this provision, with the balance funded by the inflationary reserve created for such purposes

Financial performance

18. It is important to note that these figures are based on an assumption that all of the leisure centres will continue to be fully operational throughout the 2023/24 financial year, (excluding the Brinscall Pool works which are to be undertaken). The council has a planned programme of improvement work to the centres but there are no assumptions as yet as to how these will impact forecasts.

Climate change and air quality

19. The request made in the report for additional financial support does not impact upon the Council's carbon emissions and the wider Climate Emergency and sustainability targets of the Council.

Equality and diversity

20. No implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Risk

21. Without financial assistance from its parent company, Chorley Leisure Ltd will have insufficient cash flow to operate therefore risking company insolvency, redundancies, and reputational damage.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

22. The Company is in a difficult financial position given the increases over and above the levels budgeted in respect of the cost of utilities, irrecoverable VAT and the projected cost of the pay award. Alongside this, lower levels of income have been achieved compared to budget, as the budgets were based on securing increased income over the three years from establishment of the company through significant capital improvement works which have been delayed; as such, a request is made to increase the support from the council to address this.
23. There is currently no indication of financial support from central government to Councils to ensure continued levels of leisure services can be delivered and to cover these additional cost pressures. As it stands, government support has in fact reduced as the previous price cap on utility costs over the winter of 2022/23 are no longer in place.
24. A bid was submitted by the company in August for financial assistance through the Swimming Pool Support Fund (SPSF) run by Sports England, however the outcome of this has not yet been announced; should the company be successful then the amount of support from the Council could be reviewed.
25. It is therefore highly likely that without further financial assistance from Chorley Council, the company will not have sufficient cashflow to operate through to March 2024. The financial position will continue to be monitored and should the position change and improve, then the level of financial support could be reduced.
26. Within the 2023/24 budget approved at Council in February 2023, a general provision was made of £680k for any additional costs arising in the council, such as those relating to inflation and utilities; this provision was created given the level of economic volatility and in consideration of the fact that the risk of further cost pressures arising both in the council and the leisure company was very likely; the additional funding requested of £1.122m will be met from this provision, with the balance funded by the inflationary reserve created for such purposes.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

27. This is a decision on budget. The proposed increase in financial support is justified in the body of the report and the payments will enable the Leisure Company to continue to deliver a leisure service for the council.

Background documents

None

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