

Minutes of	Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel
Meeting date	Thursday, 23 November 2023
Committee Members present:	Councillor Aidy Riggott (Chair), Councillor Roy Lees (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Sarah Ainsworth, Arjun Singh and Kim Snape
Guests:	Councillor Bradley (Executive Member, Economic Development and Public Service Reform) and Councillor Peter Wilson, Executive Member for Resources)
Officers:	Chris Moister (Director of Governance/Monitoring Officer), Louise Mattinson (Director of Finance/Section 151 Officer), Polly Patel (Performance and Partnerships Manager) and Clare Gornall (Democratic and Member Services Officer)
Apologies:	None

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

20.OSP.5 Declarations of Any Interests

No interests were declared.

20.OSP.6 Minutes of meeting Thursday, 27 July 2023 of Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 27 July 2023 be approved as a correct record.

20.OSP.7 Business Plan Update 2023/24

Councillor Alistair Bradley, Executive Member for Economic Development and Public Service Reform and Councillor Peter Wilson, Executive Member for Resources presented a report providing an update on the delivery of service level projects outlined in the business plans.

Councillor Bradley highlighted that of the total 81 projects:

- 54 were rated as **Green (67%)**
- 10 were considered **Completed (12%)**
- 16 were rated as **Amber (20%)**

- 1 was rated as **Red (1%)**

Councillor Bradley explained that the project rated red was in relation to the finance system project, which had been delayed for the reasons explained in paragraph 14, i.e. to ensure a stable environment before proceeding with the purchase of a new system.

A number of questions were put by Panel, to which the responses were as follows:

2023 Events Programme – It was clarified that some of the overspend related to South Ribble (i.e. Worden Park / South Ribble Museum). In respect of Chorley Council, there had been additional spend on the Flower Show. It was noted, however, that the events programme ran from Jan – Dec whereas performance reporting year runs April – April. For future performance reports it was requested that officers look at addressing that discrepancy and also the disaggregation of Chorley Council matters so it is clearer for Members.

Environmental Crime Enforcement Policy – an update to be provided to members after the meeting.

Finance systems project delay – The Director of Finance, Louise Mattinson explained the position as regards the finance systems project. She stressed that it was important for systems to be able to interface with each other; therefore measures had been taken to ensure stability and integrity of existing systems by renewing the contract with the existing provider for one year with the option to extend for a further two years at an agreed price. In the meantime, progress can be made into purchasing a newer and better systems on the market to deliver best value for the Council.

The Director of Finance confirmed that the project was now on track for implementing the new systems in April 2025.

Long term empty property checks – latest figures to be provided to the Neighbourhood Area Meetings and an update be given to the next Panel meeting.

Special Expenses – Councillor Wilson stressed it was important to ensure that the detailed costs were apportioned as accurately as possible across parishes (e.g. for grass cutting); however there will inevitably be some grey areas. The Chair stressed that it was important to clarify for the benefit of local residents.

UKSPF programme – update report to the next meeting on the Council's proposals to monitor the delivery of the programme.

Exploration of joint district health scrutiny – That an update be provided to members.

Resolved –

- i) That the report be noted;
- ii) That for future performance reporting in respect of areas where there is a shared service, projects be disaggregated to make clear which relate only to Chorley Council;
- iii) That an update be provided after the meeting in relation to progress on the Environmental Crime Enforcement Policy;
- iv) That the figures regarding long term empty property checks be provided to Neighbourhood Area Meetings ;
- v) That an update on special expenses be provided to the Panel in due course;
- vi) That an update be provided to the next meeting on the Council's proposals to monitor delivery of the UKSPF programme;
- vii) That an update be provided to members regarding exploration of joint district health scrutiny.

20.OSP.8 Performance Focus - Policy and Governance

Councillor Alistair Bradley, Executive Member for Economic Development and Public Service Reform and Councillor Peter Wilson, Executive Member for Resources presented a report providing a performance update for the Policy and Governance Directorate. This included:

- a) An overall directorate summary and budget position,
- b) An overview of performance at quarter two 2023/2024
- c) An update on the Corporate Strategy projects.

Chris Moister, Director of Governance and Louise Mattinson, Director of Finance were also in attendance.

A number of questions / queries were raised by the Panel, and the responses were as follows:

- Overall employment rate – members queried the figure as it differed significantly from the rest of the region average. Councillor Bradley agreed that the figure needed to be investigated further, and if accurate to identify the reasons.
- Corporate projects – Improve our Council buildings – Councillor Bradley explained the delays were related to the decarbonisation scheme and the need to meet government criteria which was very strict.
- Internal audit reviews – Chris Moister explained that all management actions had been agreed with the service. It may be that work in some areas was complete, however, if they had yet to be ticked off in the system (.i.e at the deadline of end of the month or the quarter), the action would still be shown as outstanding in the report. He stressed that overall, things were moving in the right direction.
- Astley Hall Bookings – Councillor Wilson agreed to provide a breakdown of footfall figures split into local residents and visitors.

- Digital connectivity in rural areas - Rural England Prosperity Fund grants – Cllr Bradley indicated that the take up had been very good. He would be receiving a full report in due course and an update would subsequently be provided to the Panel.
- Council business networking / events – Councillor Bradley indicated we are now taking a different approach – it is working well but there is more we can do.
- Response times for complaints to the Chief Executive and MP - identify what is the issue / reason for delay and review the appropriateness of the target if necessary.

Resolved –

- i) That the report be noted;
- j) That the above actions be agreed.

20.OSP.9 Any urgent business previously agreed with the Chair

There was no urgent business.

Chair

Date