

# Executive Cabinet

## Minutes of meeting held on Thursday, 14 February 2008

**Present:** Councillor Peter Goldsworthy (Executive Leader in the Chair), Councillor Pat Case (Deputy Leader of the Council) and Councillors Eric Bell, Alan Cullens, Peter Malpas and John Walker

**Also in attendance:**

**Lead Members:** Councillors Mrs Marie Gray (Lead Member for Town Centre), Harold Heaton (Lead Member for Development Control), Geoffrey Russell (Lead Member for Finance), Rosie Russell (Lead Member for Health and Older People) and Iris Smith (Lead Member for Licensing)

**Other Members:** Councillors Ken Ball, Nora Ball, Dennis Edgerley, Anthony Gee, Daniel Gee, Catherine Hoyle, Laura Lennox, Ralph Snape and Mrs Stella Walsh

### 08.EC.01 COUNCILLOR KEN BALL

The Executive Leader expressed the Members' best wishes for the speedy return to full health of Councillor Ken Ball following his recent stay in hospital.

### 08.EC.02 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest by any of the Executive Members in any of the agenda items.

### 08.EC.03 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Executive Cabinet held on 6 December 2007 were confirmed as a correct record for signature by the Executive Leader.

### 08.EC.04 FORWARD PLAN

The Executive Cabinet received the Council's February Forward Plan, which set out details of the potential key decisions to be made by the Executive Cabinet or individual Executive Members during the four-month period commencing 1 February 2008.

**Decision made:**

**That the February Forward Plan, as now presented, be noted.**

### 08.EC.05 BID FOR BEACON COUNCIL STATUS

The Chief Executive gave a short presentation on Chorley Council's bid to the Improvement and Development Agency for Beacon Council status to be afforded to the Authority by the Government in recognition of the Council's initiatives related to 'Transforming Services for Citizen Engagement and Empowerment'.

The Chief Executive's presentation explained the rationale and basis of the bid for Beacon Council status, highlighting the strong customer orientated culture of the whole of the organisation that underpinned its service delivery. The Council's innovative and consultative approach had helped to shape services around the needs and aspirations of local residents to the extent that the Council was now acknowledged as one of the top performing Authorities in respect of its recycling, street cleanliness and benefits services. The Authority's overall customer satisfaction

rate had increased by 14% during the past 12 months, placing Chorley amongst the five Authorities with the highest customer satisfaction ratings.

The Council's bid had emphasised Chorley's innovative and pioneering practices which had highlighted, in particular, transformation of its business processes and re-engineered services around customer and corporate priorities; the use of mosaic customer profiling in identifying and categorising the various types of customer profiles for linkage with the 'circle of need' which aimed to provide a comprehensive support package to customers; the innovative partnership projects (e.g. the Multi-Agency Tasking and Co-ordination (MATAC) Unit and the Vulnerable Households project); the development of a Locality Plan and an LAA neighbourhood pilot scheme with Lancashire County Council; the transfer of community centres to local community management; the pursuance of shared services with County and neighbouring District Councils; and the introduction of contracted equality targets.

Chorley Council's bid was one of only 5 from 15 applications to be short listed and the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government was due to announce the award of Beacon Council Status on 4 March 2008.

The Council, if successful, would be awarded £83,000 to spend on the dissemination of good practice to other authorities and would be granted certain exemptions from the inspection regime. The Chief Executive also indicated that the award of Beacon Status would enable the Council to develop an on-line toolkit and other bespoke monitoring and diagnostics services to other Councils, based on Chorley's experience of business transformation, in addition to the organisation of national conferences and events.

The Members thanked the Chief Executive for her address and affirmed their support of the bid of Beacon Status, which, if awarded, would assist the Council's efforts to achieve the highest CPA rating.

#### **08.EC.06 ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION IN DESIGNATED PUBLIC PLACES - PROPOSED ORDER UNDER CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND POLICE ACT 2001**

The Executive Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director (Neighbourhoods) recommending the Council to undertake a consultation exercise on a proposal to make a Designated Public Place Order under the provisions of the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 in respect of the area surrounding the Leisure Centre complex and Springfield Road, Coppull and in the vicinity of German Lane, as defined on the plan accompanying the Director's report.

The Order, if effected, would not introduce a blanket ban on the drinking of alcohol with the designated area, but failure to comply with a Police Officer's requirements in respect of public drinking or surrender of alcohol, without reasonable excuse, would become an arrestable offence.

Residents in the area at Coppull had suffered from anti-social behaviour caused by drunkenness over a long period and various schemes and measures introduced in the past had had varying degrees of success, but had failed to eradicate the problem. The Police had now supported the current proposals to consult on the Order, which, if introduced, would provide a further tool for the Police to tackle alcohol problems. If the initiative proved successful, the scheme could be replicated in other appropriate areas of the Borough.

Coppull Parish Council had agreed to fund the costs of the provision of appropriate signage within the designated area. Councillor Ken Ball confirmed the

Parish Council' support of the scheme and requested the Council to consider the extension of the designated area to embrace Darlington Street, Coppull.

**Decision made:**

1. **That the Council be recommended to consult the persons, organisations and businesses identified in the appendix to the submitted report on a proposal to make a Designated Public Place Order under Section 13 of the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 in respect of the area within Coppull defined on the plan attached to the submitted report.**
2. **That the proposal to submit the above recommendation for consideration at a special meeting of the General Purposes Committee on 3 March 2008 be noted.**

**Reasons for Decision**

1. The facilities affected are public buildings and facilities that provide a service to the community. If the Council fails to take all reasonable steps to prevent the anti-social behaviour of people at this location then confidence in public services will be lost.
2. The legislation governing this order is tailored specifically to address the problems that are prevalent at this locality and also caters for issues of displacement as a result of an Order.
3. All other means to prevent drunkenness and unruly behaviour at this location have been tried and have had only limited or short-term effect.
4. This type of Order has not been tried in Chorley previously and this location will give the Council the ideal opportunity to monitor and evaluate its effectiveness for future projects.
5. The Parish Council is willing to pay for all signage.
6. A dispersal notice was effective during its period of operation, which gives some confidence that the order will be successful.
7. An Order will support the Parish Council in their efforts to upgrade the facilities, through Lottery Funding, and will show that the Council is determined to stop anti-social behaviour in this area.

**Alternative options considered and rejected**

A number of measures designed to eradicate anti-social behaviour (e.g. CCTV, alley gates, seating facilities, Dispersal Notice, restricted access) have met with only limited success.

A permanent Police or Police Community Support Officer presence would not be cost effective or proportionate.

(Councillor Ken Ball and Nora Ball left the meeting after the conclusion of the above item at approximately 5.40pm).

The Executive Cabinet received a report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Business Transformation) monitoring the Council's financial performance during the third quarter of 2007/08 in comparison with the budgetary and efficiency savings targets for the current financial year in respect of the General Fund.

The report identified and commented on the most significant variations to the original budget since the last monitoring report, indicating that the projected overspend on the 2007/08 budget had been reduced to £30,000. It was envisaged, however, that further efficiency savings would be made in order to achieve a balanced budget by the financial year-end.

**Decision made:**

**That the report be noted.**

**08.EC.08 PROPOSALS FOR GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX, 2008/09**

The Executive Cabinet considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Business Transformation) putting forward revised proposals for the General Fund Budget and Council Tax levels for 2008/09 with a view to the Executive Cabinet's recommendations being considered by the Council on 26 February 2008, following the consultation exercise into the draft budget proposals agreed at the 6 December 2007 Executive Cabinet meeting.

The report was accompanied by the following appendices:

- Appendix A contains a summary of the key factors impacting on the budget position (e.g. further information on Government grants), which, collectively, had allowed an opportunity for the investment of a further £35,000 in projects linked to the Council's corporate priorities, in addition to the £265,00 agreed previously.
- Appendix B put forward priorities to restructure the car park fees and tariffs for 2008/09.
- Appendix C summarised the outcome of the consultation exercise on the draft budget proposals, highlighting the consultees' preferred top three priorities for further investment.
- Appendix D outlined the views of recommendations of the Corporate and Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel and the Environment and Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel on the draft budget proposals.

After taking account of the additional financial resources that would be available to the Authority in 2008/09 and the views and suggestions of consultees, the report put forward proposals to reduce the proposed Council Tax increase from 3% to 2.5% and to invest significant extra sums on the Council's 'Get Up and Go' programme and the improvement of neighbourhoods. In addition further capital expenditure was recommended to be incurred on the improvement of football pitches and energy efficiency schemes throughout the Borough.

A non-Executive Member present at the meeting requested the Executive Cabinet to consider the allocation of a further £100,000 from reserves for use by the Council's Strategic Housing Team to pump prime the funding of appropriate initiatives to combat homelessness throughout the Borough.

**Recommendations made:**

**That the draft General fund revenue budget proposals for 2008/09 agreed at the 6 December 2007 meeting of the Executive Cabinet for consultation purposes to recommended for approval and adoption by the Council at its meeting on 26 February 2008, subject to the following amendments:**

- **The Council Tax increase for 2008/09 be 2.5% rather 3% as previously proposed.**
- **That, following the budget consultation exercise, a further investment of £20,000 be allocated to the 'Get Up and Go' programme, to be funded by a similar reduction in the sum previously allocated for the extra opening of Astley Hall.**
- **That an additional £100,000 expenditure on improving neighbourhoods be funded from working balances and reserves.**
- **That the addition of the Cotswold House grant bid at a total cost of £3.2m, to be financed from grant and £500,000 of the Council's own resources, be noted.**
- **That further sums of Capital resources totalling £300,00 and £150,000 respectively be allocated for the improvement of the Council's football pitches and the improvement of the Council's buildings to make them more energy efficient.**

**Reasons for recommendation:**

To finalise the Executive's budget proposals for 2008/09 which will form the basis of the recommendation to the Council on 26 February 2008.

**Alternative option(s) considered and rejected:**

None.

**08.EC.09 PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT - THIRD QUARTER OF 2007/08**

The Executive Cabinet considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Policy and Performance) which set out and reviewed the Authority's performance in the delivery of the key projects and measures in the Corporate Strategy and against national Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI's) during the third quarter of 2007/08 ending on 31 December 2007.

The report revealed an overall commendable performance in the delivery of the refreshed Corporate Strategy's key projects, with 84% of the projects either having been completed or progressing on or ahead of plan. The report explained that three of the projects were currently behind schedule for reasons beyond the Council's control, but indicated that the projects managers were confident that the projects would be delivered on the foreseeable future.

In addition, the report confirmed a good overall BVPI performance, with an increased 41% of BVPI's in the top quarter nationally. 67% of indicators had shown an improving or consistent performance and an assurance was given that performance in relation to the indicators which were failing to meet their respective targets would be monitored and action instigated to effect improvements.

The report also highlighted the Audit Commission's award of a maximum score of 4 for Chorley Council's use of resources, with only 12 other Authorities nationally receiving the maximum score. Additionally, Chorley Council had been one of only seven Council's to receive an overall 4 out of 4 score on Value for Money. The Executive Cabinet appreciated the significant achievement, which bode well for the impending CPA inspection.

**Decision made:**

**That the report be noted.**

**08.EC.10 CHILD AND YOUNG PERSON PROTECTION POLICY**

The Corporate Director (People) presented a report recommending the adoption of the Child and Young Person Protection Policy accompanying the report.

The Executive Cabinet was reminded that the Council provided a wide variety of services and activities either directly for, or with the participation of, children and young people, particularly in the field of sport, art and culture. The Council had, under the terms of the Children Act 2004, a statutory responsibility to provide a safe environment for children and young people, in which their welfare was of paramount importance.

The Child and Young Person Protection Policy confirmed the Council's commitment to its responsibility to safeguard children and set out various systems, guidance and procedures for officers to follow in differing circumstances in order to protect children and young people.

The policy would apply to all permanent and temporary staff, Councillors, Contractors and volunteer workers. It was intended that the role of Designated Child Protection Officer, who would provide a point of contact and take forward any concerns or disclosures on children at risk, would be undertaken by the new post of Active People Manager (Leisure and Inclusion).

**Decision made:**

**That the Child and Young Person Protection Policy, as now submitted, be approved and adopted.**

**Reason for Decision:**

The introduction of the policy will enable the Council to promote good practice and provide children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst involved in activities of the Council, and will allow Council representative to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

**Alternative option(s) considered and rejected:**

None.

**08.EC.11 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**Decision made:**

**That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the ground that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.**

**08.EC.12 IMPROVING NEIGHBOURHOODS IN CHORLEY**

The Executive Cabinet considered a report of the Chief Executive on the recommendations of the Cabinet Task Group that had been set up to examine the findings of the Environment and Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel's inquiry into methods of neighbourhood working.

Whilst the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had advocated the creation of 8 Neighbourhood Areas based on the Neighbourhood Policing Areas, the Task Group had recommended the establishment of neighbourhood teams operating within seven Neighbourhood Areas identified on the accompanying plan as a more appropriate model better placed to work in conjunction with existing community groups and Parish Councils.

The report recommended the transfer of the Community Development Officers from the People Directorate to the Neighbourhood Directorate and the establishment of a new post of Neighbourhood Co-ordinator and two additional front-line Neighbourhood Officers.

The resources required to implement the initiative, which included the provision of a fund to support local schemes and a £100,00 non-recurrent pump-priming sum, had been factored into the 2008/09 draft revenue budget.

The Chief Executive emphasised that the proposals had been formulated with the aim of disseminating the neighbourhood working model across the whole of the Borough, with the emphasis being placed firmly on an action based initiative, as opposed to a meetings led concept.

#### **Decisions made:**

1. **That the Neighbourhood Working proposals and action plan, as outlined in the submitted report, be approved and adopted.**
2. **That approval be given to the seven neighbourhood footprints as defined on the plan shown in Appendix 1 to the submitted report.**
3. **That a new post of Neighbourhood Co-ordinator be established at a grading established by the Job Evaluation exercise.**
4. **That two additional posts of front-line Neighbourhood Officer be established at a grading established by the Job Evaluation exercise.**
5. **That the existing post of Trainee Community Development Assistant in the People Directorate be deleted and replaced by one full time qualified Community Development Assistant in the Neighbourhoods Directorate at a grading established by the Job Evaluation exercise.**
6. **That the existing Community Development Officer post be transferred to the Neighbourhoods Directorate.**
7. **That the budget provision for the implementation of the proposals, as projected in the submitted report, be accepted and approved.**
8. **That the areas of the Borough currently not covered by Parish Councils be encouraged to explore the option.**
9. **That the Chorley Community Safety Partnership be recommended to review and consider the future of Target Area Partnerships (TAPS) through the refresh of the Community Safety Strategy.**

#### **Reasons for recommendations:**

The proposals have been compiled with the primary aim of enabling

- (i) people to feel and be involved in their communities;
- (ii) services to be improved by local influence and delivery;

(iii) the development of community confidence and cohesion.

**Alternative options(s) considered and rejected:**

The recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were considered by a group of Executive Cabinet members (i.e. Executive Member for Streetscene, Neighbourhoods and Environment, Executive Member for Health, Leisure and Well-Being and Executive Member for Customer, Democratic and Legal Services), with advice from the Chief Executive and the former Director of Streetscene, Neighbourhoods and Environment.

As a result of its examination, the Task Group considered that a Neighbourhood Working model based on the seven Policing and Borough Ward boundaries would be inappropriate. Alternatively, the Group favoured a revised model based on seven Neighbourhood Areas that would better secure the engagement of existing groups in the respective areas.

Executive Leader