

Environment and Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Agenda and Reports

For consideration on

Monday, 16th July 2007

In Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Chorley

At 6.30 am



PROCEDURE FOR PUBLIC QUESTIONS/SPEAKING AT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MEETINGS

- Questions must be submitted to the Democratic Services Section by no later than midday, two working days before the day of the meeting to allow time to prepare appropriate responses and investigate issues if necessary.
- A maximum period of 3 minutes will be allowed for a question from a member of the public on an item on the agenda. A maximum period of 30 minutes to be allocated for public questions if necessary at each meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its appropriate panels. This will provide an opportunity for members of the public to raise and ask questions on any issue falling within the remit of the Committee or Panel.

Chief Executive's Office

Please ask for: Gordon Banks
Direct Dial: (01257) 515123
E-mail address: grdon.banks@chorley.gov.uk
Date: 5 July 2007

Chief Executive: Donna Hall

Chorley
Council

Town Hall
Market Street
Chorley
Lancashire
PR7 1DP

Dear Councillor

ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL - MONDAY, 16TH JULY 2007

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Environment and Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel to be held in Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Chorley on Monday, 16th July 2007 commencing at 6.30 am.

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for absence**

2. **Declarations of Any Interests**

Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any personal interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda. If the interest arises **only** as result of your membership of another public body or one to which you have been appointed by the Council then you only need to declare it if you intend to speak.

If the personal interest is a prejudicial 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. **Minutes (Pages 1 - 2)**

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 7 June 2007 (enclosed)

4. **Public Questions**

Members of the public who have requested the opportunity to ask a question(s) on an item(s) on the agenda will be asked to put their question(s) to the Committee. Each member of the public will be asked one supplementary question within his or her allocated 3 minutes

Continued....

5. **Business Plan Monitoring (Pages 3 - 4)**

The Panel on the 7 June 2007 requested Directors to submit to this meeting information relating to the under mentioned issues when it considered the Business Plan Monitoring Statements for the period 1 January to 31 March 2007.

The Director of Finance to report on the following issue

- Processing of Invoices within the 30 working days.

An analysis of where and the reasons for the delays that are causing the current fall in the performance target and whether the system is working across the authority (enclosed)

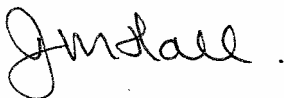
The Director of Human Resources will give a short presentation on the management of sickness absence across the authority, indicating how the figures are arrived at and the split in the figures between short term and long-term sickness.

6. **Neighbourhood Working - Inquiry**

The Director of Streetscene, Neighbourhoods and Environment will present a verbal report on the current position regarding the progress of the ongoing Neighbourhood Working Inquiry.

7. **Any other item(s) that the Chair decides is/are urgent**

Yours sincerely



Chief Executive

Distribution

1. Agenda and reports to all Members of the Environment and Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Councillor Greg Morgan (Chair) and Councillors Nora Ball, Judith Boothman, Magda Cullens, Michael Devaney, Doreen Dickinson, Anthony Gee, Catherine Hoyle, Keith Iddon, Miss Margaret Iddon, KevinJoyce, Roy Lees, Adrian Lowe, Marion Lowe, Michael Muncaster, Rosemary Russell and Shaun Smith for attendance.
2. Agenda and reports to John Lechmere (Director of Streetscene, Neighbourhoods and Environment) and Gordon Bankes (Democratic Services Officer) for attendance.

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

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

ان معلومات کا ترجمہ آپکی اپنی زبان میں بھی کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ یہ خدمت استعمال کرنے کیلئے براہ مہربانی اس نمبر پر ٹیلیفون
کیجئے: 01257 515823

This page is intentionally left blank

Environment and Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Thursday, 7 June 2007

Present: Councillor Greg Morgan (Chair) (Chair) and Councillors Magda Cullens, Michael Devaney, Anthony Gee, Miss Margaret Iddon, Kevin Joyce and Rosemary Russell

07.ECS.13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Nora Ball, Doreen Dickinson, Catherine Hoyle, Roy Lees, Adrian Lowe, Marion Lowe, Michael Muncaster and Shaun Smith.

07.ECS.14 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

No Members declared any interest in relation to matters under consideration at the meeting.

07.ECS.15 MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 22 March 2007 be confirmed as a correct record.

07.ECS.16 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No member of the public requested to speak at the meeting.

07.ECS.17 BUSINESS PLAN MONITORING STATEMENTS - PERIOD 1 JANUARY TO 31 MARCH 2007

The Panel received the fourth quarter Business Plan Monitoring Statement for the period December 2006 to April 2007 relating to the under mentioned Directorates whose service and function all fall within the remit and area of responsibility of the Panel.

- Leisure and Culture
- Development and Regeneration
- Streetscene, Neighbourhoods and Environment

The Panel received the Business Plan for the Leisure and Cultural Services Directorate. The Director informed the Panel that the only area of his service that had not reached the performance target was that of processing of invoices within 30 working days. It was pointed out that this was an issue, which every directorate was currently coming to terms with and action taken to improve the service.

However, the Committee expressed concern that this issue had been at this level of performance for several months and that immediate action was now required to improve performance as it was considered to be an important indicator reflecting on the Council's payments to suppliers etc.

The Director of Development and Regeneration presented the Panel with her Business Plan for her Directorate. All key projects set out in the Business Plan were on track.

Members congratulated the Director on the tremendous improvements that had been made to service delivery to customers, reflected in an increase in customer

satisfaction from 61% to 76%. The Planning Services Team was keen to build on this success and were prepared to implement a 3 year action plan to help to continue the success.

The Panel received the Business Plan relating to the Streetscene, Neighbourhoods and Environment Directorate. The Director indicated the performance variation for the number of missed collections per 100,000 collections of household waste had improved but was still slightly below target. Various initiatives had been taken up with the contractor to drive up collection performance and reduce missed collections.

Other areas of poor performance related to racist and offensive graffiti removal within 2 working days, invoices processed within 30 working days and sickness absence days with the Director pointing out that the corporate target was 9.00 working days. Action plans had been compiled to address these issues.

RESOLVED – 1) That the report be noted.

2) That the Director of Finance be requested to submit a report to the next meeting of the Panel on the processing of invoices within 30 working days, providing an analysis of where and reasons for the delays which are causing the current fall in the performance target and whether the system is working across the authority.

3) That the Director of Human Resources be requested to inform the Panel at its next meeting on the management of sickness absence across the authority, indicating how the figures are arrived at and the split in the figures between short term and long term sickness.

07.ECS.18 NEIGHBOURHOOD WORKING - INQUIRY

The Director of Streetscene, Neighbourhoods and Environment reported on the current position with regard to the Panel's ongoing inquiry into neighbourhood working, indicating that a visit was planned provisionally for 27 June 2007 to Bolton where neighbourhood working was being conducted in the Great Lever area of the authority.

A final witness hearing was due to take place with the Chair of the Panel and the Chief Executive, Director of Finance, Executive Leader and Executive Member for Streetscene, Neighbourhoods and Environment.

A draft report of the Inquiry's findings had been completed but required input from the findings from the above meetings.

Chair

Briefing Note

Briefing Note of The Director of Finance to Environment and Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Purpose of Note

To appraise members of the actions being taken to deliver improvements in invoice processing following the Panels review of the quarter ending 31 December 2006 results.

Background

The Council's corporate target for the processing of invoices is to achieve 96% of all invoices paid within 30 days of receipt. The measure is also as Best Value Performance Indicator required on a national basis. Achieving 96% would place the Council in a upper quarter of Performing Council's.

Update

Members raised their concerns at the last Panel meeting where Performance to the end of December 2006 was not as expected, with performance falling below target. Set out below is an update that that incorporates both the year end performance and the latest quarter information.

Directorate	Quarter ended 31/12/06	Year ended 31/03/07	Quarter ended 30/06/07	No of invoices out of date 31/06/07
Development & Regeneration	91.35	86.02	90.22	9
Leisure & Culture	91.57	89.94	79.78	37
Streetscene & Neighbourhood	91.10	90.37	96.75	19
				65

The table shows that performance in SNED has increased dramatically in Development and Regeneration performance has been sustained whilst in Leisure and Culture Performance has declined.

To put this into context, members should be aware that overall the Council's performance increased from 84% in 2005/2006 to 92% in 2006/2007, an improvement of almost 10%.

This was due in part to the new arrangements instigated in 2006/2007 following the introduction of the electronic pay to process whereby the system is new paperless and significant administrative cost savings have been made.

In relation to the current performance a number of changes have been made in this year to ensure that:

- Directorates have up to date performance information.
- Problems on an individual invoice basis are flagged up early to all concerned.

In addition further training has been provided to staff using the system and process.

Members should also note that whilst the % performance figures can fluctuate the actual number of invoices which miss the target is relatively small, with only 65 missing the 30 day deadline in the first quarter of 2006/07.

We continue to work with Directors and others involved in the processing of invoices to improve performance. Signification changes have been made in the Leisure and Cultural Directorate regarding how payments are processed and despite their current performance the trend is an improving one.

I believe that we have now done all that is possible to facilitate Improvement Performance and that it is a matter for individuals to ensure that performance is maintained. I shall continue to provide members with an update of performance again this particular indicator which I expect to improve in the forthcoming months.