

Chief Executive's Office

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Date: 14 December 2005

Chorley
Borough Council

Town Hall
Market Street
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Lancashire
PR7 1DP

Chief Executive:

Jeffrey W Davies MA LLM

Dear Councillor

A meeting of the Executive Cabinet is due to be held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Chorley on Thursday, 30th June, 2005 at 5.00 pm.

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Declarations of Any Interests**

Members of the Executive Cabinet are reminded of their responsibility to declare any personal interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda, in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Members Code of Conduct. If the personal interest is a prejudicial interest, then the individual Member should not participate in a discussion on the matter and must withdraw from the room and not seek to influence a decision on the matter.

3. **Minutes (Pages 1 - 6)**

To confirm as a correct record the public minutes of the meeting of the Executive Cabinet held on 26 May 2005 (enclosed)

MATTERS REFERRED BY THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (INTRODUCED BY THE CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, COUNCILLOR J WALKER)

4. **Review of Youth Activities in Chorley (Pages 7 - 48)**

Report of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel (copy enclosed)

5. **One Stop Shop (Pages 49 - 120)**

Report of the Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel (copy enclosed)

Continued....

STRATEGIC / POLICY ITEMS

CAPACITY AND RESOURCES ITEMS (INTRODUCED BY THE EXECUTIVE LEADER, COUNCILLOR J WILSON)

6. **Review of Members Allowance Scheme**
Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (copy to follow)
7. **Revenue and Capital Outturn 2004/05**
Report of the Director of Finance (copy to follow)
8. **Equality and Diversity in Employment Policy**
Report of the Head of Human Resources (copy to follow)
9. **Equality and Diversity Officer**
Report of the Director of Legal Services (copy to follow)
10. **Economic Regeneration Strategy / Core Central Lancashire City Region**
Report of the Head of Economic Regeneration (copy to follow)

LIFE AND LEISURE ITEM (INTRODUCED BY THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER, COUNCILLOR HOYLE)

11. **Astley Park Heritage Lottery Fund Contract (Pages 121 - 124)**
Joint report of the Director of Finance and the Head of Economic Regeneration (copy enclosed)

HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL ITEM (INTRODUCED BY THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER, COUNCILLOR LENNOX)

12. **Protocol for Members and Officers in respect of Proposed Housing Stock Transfer (Pages 125 - 136)**
Report of the Director of Legal Services (copy enclosed)

DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING ITEM (INTRODUCED BY THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER, COUNCILLOR A LOWE)

13. **Statement of Community Involvement (Pages 137 - 198)**
Report of the Head of Planning Services (copy enclosed)
14. **Planning Services - Amendment to Scheme of Delegation (Pages 199 - 200)**
Joint report of the Head of Planning Services and Director of Legal Services (copy enclosed)

OPERATIONAL ITEMS

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION ITEMS (INTRODUCED BY THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER, COUNCILLOR D GEE)

15. **Percy Street, Chorley - Proposed Stopping Up** (Pages 201 - 204)
Report of the Director of Legal Services (copy enclosed)
16. **Temple Way, Chorley - Proposed Stopping Up** (Pages 205 - 208)
Report of the Director of Legal Services (copy enclosed)
17. **Crosse Hall Lane, Chorley - Proposed of Private Street Works** (Pages 209 - 212)
Report of the Director of Legal Services (copy enclosed)
18. **Any other item(s) which the Executive Leader decides is/are urgent**
19. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

To consider the exclusion of the press and public for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.
20. **Minutes** (Pages 213 - 216)

To confirm as a correct record the non-public minutes of the meeting of the Executive Cabinet held on 26 May 2005 (enclosed)

Yours sincerely

Chief Executive

ENCS

Distribution

1. All members of the Executive Cabinet and Chief Officers for attendance.
2. Councillor Walker for attendance.
3. All remaining Members of the Council for information.
4. Mike Thomas (District Auditor) Audit Commission for attendance.

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CHORLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE CABINET****26 MAY 2005**

Present: Councillor J Wilson (Executive Leader in the Chair), Councillor Edgerley (Deputy Leader of the Council), Councillors Ball, T Brown, A Gee, D Gee, Lennox, A Lowe, and R Snape

Also in attendance: Councillors Mrs Case, D Dickinson, Malpas, Walker and Mrs Walsh.

O5.EC.64 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Hoyle.

O5.EC.65 SENIOR SOLICITOR

The Executive Leader welcomed and introduced Susan Hedges, Senior Solicitor, to her first Executive Cabinet meeting.

O5.EC.66 MINUTES

The public minutes of the meeting of the Executive Cabinet held on 7 April 2005 were confirmed as a correct record for signature by the Executive Leader

O5.EC.67 APPOINTMENT AND COMPOSITION OF CABINET COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

The Executive Cabinet considered the proposed composition of a number of ad hoc Committees and Working Groups whose functions fell within the remit of the Executive.

Decision taken:

1. That the following Committees of the Executive Cabinet be appointed comprising of the membership indicated:

(a) Human Resources Appeals Committee (5 Members)

Councillor J Wilson (Chair) and Councillors Ball, A Gee, Hoyle and R Snape

(b) Indoor Leisure Committee (3 Members)

Councillor Edgerley (Chair) and Councillors Ball and Hoyle

(c) Performance Review Committee (3 Members)

Councillor Edgerley (Chair) and Councillors Ball and A Gee

2. That the following bodies whose functions fall within the remit of the Executive Cabinet be appointed, comprising of the membership indicated:

(a) Disability Liaison Group (8 Members)

Councillor Hoyle (Chair) and Councillors Mrs Case, D Dickinson, D Gee, Molyneaux, Parr, R Snape and Mrs Walsh

(b) Economic Development Liaison Panel (4 Members)

Councillor J Wilson (Chair), Councillor Edgerley (Vice Chair) and Councillors A Lowe and M Wilson

(c) Ethnic Minorities Consultative Committee (5 Members)

Councillor Snow (Chair) and Councillors Malpas, Walker, Mrs Walsh and M Wilson

(d) Housing Shadow Management Group (4 Members)

Councillors Edgerley, Lennox, Livesey and Snow

plus 4 tenants representatives

(e) Housing Joint Selection Panel (5 Members)

Councillors Culshaw, Edgerley, Lennox, Livesey and Snow

plus 8 tenants and 5 members of staff

(f) Markets Liaison Group (2 Members)

Councillors A Gee (Chair) and M Lowe (Vice Chair)

(g) Staff Local Joint Consultative Committee (10 Members)

Councillor J Wilson (Chair) and Councillors Ball, Mrs Dickinson, A Gee, Mrs Gray, Lees, Lennox, McGowan, E Smith and J Snape

Reasons for decision:

To establish the bodies responsible for the implementation of a number of executive functions.

Alternative Options considered and rejected:

None

O5.EC.68 REVISED SANCTION AND PROSECUTION POLICY - HOUSING BENEFITS AND COUNCIL TAX BENEFITS

The Director of Finance submitted a report on proposed changes to the Sanction and Prosecution Policy to reflect changes to guidance issued by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

Decision made:

That approval be given to the amendments to the revised Sanction and Prosecution Policy Sanction and Prosecution Policy, to be adopted with immediate effect.

Reasons for decision:

To make the Council's Sanction and Prosecution Policy more relevant and workable and to bring it in line with DWP Policy.

Alternative Options considered and rejected:

None.

O5.EC.69 LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Head of Human Resources submitted a report which incorporated the draft Learning and Development Strategy for 2005-2008.

Decision made:

- 1. That the draft Learning and Development Strategy for 2005-2008 be approved as the basis for general consultation with Members of the Council.**
- 2. That the Executive Leader be given delegated authority to approve the final draft of the Strategy following Member consultation prior to the Summer recess.**

Reasons for decision:

To provide a strategic focus for developing the capacity of Members and Officers of the Authority.

Alternative Options considered and rejected:

None

O5.EC.70 AMENDMENT TO SCHEME OF DELEGATION - ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ORDERS

The Head of Corporate and Policy Services submitted a report seeking an amendment to the Scheme of Delegation to allow the Anti Social Behaviour Co-ordinator to consult and make applications for Anti Social Behaviour Orders on behalf of the Council.

Decision made:

That the Council be recommended to give approval to the amendment of the Executive Functions in the Council's Constitution to allow the Head of Corporate and Policy Services and the Anti Social Behaviour Co-ordinator to conduct any necessary consultations with agencies and make applications for Anti Social Behaviour Orders on behalf of the Council under Section 1 and 2 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Reasons for decision:

To allow the Anti Social Behaviour Co-ordinator to progress applications for Anti Social Behaviour Orders.

Alternative Options considered and rejected:

None

05.EC.71 CHORLEY AND SOUTH RIBBLE LOCAL COMPACT

The Head of Leisure and Cultural Services submitted a report seeking approval to the adoption of a Local Compact between the Council, South Ribble Borough Council, Chorley and South Ribble Primary Care Trust and the voluntary, community and faith sectors.

Decision made:

That approval be given to the Council adopting and signing-up to the Local Compact for Chorley and South Ribble.

Reasons for decision:

To further develop effective partnership working with statutory, voluntary, community and faith sectors within the Borough for mutual advantage.

Alternative Options considered and rejected:

Not adopting a Local Compact

Adopting a Compact with the voluntary, community and faith sectors in isolation from South Ribble Borough Council and the Chorley and South Ribble Primary Care Trust.

05.EC.72 EXTENSION OF ICT DATA NETWORK

With the consent of the Executive Leader to the consideration of this urgent item, the Head of Public Space Services submitted a report seeking approval to the extension of the Council's ICT Data Network and the establishment of a Service Centre at Portland Street car park by a nominated contractor, to meet the requirements of the Council's Business Continuity Plan.

Decision made:

1. That approval be given to the award of a contract to Cedar Contract Services in the terms indicated for the completion of the Council's ICT Data Network.

2. That the Capital Programme Budget for this project be increased to £68,040 in 2005/06 to cover works not included in the Cedar Contract Services contract and internal charges.

Reasons for decision:

The cabling work and extension of the Council's ICT network is essential to remove the risk of failure of the network and to provide a facility for the continuation of the Council's business in emergency situations in line with the Business Continuity Plan.

Alternative Options considered and rejected:

The invitation and assessment of tenders and the award of a contract would delay the extension of the network by upto four months.

O5.EC. 73 CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION ITEMS

The Executive Cabinet, in addition to the items listed above, considered other items that disclosed exempt information as defined within the meaning of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and made the decisions indicated below.

O5.EC. 74 Confirmation of the Non-public Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Cabinet held on 7 April 2005

O5.EC. 75 Approval to proposals to enable the implementation of a Job Evaluation and Equal Pay Review, as required by the Single Status Agreement

O5.EC. 76 Approval to recommendations following consultations with affected staff on the Housing Services Restructuring Proposals

O5.EC. 77 Approval to consultations being held with affected staff and trade unions on the Homelessness Accommodation Service Review

O5.EC. 78 Approval to the funding arrangements negotiated for the Eaves Green Link Road and the submission of planning applications for the additional works to the Link Road

Chair

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Final Report of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel into the Provision of Youth Activities in Chorley



May 2005



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1. **PREFACE**

1. Following a request by myself for a scrutiny inquiry into the provision of youth activities in Chorley, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee requested the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel to conduct the Inquiry.
2. The Inquiry has been undertaken over the past 8 months and I would like to express my gratitude to those members of the Panel who have demonstrated an enthusiastic commitment to the project and contributed so much to the Inquiry's findings. I am also indebted to each of the individuals and organisations who volunteered evidence to the Panel; all the persons who completed the baseline survey questionnaire; and Officers from the Leisure and Cultural Services Unit and the Democratic Services Section for their administrative support and advice.
3. The conclusions and recommendations of the Panel are set out in the following pages of this report. We have been impressed with the level of commitment and effort from all current service providers (eg Chorley Council's Leisure and Cultural Services Unit, Lancashire County Council and numerous voluntary bodies and organisations) to the provision of facilities for sports, arts and cultural activities for young people throughout the community. We do not wish to detract or discourage the future work of these dedicated people in any way. The overriding aim of our inquiry recommendations is to enhance and complement present efforts by helping to facilitate more effective co-ordination and co-operation, particularly between service providers and funding bodies, and to encourage maximisation of the use of current facilities.
4. I consider that the inquiry has been worthwhile and I strongly commend these findings and recommendations for endorsement.

Councillor Mark Perks
Chair of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel have conducted an investigation into the provision of youth activities in the Borough.
2. The terms of reference and aims and objectives of the scrutiny inquiry, together with the detailed findings of the Panel, are outlined in other relevant sections of this report.
3. Following a careful assessment of all the witnesses representations, documentary and verbal evidence presented and the outcome of Members' visits, the Panel has compiled a number of recommendations for consideration, initially, by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. These recommendations, categorised to relate to the four original objectives of the inquiry, are set out below for ease of reference:

Objective 1 (To identify and explore the current provision of youth activities and facilities (including the roles of statutory and voluntary bodies))

1. *All available services, activities, advice sources and training and vocational programmes through, for example, the Borough Council's 'Get Up and Go' Programme and the Lancashire Youth and Community Service should be advertised and promoted as extensively and vigorously as possible.*
2. *The Lancashire County Council be requested to provide and/or support endeavours to establish dedicated 'Youth Centres' in local areas with advice and guidance to voluntary youth groups from the Borough Council.*
3. *The Council lobbies and encourages more extensive use of school facilities out of school hours for young people's activities.*

Objective 2 (To identify future issues highlighted by the Youth Service and other key partnerships (including the current Youth and Community Service Review))

4. *The Council supports the establishment of a link between the web sites of the Lancashire County Youth and Community Services and the Borough Council to highlight information on available services and activities.*
5. *The Council aims to develop more effective links and liaison with Parish Councils on youth activities programmes and services and explores the potential for appropriate Parish Councils taking on the role of 'Cultural Champions' for the Borough.*
6. *The Panel recognises the valuable contribution a vibrant Youth Council makes to an area and recommends the Council to request the Lancashire County Council to re-establish a vibrant Chorley Youth Forum as a matter of urgency.*
7. *The Council to continue to encourage more local Groups to compile Development Policies to encourage young people's activities and to enable them to qualify for available financial aid from a variety of sources.*

Objective 3 (To compare with best practice elsewhere)

8. *The Council explores the potential for the establishment of a 'Chorley Lads and Girls Club' by setting up an Officer Working Group to assess the feasibility of the facility.*

Objective 4 (To identify relevant issues relating to funding, budget and capacity)

9. *The Council recommends and promotes better and more effective co-ordination between service delivery agents/bodies and funding sources.*

10. *The Panel recognises the need for the correct balance to be achieved between the direct provision and the sustainability of young people's activities and services and recommends the Council to support all measures to achieve this goal through, for example, the encouragement of local groups to pursue volunteer training and development courses.*
11. *The Panel supports the Council's commitment to its support of youth activities (evidenced by the growth item in the 2005/06 budget) and requests the Council to sustain its commitment to the provision of facilities for young person's activities by continuing a budget provision in future years for a continued rolling programme of improvement. This will enhance, but not replace, the activities and services provided by the Lancashire County Council and local voluntary groups throughout the community.*
12. *The Panel accepts the responsibility of parents/guardians to encourage their children to participate in activities, to participate themselves (whenever practicable) and to contribute (in whatever manner) to the resources required to stage the activities; and the Panel recommends the Council to examine means of promoting this principle.*

3. INTRODUCTION

1. Background

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee, through its application of the agreed selection criteria, approved a request from Councillor M Perks for a Scrutiny Inquiry into the provision of youth services throughout the Borough. The definition was subsequently altered to the provision of youth activities throughout Chorley.

2. Terms of Reference

For the purposes of the inquiry, the Panel's terms of reference were defined as follows:

- (a) to conduct a scrutiny investigation into the provision of youth activities throughout the Chorley Borough in line with the parameters identified in the Topic Selection Assessment documents.
- (b) To report the Inquiry's findings and recommendations initially to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

3. Aim and Objectives

The Panel's aims and objectives of the inquiry were identified as follows:

- (a) To identify and explore the current provision of youth activities and facilities (including the role of statutory and voluntary bodies).
- (b) To identify relevant future issues highlighted by the Youth Service and other key partnerships (including the current Youth and Community Service Review).
- (c) To compare with best practices elsewhere.
- (d) To identify relevant issues relating to funding, budgets and capacity.

4. Inquiry Project Outline

The relevant Overview and Scrutiny Inquiry Project Outline document which describes the scope and extent of the investigation is attached as Appendix B to this report.

5. Desired Outcome

The Panel hoped to achieve the production of a Multi-Agency Improvement Plan that achieves an increase in and improved use of the facilities available within the Borough.

6. General Information

Information on Chorley Borough Council's overview and scrutiny policies and procedures can be found on the Council's website at www.chorley.gov.uk/scrutiny

4. METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

1. Documentary Evidence

The Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel received and considered several reports and documents during its examination into youth activities in the Borough.

These documents included:

- the Youth Manifesto produced by the National Youth Agency in September 2004;
- an overview of the role, functions and services provided by the Lancashire County Council Youth and Community Service in Chorley;
- the Young People's Activities Questionnaire produced by the Borough Council to ascertain local residents' views on the currently available services and their aspirations for the development of youth activities;
- a summary of the findings from both the Borough Council's baseline survey and the Strata Survey carried out in July 2001;
- a report on the outcome of research surveys conducted on behalf of the Northwest Regional Development Agency between March and July 2004 into Year 9 students' and adults' participation in sport, the arts, physical and creative activities within Chorley;
- report of Preston City Council's Regeneration, Community and Leisure Services Review Board's study into the provision of services for children and young people;
- report of Maidstone Borough Council's Cultural and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee's inquiry into services for young people.

The Scrutiny Inquiry Information Checklist (Appendix C) details the written documents assessed by the Panel.

2. Witnesses

The Panel, at its meeting on 5 January 2005, interviewed the following persons representing a number of authorities and organisations involved in the provision of youth activities and services for young people:

- Mr L Boyer, Sports Development Officer in the Council's Leisure and Cultural Services Unit;
- Mr G Murdoch, former District Team Manager with the LCC Youth and Community Service;
- Parish Councillor T Dickinson, a member of Chorley and District Sports Forum and Wheelton Parish Council;
- Ms M Graham, South Lancashire Arts Partnership;
- Mr I Fazakerley, Area Manager with Connexions Lancashire Limited;
- Mr H Kelly, Programme Manager with Groundwork Wigan and Chorley;
- Mr D Barry, Youth Development Manager with the Prince's Trust.

Each of the representatives gave a brief address on the extent of the services/activities provided by their respective organisations, and discussed with the Panel Members the perceived barriers to their organisations meeting the public's increasing demand for leisure facilities.

A copy of the Scrutiny Inquiry Witness Checklist is attached to this report as Appendix D.

3. Research

A questionnaire, compiled by the Head of Leisure and Cultural Services, has been widely distributed and has been available on the Council's website. The survey aimed to create baseline information on currently available activities and facilities and to secure aspirations for the future.

In addition, the Panel has met Mr P Round, Head of Sport, Leisure and Inclusion Services, with Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council, and a number of his colleagues, together with Mr J Glover, Chief Executive of the Bolton Lads and Girls Club, to obtain their perspective on how the services provided by their organisation impacted on the local communities.

The Panel Members have also visited selected locations around the Borough to meet young people to ascertain their opinions on the youth activities currently available and their views and aspirations for the future development of youth services.

4. Panel Meetings

The minutes of each of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel's meetings on 7 October 2004, 18 November 2004, 5 January 2005 and 9 February 2005 are contained in this report collectively as Appendix J.

5. FINDINGS

OBJECTIVE/KEY ISSUES	EVIDENCE (Brief Commentary)	FINDINGS	DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>1. To identify and explore the current provision of youth activities and facilities (including the roles of statutory and voluntary bodies)</p>	<p>A questionnaire, prepared by the Head of Leisure and Cultural Services, aimed to establish baseline information on currently available activities and facilities for young people and seek suggestions and aspirations for improvements. The questionnaire (available on the Council's website) has been targeted at young people, parents and organisers of young people's activities. The questionnaire had been widely distributed through schools, public buildings, clubs/groups and leisure centres.</p>	<p>237 responses have been received from young people, 67% of which were returned by 13 – 16 year olds. The survey findings identified the range of activities in which young people currently participate, the most popular being music, swimming, dancing, football, cycling, fishing, horse riding and uniform group activities. The most popular aspirational activities for young people appeared to be finding a place to "chill" without fear of being moved on, dancing, cinema going, climbing, off road cycling and water sports (eg canoeing etc). A lack of information about available activities and events appear to be the greatest obstacle to participation, with concerns at the lack of closely available facilities and time to pursue leisure activities also being identified as major barriers. 41% of young people indicated an awareness of the Borough Council's "Get Up and Go" initiative and 56% confirmed a willingness to receive future information on activities.</p>	<p>Please refer to Recommendations 1 and 8</p>
	<p>Presentation by Mr L Boyer, Sports Development Officer in the Council's Leisure and Cultural Services Unit.</p>	<p>The following activities and projects, in particular, are promoted by the Sports Development Section as a means of engaging with young people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Schools (assistance with funding sources and organisation of activity programmes and festivals, etc); • Club Development (Chartmark accreditation scheme to promote the effective and efficient operation of sports clubs; advice on facilities and volunteer training); 	

OBJECTIVE/KEY ISSUES	EVIDENCE (Brief Commentary)	FINDINGS	DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach Development (schemes to ensure that coaches are adequately trained and accredited); • Community Projects (holiday activities, community clubs, etc); • Under represented Groups (engagement with black and Asian minority groups, disabled people's groups, etc); • Partnership working with Lancashire County Council Youth and Community Service, local Schools, Youth and Community Groups etc; • Marketing and promotion of sport and physical activities to raise awareness of facilities on offer; • Assistance with organisation of Young People's schemes and activities (eg Lancashire Youth Games etc) 	
	<p>Interview with Ms M Graham, South Lancashire Arts Partnership.</p>	<p>The South Lancashire Arts Partnership was set up to instigate initiatives and advise and assist local clubs/groups to seek funding and operate their own schemes.</p> <p>The Partnership's involvement in the "Get Up and Go" programme for young children allows them to participate in film and dance workshops and art and crafts activities. The project is funded by grants from the Borough Council, the Lancashire Youth and Community Service, Awards for All Fund and local community groups. The Partnership is also pursuing the establishment of a pilot After School Activities Club with the Governors and staff of Highfield School, which the Partnership hopes will be replicated in other parts of the Borough.</p>	

OBJECTIVE/KEY ISSUES	EVIDENCE (Brief Commentary)	FINDINGS	DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS
	<p>Interview with Mr I Fazakerley, Area Manager with Connexions Lancashire Limited.</p>	<p>Connexions Lancashire is one of 47 Connexions Partnerships in England founded in April 2002. The service offers all young people aged 13 to 19 years information, advice and guidance through Centre and Personal Advisors on education, training and employment matters.</p> <p>The organisation offers advice from both the office centres and within local schools on job vacancies, career and training opportunities, in addition to information on benefits and links to organisations that may be able to assist with personal problems (eg drug abuse, learning difficulties etc).</p> <p>Connexions Lancashire is currently assisting 150 16 to 18 year old young people in Chorley, in addition to their contacts with 13 to 16 year old school children.</p> <p>Connexions places great importance on its partnership relationships, with a PAYP three year funding programme targeted at assisting young people at risk of committing crimes. Connexions also provides funding support to organisations supporting summer activities programmes for young persons.</p>	
	<p>Presentation by Mr H Kelly, Programme Manager at Groundwork Wigan and Chorley.</p>	<p>The following Groundwork programmes are specifically targeted at young people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Youth programmes implemented through the Prince's Trust regime (12 weeks personal development programmes for 16 to 25 year olds, with three programmes in each area normally reserved for young people with learning difficulties 	

OBJECTIVE/KEY ISSUES	EVIDENCE (Brief Commentary)	FINDINGS	DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS
		<p>or low skills);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakthrough programmes (6 week development programmes for 14 to 16 year olds who have been, or are on the verge of being, excluded from the education system. • 12 week programmes with young people from hard-to-reach groups; • Up to three-year programmes with young people up to the age of 25 years on the development of restoration schemes aimed at benefiting the whole community 	
	<p>Presentation by Mr D Barry, Youth Development Manager with the Prince's Trust.</p>	<p>A Youth Development Programme for 16 to 25 year olds is administered by the Prince's Trust on behalf of Groundwork. The projects are specifically targeted to help the volunteers gain confidence in themselves and prepare them for employment through their participation in team building exercises, practical project work and training on CV preparation and job interview techniques, etc.</p>	

OBJECTIVE/KEY ISSUES	EVIDENCE (Brief Commentary)	FINDINGS	DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS
	<p>Evening tour of a number of locations throughout the Borough (ie Jubilee Playing Fields, Adlington, Adlington Railway Station, Tatton Community Centre, Astley and Euxton) on 10 March 2005.</p>	<p>The purpose of the tour was to allow the Panel Members to meet young people and encourage them to tell their opinion of the youth facilities currently available in their areas and to indicate what they would like to see provided in the future. The responses from the young people met that evening can be summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jubilee Playing Field and skateboard park is not floodlit, consequently causing health and safety problems and preventing the park from being used for any organised sports after daylight hours. • A youth shelter or formal club premises would be welcomed. • The skateboard park surface is not in good condition and is not conducive to any organised events, eg skateboard competitions etc. • The playing fields are sufficiently distant from neighbouring houses and do not give rise to complaints from residents. • The young people interviewed do not currently visit the Adlington Community Centre, but said they are willing to visit the new Centre at Fairview Farm. • The young people frequent the Railway Station through the lack of anything else better to do. • The recreation grounds are not floodlit and it is, therefore, unsafe to visit them after daylight hours. • The young people would prefer to visit warm, well lit premises where they could either play sports, engage in arts and crafts or cultural activities, or simply “chill out” listening to music during weekdays and at weekends. 	<p>R1. All available services, activities, advice sources and training and vocational programmes through, for example, the Borough Council's 'Get Up and Go' Programme and the Lancashire Youth and Community Service should be advertised and promoted as extensively and vigorously as possible.</p> <p>R2. The Lancashire County Council be requested to provide and/or support endeavours to establish dedicated 'Youth Centres' in local areas with advice and guidance to voluntary youth groups from the Borough Council.</p> <p>R3. The Council lobbies and encourages more extensive use of school facilities out of school hours for young people's activities.</p>

OBJECTIVE/KEY ISSUES	EVIDENCE (Brief Commentary)	FINDINGS	DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The young people preferred a membership system for any club to regulate entry. • Youth activities and facilities should be available from around 5.30pm until 8.30pm. • The youths interviewed are not currently members of any club, but do occasionally visit the cinemas at Middlebrook. • Some of the young people were aware that the Council's "Get Up and Go" leaflets were distributed at their school. • A number of young people were unaware of the Council's "Get Up and Go" literature, but indicated that they would inspect brochures posted on their school notice board. • A number of the pupils attended Albany High School which did not provide any after-school activities. • Some youths occasionally attended the Lord Street Community Centre. 	<p>Please also refer to recommendations 4 and 8.</p>
	<p>Outcome of research surveys conducted on behalf of the Northwest Regional Development Agency between March and July 2004 into Year 9 students' and adults' participation in sport, the arts, physical and creative activities within Chorley.</p>	<p>The survey reveals that the numbers of young people participating in sport, the arts, physical and creative activities are increasing. More people are becoming members of Sports Clubs, etc. The number of young people in Chorley involved in such activities compares favourably with all other neighbouring Districts.</p>	

OBJECTIVE/KEY ISSUES	EVIDENCE (Brief Commentary)	FINDINGS	DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>2. To identify future issues highlighted by the Youth Service and other key partnerships (including the current Youth and Community Service Review).</p>	<p>Interview with Mr G Murdoch, former District Team Manager with the Lancashire County Council Youth and Community Service.</p>	<p>The Lancashire County Council Youth and Community Service (LCCYCS) provides a wide variety of informal, social and educational opportunities for young people and adults from 11 to 25 years to participate in sport, the arts and community projects in a wide range of settings and residential courses. The service aims to assist young people, through participation and involvement in activities, to develop personal and social skills and to promote cultural awareness and equality of opportunity. While the service aims to be available to all young persons, limited resources have resulted in priority being afforded to services for 13 – 19 year olds and to groups experiencing social exclusion.</p> <p>The Youth and Community Service operates centres in Lord Street, Chorley and at Clayton-le-Woods, Eccleston, Coppull, in addition to the Information Centre and District Office at Union Street, Chorley and several other voluntary run centres throughout the Borough, with District Plans' objectives being delivered by local Teams of Officers.</p> <p>The service will need, in particular, to address the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the need for the service to demonstrate that it is capable of meeting young people's aspirations for particular services and activities; • the current deficiencies in the level of provision in the north eastern and western parts of the Borough, in addition to the Chorley town centre area (especially within Chorley South East Ward); 	<p>R4. The Council supports the establishment of a link between the web sites of the Lancashire County Council Youth and Community Service and the Borough Council to highlight information on available services and activities. Please also refer to Recommendations 1, 6, 9 and 10.</p>

OBJECTIVE/KEY ISSUES	EVIDENCE (Brief Commentary)	FINDINGS	DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the need to invest resources in targeted areas of activity (eg to stimulate the engagement of all ethnic minority and disadvantaged groups of young people); the need to address capacity and training issues to encourage the recruitment of the right calibre of staff and volunteers. 	
	<p>Interview with Parish Councillor T Dickenson, a member of the Chorley and District Sports Forum and Wheelton Parish Council.</p>	<p>The Chorley and District Sports Forum is a voluntary autonomous body that operates with funding from the Borough Council. The Forum provides support and advice to groups, organisations, clubs and individuals involved in sports and health related activities.</p> <p>Parish Councillor Dickenson perceives the greatest barriers to closer collaboration with young people as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> problems in communication; facilities and resources (prohibitive cost of room hire etc); insufficient links and dual use between schools and local clubs/organisations; inadequate funding, particularly to support people at a performance level; insufficient Youth Development Policies (only 40% of local Sports Clubs have compiled the requisite development policy that allows them to be eligible for National Lottery Funding). 	<p>R5. The Council aims to develop more effective links and liaison with Parish Councils on youth activities programmes and services and explores the potential for appropriate Parish Councils taking on the role of “Cultural Champions” for the Borough.</p> <p>R6. The Panel recognises the valuable contribution a vibrant Youth Council makes to an area and recommends the Council to request the Lancashire County Council to re-establish a vibrant Chorley Youth Forum as a matter of urgency.</p>

OBJECTIVE/KEY ISSUES	EVIDENCE (Brief Commentary)	FINDINGS	DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS
		<p>Parish Councillor Dickenson also drew attention to the role Parish Councils could fulfil on youth activities by commenting on Wheelton Parish Council's encouragement for young people to participate in sports and arts activities and projects (eg fell walking, swimming, triathlon events, etc).</p>	<p>R7. The Council to continue to encourage more local Groups to compile Development Policies to encourage young people's activities and to enable them to qualify for available financial aid from a variety of sources. Please also refer to Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 10, 11 and 12.</p>
<p>3. To compare with best practice elsewhere.</p>	<p>Reports of other Authorities scrutiny inquiries into or reviews of services for young people.</p>	<p>The Panel received, for information and comparison purposes, the report of Preston Borough Council's Regeneration, Community and Leisure Services Review Board's study into the provision of services for children and young people, and the report of Maidstone Borough Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee's inquiry into services for young people.</p>	
	<p>Discussions with Mr P Round, Head of Sport, Leisure and Inclusion Services with Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council, and a number of his colleagues on 17 February 2005.</p>	<p>"Positive Futures" (a national sports based social inclusion programme managed within the Home Office Drugs Directorate) is managed by "Moving Up Through Leisure" (MUTL), a mainstream activities programme based within Bolton Council's Education and Culture Department. The MUTL Teams provide a broad range of sport and leisure activities for young people aged 10 - 19 years who are referred by key partners after being identified as experiencing problems or are at risk.</p>	

OBJECTIVE/KEY ISSUES	EVIDENCE (Brief Commentary)	FINDINGS	DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS
		<p>The project engages and helps young people by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing regular participation in sport, physical activity and constructive leisure opportunities; • assisting in the prevention of juvenile nuisance, substance abuse and youth offending; • re-integrating young people into mainstream education and training. <p>The MUTL project provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a wide range of evening and holiday programmes comprising up to 8 activity fields; • a variety of innovative, constructive and challenging leisure activities; • access to learning partnerships with schools; and • mentoring/volunteers' programmes. <p>The role and work of the Outreach Task Group was specifically highlighted, 50% of the costs of which are externally funded. The Group works extensively with the education, social services and voluntary agencies to avoid duplication of effort and, principally, to support children experiencing problems or severely at risk. The Group, through teams of area based workers and mentoring schemes, supports and advises the "hard to reach" groups of children, with the aim of guiding the young people back into education and mainstream, generic sports and leisure activities. The Juvenile Response Team is currently externally funded, but the external funding source is shortly to expire.</p>	

OBJECTIVE/KEY ISSUES	EVIDENCE (Brief Commentary)	FINDINGS	DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS
		<p>Bolton MBC is satisfied that the implementation of the MUTL programme is achieving the following positive results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an increase in regular participation in sport, physical activity and leisure opportunities by young people; • social inclusion for young people; • a reduction in youth offending, juvenile nuisance and substance misuse. 	
	<p>Visit to Bolton Lads and Girls Club and discussions with its Chief Executive, Mr T Glover.</p>	<p>The Club, close to Bolton town centre, is proud of the distinction of being the largest youth club in the country, being capable of accommodating up to 250 children at any one time, with a current membership of around 2,500. A minimal 40p entrance fee is charged for each admittance, which entitles the young person to access all the Club's facilities, with the exception of the exceptionally well-equipped gymnasium, for which an annual fee is charged. The Club opens each day, with extended opening hours during school holidays.</p> <p>The new Bolton Lads and Girls Club relocated to its current location in 2002 with the aid of Sports England and National Lottery funding. The original Bolton Boys Club had been founded in 1989.</p> <p>The Club provides facilities for a wide range of sports and leisure activities, including a large multi-functional sports hall; a café and "chilling out" area (with TV, pool tables, etc); a dance/climbing wall studio; a boxing hall; fully equipped gymnasium; Board room and office accommodation; and an adjacent astro-turf football pitch.</p>	<p>R8. The Council explores the potential for the establishment of a "Chorley Lads and Girls Club" by setting up an Officer Working Group to assess the feasibility of the facility.</p>

OBJECTIVE/KEY ISSUES	EVIDENCE (Brief Commentary)	FINDINGS	DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS
		<p>The Club is operated as a registered charity and is managed by a voluntary Board of Directors. The Club employs a Chief Executive and approximately 30 full-time and 60 part-time staff; including a number of Outreach Officers. In addition, over 200 active volunteers assist in training and supervising the Club's members and a further 100 mentors provide a dedicated one-to-one counselling and support service to identified young people with social problems.</p> <p>One member of staff is responsible for the recruitment of volunteers through various methods, such as widespread leafleting and personal approaches. Each volunteer is offered an 8 session training course on effective means of working with children, identifying occurrences of substance abuse and handling difficult situations.</p> <p>The costs of operating the Bolton Lads and Girls Club exceeds £1.3m, which is currently funded principally by Home Office and National Lottery grants, corporate and individual donations, Bolton MBC funding, members contributions and fund raising events.</p>	

OBJECTIVE/KEY ISSUES	EVIDENCE (Brief Commentary)	FINDINGS	DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>4. To identify relevant issues relating to funding, budgets and capacity</p>	<p>Baseline information survey based on responses to the previously distributed questionnaire compiled by the Head of Leisure and Cultural Services.</p>	<p>52 responses were received from organisations involved in the provision of youth activities. (eg Schools, Youth Clubs, Sports/Arts/Action Groups, Parish Councils, Scouts/Uniform Groups, Community Centres, Millennium Green Committees etc). 82% of the organisations confirmed that their facilities are readily available for new members and 78% wished to expand the current facilities on offer. A lack of suitable volunteers and inadequate funding was identified by the organisations as the major barriers to the development of further opportunities for young people. The organisations had also highlighted the inadequate promotion and publicity for available facilities, insufficient opportunities for the local use of educational facilities and the problems caused by prohibitive room hire charges.</p>	
	<p>Interview with Mr L Boyer, Chorley Borough Council's Sports Development Officer.</p>	<p>The Council's Leisure and Cultural Services Unit hopes to expand its support services by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • closer collaboration with existing and new partners; • development of further projects such as the Cyclo Cross Project with the South Lancashire Arts Partnership; • Coach Development (schemes to ensure that coaches are adequately trained and accredited); <p>The principal barriers to the expansion of services are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • difficulties in the provision of facilities for community based activities; • recruitment of skilled and experienced staff and volunteers; • finite funding 	<p>R.9 The Council recommends and promotes better and more effective coordination between service delivery agents/bodies and funding sources.</p> <p>R.10 The Panel recognises the need for the correct balance to be achieved between the direct provision and the sustainability of young people's activities and services and recommends the</p>

OBJECTIVE/KEY ISSUES	EVIDENCE (Brief Commentary)	FINDINGS	DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS
			<p>and recommends the Council to support all measures to achieve this goal through, for example, the encouragement of local groups to pursue volunteer training and development courses.</p> <p>Please also refer to Recommendations 3, 5, 6 and 12.</p>
	<p>Interview with Ms M Graham, South Lancashire Arts Partnership</p>	<p>The Partnership identified the problems to further developments as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inadequate funding for activities/programmes; • lack of inexpensive venues for activities; • lack of venues conducive to physical activity programmes (eg ball games etc). 	<p>Please refer to Recommendations 2, 3, 5, 9 and 10.</p>
	<p>Group discussion session on 5 January 2005 with Council Officers and representatives of a number of organisations involved in the provision of activities and services for young people.</p>	<p>The following key issues and deficiencies in the current level of services and facilities have been identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient funding levels and prohibitive hire charges for halls and facilities appear to represent the greatest obstacles to each body's expansion plans. <p>Whilst it is not a statutory requirement for the Borough Council to provide facilities for youth activities, the Borough Council places great emphasis on its investment of resources into its discretionary power to provide facilities.</p>	<p>R11. The Panel supports the Council's commitment to its support of youth activities (evidenced by the growth item in the 2005/06 budget) and requests the Council to sustain its commitment to the provision of facilities for young person's activities by continuing a budget provision in future years for</p>

OBJECTIVE/KEY ISSUES	EVIDENCE (Brief Commentary)	FINDINGS	DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS
		<p>The Council hopes to establish a Sport and Activity Consultation Group, with the membership including two pupils from each local school (including Special Schools), as a means of ascertaining the opinions of young people on the type of activities they would wish to see provided.</p> <p>The advantages of guiding young people into sport, physical exercise, academic, craft or cultural activities are multitudes. Incidents of juvenile nuisance are likely to be reduced and young people are likely to be encouraged to make a more positive contribution to the life of the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for efforts to make suitable School and Community Halls more accessible to the community for youth activities (eg extension of dual use facilities and After School Clubs etc) at reasonable cost is accepted. • The potential dual use of privately owned premises could also be explored. • Regular contact between the Borough Council, the Lancashire County Youth and Community Service and Parish Councils is essential to ensure that resources are targeted to meet local needs. The possibility of a local Service Level Agreement might also be examined. <p>A new Officer has been appointed by the Lancashire County Youth and Community Service to lead the Chorley Town Detached Work Team, which is likely to concentrate activity in the Chorley East and South West Wards.</p>	<p>a continued rolling programme of improvement. This will enhance, but not replace, the activities and services provided by the Lancashire County Council and local voluntary groups throughout the community</p> <p>R12. The Panel accepts the responsibility of parents/guardians to encourage their children to participate in activities, to participate themselves (whenever practicable) and to contribute (in whatever manner) to the resources required to stage the activities; and the Panel recommends the Council to examine means of promoting this principle.</p> <p>Please also refer to Recommendations 3, 4, 5, 8, 9 and 10.</p>

OBJECTIVE/KEY ISSUES	EVIDENCE (Brief Commentary)	FINDINGS	DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After taking account of all the documentary and verbal evidence presented and the outcome of the visit to Bolton and tour of selected locations within the Borough to speak to young people, the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel has identified a number of proposals, measures and initiatives which, if implemented, the Members consider will enhance the current opportunities for sport, leisure and cultural activities for young residents of the Borough and help to build the foundation for a sustained improvement of service.

The considered recommendations of the Panel are set out below, with an indication of the financial implications, where appropriate.

Objective 1 (To identify and explore the current provision of youth activities and facilities (including the roles of statutory and voluntary bodies))

1. *All available services, activities, advice sources and training and vocational programmes through, for example, the Borough Council's 'Get Up and Go' Programme and the Lancashire Youth and Community Service should be advertised and promoted as extensively and vigorously as possible.*

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

2. *The Lancashire County Council be requested to provide and/or support endeavours to establish dedicated 'Youth Centres' in local areas with advice and guidance to voluntary youth groups from the Borough Council.*

NO ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR THE BOROUGH COUNCIL

3. *The Council lobbies and encourages more extensive use of school facilities out of school hours for young people's activities.*

NO ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR THE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Objective 2 (To identify future issues highlighted by the Youth Service and other key partnerships (including the current Youth and Community Service Review))

4. *The Council supports the establishment of a link between the web sites of the Lancashire County Youth and Community Services and the Borough Council to highlight information on available services and activities.*

NO ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5. *The Council aims to develop more effective links and liaison with Parish Councils on youth activities programmes and services and explores the potential for appropriate Parish Councils taking on the role of 'Cultural Champions' for the Borough.*

NO ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6. *The Panel recognises the valuable contribution a vibrant Youth Council makes to an area and recommends the Council to request the Lancashire County Council to re-establish a vibrant Chorley Youth Forum as a matter of urgency.*

NO FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR THE BOROUGH COUNCIL

7. *The Council to continue to encourage more local Groups to compile Development Policies to encourage young people's activities and to enable them to qualify for available financial aid from a variety of sources.*

NO ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Objective 3 (To compare with best practice elsewhere)

8. *The Council explores the potential for the establishment of a 'Chorley Lads and Girls Club' by setting up an Officer Working Group to assess the feasibility of the facility.*

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

Objective 4 (To identify relevant issues relating to funding, budget and capacity)

9. *The Council recommends and promotes better and more effective co-ordination between service delivery agents/bodies and funding sources.*

NO ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10. *The Panel recognises the need for the correct balance to be achieved between the direct provision and the sustainability of young people's activities and services and recommends the Council to support all measures to achieve this goal through, for example, the encouragement of local groups to pursue volunteer training and development courses.*

NO ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

11. *The Panel supports the Council's commitment to its support of youth activities (evidenced by the growth item in the 2005/06 budget) and requests the Council to sustain its commitment to the provision of facilities for young person's activities by continuing a budget provision in future years for a continued rolling programme of improvement. This will enhance, but not replace, the activities and services provided by the Lancashire County Council and local voluntary groups throughout the community.*

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

12. *The Panel accepts the responsibility of parents/guardians to encourage their children to participate in activities, to participate themselves (whenever practicable) and to contribute (in whatever manner) to the resources required to stage the activities; and the Panel recommends the Council to examine means of promoting this principle.*

NO ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The estimated financial implications of each of the Panel's recommendations are shown below:

Objective 1 (To identify and explore the current provision of youth activities and facilities (including the roles of statutory and voluntary bodies))

1. *All available services, activities, advice sources and training and vocational programmes through, for example, the Borough Council's 'Get Up and Go' Programme and the Lancashire Youth and Community Service should be advertised and promoted as extensively and vigorously as possible.*

Chorley Borough Council resources are in place for publicity and promotional activity through the 'Get Up and Go' programme and direct mailings.

2. *The Lancashire County Council be requested to provide and/or support endeavours to establish dedicated 'Youth Centres' in local areas with advice and guidance to voluntary youth groups from the Borough Council.*

There are no additional financial implications for the Borough Council. Existing Officer time could be used to advise and guide voluntary groups.

3. *The Council lobbies and encourages more extensive use of school facilities out of school hours for young people's activities.*

There are no additional financial implications for the Borough Council.

Objective 2 (To identify future issues highlighted by the Youth Service and other key partnerships (including the current Youth and Community Service Review))

4. *The Council supports the establishment of a link between the web sites of the Lancashire County Youth and Community Services and the Borough Council to highlight information on available services and activities.*

There are no additional implications for the Borough Council.

5. *The Council aims to develop more effective links and liaison with Parish Councils on youth activities programmes and services and explores the potential for appropriate Parish Councils taking on the role of 'Cultural Champions' for the Borough.*

There are no additional financial implications for the Borough Council. Existing Officer time is used to work with Parish Councils, as this is a key task identified in the Cultural Strategy.

6. *The Panel recognises the valuable contribution a vibrant Youth Council makes to an area and recommends the Council to request the Lancashire County Council to re-establish a vibrant Chorley Youth Forum as a matter of urgency.*

There are no financial implications for the Borough Council. Existing Officer time could be used to support the re-establishment of the Forum.

7. *The Council to continue to encourage more local Groups to compile Development Policies to encourage young people's activities and to enable them to qualify for available financial aid from a variety of sources.*

There are no additional financial implications for the Borough Council. Existing Officer time could be used to advise and guide voluntary groups.

Objective 3 (To compare with best practice elsewhere)

8. *The Council explores the potential for the establishment of a 'Chorley Lads and Girls Club' by setting up an Officer Working Group to assess the feasibility of the facility.*

Initially, there are no financial implications. Officer time would be required to co-ordinate the Working Group. This would need to be considered along with other commitments upon Officers' time. Subsequent financial implications would form part of the feasibility study.

Objective 4 (To identify relevant issues relating to funding, budget and capacity)

9. *The Council recommends and promotes better and more effective co-ordination between service delivery agents/bodies and funding sources.*

There are no financial implications for the Borough Council.

10. *The Panel recognises the need for the correct balance to be achieved between the direct provision and the sustainability of young people's activities and services and recommends the Council to support all measures to achieve this goal through, for example, the encouragement of local groups to pursue volunteer training and development courses.*

There are no financial implications for the Borough Council.

11. *The Panel supports the Council's commitment to its support of youth activities (evidenced by the growth item in the 2005/06 budget) and requests the Council to sustain its commitment to the provision of facilities for young person's activities by continuing a budget provision in future years for a continued rolling programme of improvement. This will enhance, but not replace, the activities and services provided by the Lancashire County Council and local voluntary groups throughout the community.*

A recommended additional growth item to be considered along with other competing bids as part of the budget process for 2006/07.

12. *The Panel accepts the responsibility of parents/guardians to encourage their children to participate in activities, to participate themselves (whenever practicable) and to contribute (in whatever manner) to the resources required to stage the activities; and the Panel recommends the Council to examine means of promoting this principle.*

There are no additional financial implications for the Borough Council.

8. APPENDICES

Appendix A	Acknowledgements
Appendix B	Inquiry Project Outline
Appendix C	Scrutiny Inquiry Witness Checklist
Appendix D	Scrutiny Inquiry Information Checklist
Appendix E	The Youth Manifesto produced by the National Youth Agency in September 2004.
Appendix F	An overview of the role, functions and services provided by the Lancashire County Council Youth and Community Service in Chorley.
Appendix G	A copy of the Borough Council's Young People's Activities Questionnaire.
Appendix H	A summary of the findings from both the baseline survey and the Strata Survey carried out in July 2001.
Appendix I	Report on outcome of research surveys conducted on behalf of the Northwest Regional Development Agency between March and July 2004 into Year 9 students' and adults' participation in sports, the arts, physical and creative activities within Chorley.
Appendix J	Minutes of Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel meetings held on 7 October and 18 November 2004 and 5 January and 9 February 2005.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Chairman of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Councillor M Perks) wishes to acknowledge the work, research and/or evidence of the following persons and organisations, all of which have contributed in some way to the inquiry.

Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Councillor M Perks (Chairman)
Councillor N Baxter
Councillor T Bedford
Councillor P Buckley
Councillor F Culshaw

Councillor Mrs M Gray
Councillor Mrs M Lees
Councillor Mrs I E Smith
Councillor C Snow
Councillor A Whittaker

Office Support

Mr J Carson - Head of Leisure and Cultural Services
PC W Sharp - Youth Involvement Officer with the Community Safety Team.
Mr A Uren - Democratic Services Officer.

Witnesses

Mr L Boyer - Chorley Borough Council's Sports Development Officer
Mr G Murdoch - Former District Team Manager with the Lancashire County Council Youth and Community Service.
Parish Councillor T Dickinson - Chorley and District Sports Forum and Wheelton Parish Council.
Ms M Graham - South Lancashire Arts Partnership.
Mr I Fazakerley - Area Manager, Connexions Lancashire Limited.
Mr H Kelly - Programme Manager, Groundwork Wigan and Chorley.
Mr D Barry - Youth Development Manager, Prince's Trust.

Contributors to Research

All respondents to the Borough Council's questionnaire to establish baseline data on currently available activities and facilities for young people and to ascertain views and aspirations for the future development of the service.

Mr P Round, Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council's Head of Sport, Leisure and Inclusion Services and colleagues.

Mr J Glover, Chief Executive of Bolton Lads and Girls Club.

Each of the young persons who spoke to the Panel Members on the Panel's tour of selected locations on 10 March 2005.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY INQUIRY PROJECT OUTLINE

Review Topic: Provision of Youth Activities in Chorley	Investigation by: Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel
	Type: Scrutiny Inquiry

Objectives:	Desired Outcomes:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To identify and explore the current provision of youth services and facilities (including statutory and voluntary bodies). 2. To identify relevant future issues highlighted by the Youth Service and other key partnerships (including the current Youth and Community Service Review). 3. To compare with best practice elsewhere. 4. To identify relevant issues relating to funding, budgets and capacity. 	<p>The production of a Multi-Agency Improvement Plan that achieves an increase in and improved use of the facilities available within the Borough.</p>

Terms of Reference:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To conduct a scrutiny investigation into the provision of youth services throughout the Chorley Borough in line with the parameters identified in the Topic Selection Assessment document. 2) To report the inquiry's findings and recommendations initially to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Key Issues:	Risks:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature and scale of current provision of services and facilities. • Current deficiencies in services and facilities. • Effectiveness, or otherwise, of partnership working. • Good Practice elsewhere. • Identification of differing methods of working with young people. • Identification of duplication of provision of services and facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource implications. • Difficulties in securing information and co-operation. • Raising expectations beyond capacity to deliver.

Venue(s): Town Hall, Chorley; agreed site visits to service providers	Timescale: 8 months. Start: October 2004 Finish: End of 2004/05 Municipal Year
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Information Requirements and Sources:

Documents/evidence: *(what/why?)*

- Audit of current services and facilities provided by Lancashire County Youth and Community Service; Chorley Council's Leisure and Cultural Services Unit; and other providers.

Witnesses: *(who, why?)*

- Officers from Lancashire County Youth and Community Services and Chorley Council's Leisure and Cultural Services Unit
- South Lancashire Arts Partnership
- Youth Leaders
- Organisations to be determined at conclusion of initial audit

Consultation/Research: *(what, why, who?)*

To conduct a baseline survey and audit of current services and facilities and to ascertain aspirations for improvement and/or expansion of services, entailing consultation with:

- Lancashire County Council Youth and Community Service;
- Connexions
- South Lancashire Arts Partnership;
- Chorley Council's Leisure and Cultural Services Unit;
- Chorley Borough Councillors;
- Parish Councils;
- Local Schools;
- Sports and Youth Clubs operating in Chorley;
- Air Training Corps and Army Cadet Corps;
- Muslim Welfare Society and other ethnic minority groups;
- Other appropriate Community organisations

Site Visits: *(where, why, when?)*

- Appropriate Local Authorities (to examine best practice)
- Appropriate Parish Councils
- Other visits to be determined at later stage

Officer Support:	Likely	Budget	Requirements:
Lead Officer: Mr J Carson, Head of Leisure and Cultural Services	<u>Purpose</u>		<u>£</u>
Committee Administrator: Mr A Uren, Democratic Services Officer	Operation of site visits etc		500
Corporate Policy Officer: To be determined	Total		<u>500</u>

Target Body¹ for Findings/Recommendations

(Eg Executive Cabinet, Council, PCT)

Executive Cabinet, following endorsement by Overview and Scrutiny Committee.



SCRUTINY INQUIRY WITNESS CHECKLIST

Name of Inquiry: Provision of Youth Activities in Chorley

Scrutiny Body: Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Ref.	Witness	Information Required	Date	Venue
1	Mr L Boyer, Sports Development Officer, Chorley Council, Leisure & Cultural Services Unit	Outline of activities and facilities provided by organisation; Proposals for expansion of services; Perception of barriers to meeting any demand for expansion of activities and facilities.	5/1/2005	Town Hall, Chorley
2	Mr G Murdoch, Chorley Team Leader, Lancashire County Council Youth and Community Services	Outline of activities and facilities provided by organisation; Proposals for expansion of services; Perception of barriers to meeting any demand for expansion of activities and facilities.	5/1/2005	Town Hall, Chorley
3	Mr T Dickenson (Wheelton Parish Council/Chorley Sports Forum)	Outline of activities and facilities provided by organisation; Proposals for expansion of services; Perception of barriers to meeting any demand for expansion of activities and facilities.	5/1/2005	Town Hall, Chorley
4	Ms M Graham (South Lancashire Arts Partnership)	Outline of activities and facilities provided by organisation; Proposals for expansion of services; Perception of barriers to meeting any demand for expansion of activities and facilities.	5/1/2005	Town Hall, Chorley
5	Mr I Fazakerley, Area Manager, Connexions Lancashire Ltd	Outline of activities and facilities provided by organisation; Proposals for expansion of services; Perception of barriers to meeting any demand for expansion of activities and facilities.	5/1/2005	Town Hall, Chorley

Ref.	Witness	Information Required	Date	Venue
6	<p>Mr H Kelly, Programme Manager, Groundwork Wigan and Chorley</p> <p>Mr D Barry, Youth Development Manager with the Prince's Trust</p>	<p>Outline of activities and facilities provided by organisation; Proposals for expansion of services; Perception of barriers to meeting any demand for expansion of activities and facilities.</p>	5/1/2005	Town Hall, Chorley
7.	<p>Mr P Round, Head of Sport, Leisure and Inclusion Services, Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council</p>	<p>Evidence of activities provided in neighbouring district for purposes of comparison.</p>	17/02/2005	Education and Cultural Department, Bolton MBC
8.	<p>Mr J Glover, Chief Executive of Bolton Lads and Girls Club</p>	<p>Details of the types of activity provided at the privately operated facility and an insight into the funding and management of the facility.</p>	17/02/2005	Bolton Lads and Girls Club, Spa Road, Bolton
9.	<p>A number of young persons interviewed by the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel during its tour of selected locations within the Borough.</p>	<p>Views on the adequacy of current facilities and amenities and aspirations for other activities and services.</p>	10/03/2005	Visits to sites in Chorley, Adlington, Astley Village and Euxton.



SCRUTINY INQUIRY INFORMATION CHECKLIST

Name of Inquiry: Provision of Youth Activities in Chorley

Overview and Scrutiny Body: Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Ref.	Information Required	Source Details	To be sourced by
1	Audit of current services, facilities and activities throughout the Borough	Baseline survey of Borough Council's Leisure and Cultural Services Unit, Lancashire County Council Youth and Community Services; Connexions; South Lancashire Arts Partnership; Parish Councils; Local Schools; Other Sports, Youth and Community organisations active in the Borough. Witness interviews.	Head of Leisure and Cultural Services
2	Aspirations for improvement or expansion of activities and facilities	Baseline survey outlined above, Questionnaire available on Council's website aimed to target young people, parents and organisers of young people's activities. Survey of Borough Councillors. Witness interviews. Site visits.	Head of Leisure and Cultural Services/ Democratic Services Officer
3	Perception of barriers to meeting increasing demand for additional activities and facilities	Baseline surveys and on-line questionnaires outlined above. Witness interviews. Site visits.	Head of Leisure and Cultural Services/ Democratic Services Officer
4	Comparisons with 'best practice' authorities	Site visits.	Head of Leisure and Cultural Services/ Democratic Services Officer

APPENDICES E - J ARE AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION IN THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES SECTION

Telephone: 01257 515123

Chorley

Borough Council

Final Report of the Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel into One Stop Shop



MAY 2005



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1. PREFACE

At the request of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Customer Panel was asked to carry out an inquiry to assess the effectiveness of the newly implemented One Stop Shop and to identify improvements, which would benefit both the Customer and the Workforce.

At the same time the Panel was requested to review the progress on the development of the Lancashire Shared Service Contact Centre.

The Panel has now completed this inquiry. Our recommendations will be forwarded to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their approval and then passed to the Executive Cabinet for consideration and comment.

On behalf of the Customer Panel may I thank all who contributed to this inquiry. The courtesy and assistance shown is very much appreciated.

STELLA M WALSH
CHAIR - CUSTOMER PANEL



2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY / LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel undertook a Scrutiny Inquiry into the One Stop Shop as a newly implemented facility providing services to our customers.

The objective of the Inquiry was to assess the effectiveness of the One Stop Shop in improving Customer Service, to identify any future improvements to customer service and to review the progress on the development of the Lancashire Shared Services Contact Centre.

2. Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel Membership

Chair	Councillor Mrs Walsh	Councillor M Lowe
	Councillor Birchall	Councillor Malpas
	Councillor Cullens	Councillor Russell
	Councillor Mrs D Dickinson	Councillor E Smith
	Councillor T Gray	Councillor Mrs J Snape

Officer Support

Lead Officer Mr Asim Khan, Assistant Head of Customer Services

Democratic Services Miss Ruth Hawes, Assistant Democratic Services Officer

Contribution of Evidence

The Panel would like to thank the Customers, Chorley Borough Council Officers and One Stop Shop Staff, Representatives of the Disability Liaison Group, Ethnic Minorities Consultative Committee and Racial Equality Council and Councillor Edgerley (Executive Member for Customers, Policy and Performance) who have provided evidence and contributed to the Inquiry.

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3. The Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel after taking account of all the evidence recommends the following:

Aims/Objective (a) To assess the effectiveness of the One Stop Shop in improving customer service.

1. That after consideration of the evidence presented to the Panel the One Stop Shop has been effective in improving customer service.

Aims/Objective (b) To assess the current service provision
Service Objective

2. To consider further the feasibility of the planning officer on Customer Services duty, to be based from within the One Stop Shop.
3. To consider amendments to the arrangements for “on duty” planning officers to address the issue of customers having to wait.

Security

4. To let staff know how often the panic buttons are tested.

Training

5. To have Customer Services advisors, in particular the supervisors, join in on regular training sessions and new starters to have training with the back office sections, such as Revenues and Benefits and Planning Services.
6. To train some Customer Services staff to a higher level in certain services to serve as reference points within Customer Services.

Computerised Systems and Dialogues

7. To establish a policy to ensure that the dialogues used by the advisors are kept up to date for all services provided by the One Stop Shop.
8. To clarify the point where the customer query requires back office attention.
9. To load the planning software on more than one computer in the One Stop Shop.

External Publicity

10. To promote the use of the Chorley Borough Council Internet site to access information and services.
11. To publish Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) in the One Stop Shop on the different services provided, potentially via the plasma screen.
12. To increase the advertisement and promotion of facilities available at the One Stop Shop, for example a leaflet to libraries and community centres or an article in Chorley Borough News.

Internal Information

13. To produce a breakdown of the range of inquiries to Customer Services between Revenues and Benefits, Planning Services etc to aid future resource provision.
14. To record the number of queries requiring back office resolution.
15. To record the numbers of Black and Minority Ethnic customers to aid future comparisons

Internal Communication

16. To set up a One Stop Shop user group with management and staff from all of the Council's Service Units involved and a Member of the Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

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Service For Customers with Disabilities

17. To use footsteps/arrows to direct customers to the Fast Track Reception.
18. To train staff in basic sign language and to liaise with deaf organisations on other ways to provide services to deaf customers, such as the provision of sign language interpreters by appointment by an external or internal identified resource.
19. To make the internal entrance and exit doors to the One Stop Shop more accessible, potentially by making the doors semi-automatic push button operated.
20. The layout of Interview Room Three to be reconsidered.
21. To provide a disabled parking space in the vicinity of the One Stop Shop.

Service for Black and Minority Ethnic Customers

22. To advertise the "Language Line" service.
23. To target Black and Minority Ethnic communities for open evening events in the One Stop Shop and promotion of facilities available in the community.

Aims/Objective (c) To review the progress on the development of the Lancashire Shared Services Contact Centre

24. To extend the opening hours to provide additional ease of use for in-work customers e.g. appointments outside opening hours and extended hours phone lines.
25. To introduce text phone facilities for people with speech and hearing difficulties.
26. To support progress on the implementation of the Lancashire Shared Services Contact Centre and to publicise the services available

3. INTRODUCTION

1. Background

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee referred an Inquiry entitled One Stop Shop to the Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel. The subject of the Inquiry came to the attention of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as the facility had been implemented recently.

The subject of the Inquiry meets the authorities priorities of “serving our customers better”.

2. Aims/objectives

The Panel’s key aims and objectives were:

- (a) To assess the effectiveness of the One Stop Shop in improving customer service,
- (b) To identify any future improvements to customer service and
- (c) To review the progress on the development of the Lancashire Shared Services Contact Centre.

3. Terms of Reference

The terms of reference for the Inquiry were as follows:

- (a) To conduct an investigation into the One Stop Shop and Lancashire Shared Services Contact Centre and identify (if any) further improvements,
- (b) To assess the current service provision and
- (c) To report on the investigations findings and make recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee consistent with the Inquiry’s objectives and desired outcomes.

4. Inquiry Project Outline

The relevant Overview and Scrutiny Inquiry Project Outline document which describes the scope and outline of the Inquiry is attached as Appendix A.

5. General Information

Information on Chorley Borough Council’s Overview and Scrutiny policies and procedures can be found on the Council’s web site at www.chorley.gov.uk/scrutiny.

4. METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

1. Documentary Evidence

The Panel received several reports prepared by the Assistant Head of Customer Services and information within corporate strategies. These included:

- Number of customers using the One Stop Shop over a particular time range,
- Customer satisfaction cards results/statistics,
- Complaints procedure and information regarding complaints,
- Security facilities for staff and customers,
- Information on solutions for issues relating to disabled access/facilities,
- Strategy for the Lancashire Shared Services Contact Centre,
- Relevant section of Council's Implementing Electronic Government statement,

The full list of documentary evidence is contained within the Scrutiny Inquiry Information Checklist attached as Appendix B. The reports can be viewed on request from Democratic Services.

2. Witnesses

The Panel considered the results of the customer satisfaction cards at their meeting on 6 October 2004. A site visit of the One Stop Shop and Contact Centre was held on 22 November 2004, this included feedback sessions with representatives from the Ethnic Minority Consultative Committee and Disability Liaison Group. Feedback sessions were held with One Stop Shop staff on 2 February 2005.

On 16 March 2005 the Panel met with the Revenues and Benefits Manager and Head of Planning Services as back office customers of the One Stop Shop and received feedback from a representative of the Racial Equality Council. The Panel met with the Executive Member for Customers, Policy and Performance to consider their recommendations and receive feedback from him at their meeting held on 20 April 2005.

Further details of the witnesses are contained within the Scrutiny Inquiry Witness Checklist attached as Appendix C.

3. Panel meetings

The Panel met on 26 August 04, 6 October 04, 22 November, 25 November 04, 12 January 05, 2 February 05, 24 February 05, 16 March 05 and 20 April 05. The Inquiry Project Plan and relevant minutes of these meetings are attached as Appendix D.

5. FINDINGS		
Objective/Key Issue	Evidence	Supporting Evidence
<p>To assess the effectiveness of the One Stop Shop in improving customer service</p>	<p>Presentation by Assistant Head of Customer Services (6 Oct 04 meeting) Feedback session with Staff (2 Feb 05) Meeting with back office customers (16 March 05)</p>	<p><u>Service objective</u> The facility was a flag ship development with a service objective to provide customers with a single point of access to Council and Partner services using their preferred method of contact and to provide a quality service that fully meets customer requirements.</p> <p>The customer facing parts of the following services were delivered from the One Stop Shop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenues and Benefits, • Environmental Services, • Aspects of Housing Services, • Planning Services and • Concessionary Travel. <p>The following external services were also provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizens Advice Bureau, • Department of Works and Pensions and • Patient Advice Liaison Service. <p>It would be a lot to expect each member of the Customer Services staff to have a detailed knowledge of each service they provided considering the complex and technical nature of services provided.</p>
<p></p>	<p>Presentation by Assistant Head of Customer Services (6 Oct 04 meeting) Tour undertaken (22 Nov 04)</p>	<p><u>Accommodation</u> The entire ground floor of the Union Street offices had been refurbished in accordance with a Design Brief. The work had been undertaken between January and May 2003. Three interview rooms were available for more sensitive queries, including one very secure room for use if a customer was known to be violent and aggressive towards staff.</p> <p>The Panel undertook a tour of the One Stop Shop, starting at the Fast Track Reception, Payments Counter, and Housing Repair hotline. Members went into the One Stop Shop and noted the promotional plasma screen and queue system screen within the waiting area. The waiting area incorporated a children's play area that, along with a clock, had been implemented in response to comments from Customer feedback.</p>
		Recommendation

5. FINDINGS		
Objective/Key Issue	Evidence	Supporting Evidence
	<p>Feedback session with Staff (2 Feb 05)</p>	<p><u>Staff</u> within the One Stop Shop enjoyed their work and found there was a pleasant working atmosphere. The staff felt a pride in their work and their responsibility as the face of Chorley Borough Council.</p> <p>Staff advised that they felt safe and commented that it was better without the security glass as this created a barrier between staff and customers. The One Stop Shop was a calm and pleasant environment and so customers were not usually aggressive. If customers were aggressive staff would explain circumstances as they had been trained to do. The customer would then go away happy with the service received; even if they haven't got the answer they originally wanted.</p>
		Recommendation

5. FINDINGS		
Objective/Key Issue	Evidence	Supporting Evidence
	<p>Presentation by Assistant Head of Customer Services (6 Oct 04 meeting) Review of Customer Satisfaction cards (6 Oct 04 meeting) Feedback session with Staff (2 Feb 05)</p>	<p><u>Customers</u> The One Stop Shop was opened on 27 May 2003. From 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005 7,222 customers visited Fast Track Reception, 65,822 visited the Payments Counter, 28,744 visited the One Stop Shop and 627 visited other agencies within the One Stop Shop.</p> <p>The One Stop Shop was consistent with the corporate brand in terms of decoration, the uniforms worn by staff, name badges and the standard of service received by the customer.</p> <p>Staff felt that customers went away happy with the service they received. Customers appeared more relaxed without the glass and the waiting times had greatly reduced.</p> <p>The Customer comments on the satisfaction cards included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Much more relaxed atmosphere”, • “An amazing amount of improvements to how it was before the alterations - much better”, • “Extremely helpful member of staff”, • “I felt very upset that day and she put me at ease and kept me calm, well done”, • “The manner that this lady dealt with me was very professional, I also felt very comfortable in what can be very private and unpleasant information. Thank you”, • “Excellent service vast improvement on my last visit 10 out of 10”.
	<p>Presentation by Assistant Head of Customer Services (6 Oct 04 meeting) Feedback session with Staff (2 Feb 05)</p>	<p><u>Security</u> There had been concerns regarding the removal of the safety glass at the planning and design stage. Staff had visited the One Stop Shop at Knowsley to get a first hand feel of what this meant and felt reassured. It was felt that the benefits in customer relations and implementation of CCTV would mitigate the risk. A panic button was available if required. A log was kept of any incidents involving customers and staff.</p>

5. FINDINGS			Supporting Evidence	Recommendation
Objective/Key Issue	Evidence			
	Presentation by Assistant Head of Customer Services (6 Oct 04 meeting)		<p><u>Training</u> A training programme had been implemented to action a skills audit. The staff were encouraged to undertake a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) in Customer Services that complemented the Customer Care Policy and Customer Charter. Staff had been given training on violence and aggression and Health and Safety. Training was undertaken to give staff an appreciation of the back office procedures and to show how the interaction with the customer affected these.</p>	
	Presentation by Assistant Head of Customer Services (6 Oct 04)		<p><u>Computerised systems and dialogues</u> As the Customer Services staff would be serving customers for a variety of services, some of the complex business processes were mapped. These were then transferred to a computerised dialogue. This was completed for services including Revenues and Benefits and Planning Services.</p>	
	Feedback session with Staff (2 Feb 05)		<p><u>Back office support</u> Staff reported that some departments gave very good back office support and that others could be greatly improved.</p>	
	Tour undertaken (22 Nov 04)		<p><u>External publicity</u> There were stands for information leaflets and displaying information regarding ongoing planning applications within the One Stop Shop.</p>	
	Presentation by Assistant Head of Customer Services (6 Oct04)		<p><u>Internal Information</u> The number of customers using the Fast Track Reception, One Stop Shop, how many customers were seen per day and how long customers had to wait to see a customer advisor.</p>	

5. FINDINGS		
Objective/Key Issue	Evidence	Supporting Evidence
	<p>Feedback session with Staff (2 Feb 05)</p>	<p><u>Internal Communication</u> There was a daily section brief for staff within the One Stop Shop that was helpful for staff that worked part-time. Staff had regular Personal Development Reviews with their manager and could raise an issue with management at any time.</p> <p>Staff advised that they do feel happy to talk to their managers about ideas for changes or problems. Staff recognised that management needed a positive response from other departments to resolve current issues.</p>
		Recommendation

5. FINDINGS		
Objective/Key Issue	Evidence	Supporting Evidence
	<p>Presentation by Assistant Head of Customer Services (6 Oct 04 meeting) Feedback session with representatives from the Disability Liaison Group (22 Nov 04)</p>	<p><u>Service for customers with disabilities</u> The facility did comply with access requirements for people with disabilities. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A ramp from the outside of the premises directly into the One Stop Shop, • A rise and fall desk in the One Stop Shop, with Internet access, • The provision of a hearing loop in the One Stop Shop and interview rooms, Disabled toilets, • A good colour scheme for people with visual impairment, • A meet and greet service during busy periods • An audio and visual method for customers to be aware when their ticket number was called, including an audio facility in the disabled toilet • A large print strap line was used on correspondence for use by those with a visual impairment and • Helpful, aware and accommodating staff. <p>The representatives from the Disability Liaison Group were impressed with the service that had been received. The representatives commended the lighting levels within the One Stop Shop. There had been issues with the height of the door handle bar and mirror in the disabled toilet which had both been adjusted. The sign at the entrance to the facility had also been increased in size. The size of the interior signs were restricted by the height of the ceiling.</p> <p>As it was not always obvious that a customer had a disability there was a need for the customer to advise the staff of any special requirements. There were currently no sign language interpreters within the One Stop Shop.</p>
		Recommendation

5. FINDINGS		
Objective/Key Issue	Evidence	Supporting Evidence
	<p>Feedback session with representatives from the Ethnic Minorities Consultative Committee (22 Nov 04)</p> <p>Feedback session with Staff (2 Feb 05)</p> <p>Feedback from a representative of the Racial Equality Council (16 March 05)</p>	<p><u>Service for Black and Minority Ethnic Communities customers</u></p> <p>The “Language Line” facility was available within the One Stop Shop. This provided access to over 200 languages, including Urdu. There was no direct translation service available, but the use of the facility had been limited so far. The “Language Line” facility could be utilised from the home of a customer and by a member of the Customer Service staff, if the customer was housebound. A corporate strap line was used on correspondence for Urdu and Gujarati speakers. The strap line contained the following text This information can be made available to you in larger print or on audio tape, or translated into your own language. Please telephone 01257 515822 or 01257 515823 to access this service.</p> <p>આ માહિતીનો અનુવાદ આપની પોતાની ભાષામાં કરી શકાય છે. આ સેવા સરળ માટે કૃપા કરી. આ નંબર પર ફોન કરો: 01257 515822 01257 515823</p> <p>اس کی اپنی زبان میں بھی کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ یہ خدمت استعمال کرنے کیلئے براہ مہربانی اس نمبر پر ٹیلیفون</p>
		<p>The take up of these services, by those in Black and Minority Ethnic Communities was slow. Services provided for members of the Black and Minority Ethnic Communities could not be properly tested until the take up increased. Currently, a friend or other member of the community might help a person fill in a form for example.</p>
		Recommendation

5. FINDINGS			
Objective/Key Issue	Evidence	Supporting Evidence	Recommendation
	<p>Presentation by Assistant Head of Customer Services (6 Oct 04 meeting)</p>	<p><u>Customer Care Policy</u> There had been a number of Customer Care policies throughout the Council and an opportunity taken to bring these together into a corporate Customer Care Policy.</p>	<p><i>R1. That after consideration of the evidence presented to the Panel the One Stop Shop has been effective in improving customer service.</i></p>

5. FINDINGS			
Objective/Key Issue	Evidence	Supporting Evidence	Recommendation
<p>To identify any future improvements to customer service</p>	<p>Feedback session with Staff (2 Feb 05) Meeting with back office customers (16 March 05)</p>	<p><u>Service Objective</u> The staff and back office staff showed a commitment to continuously improve the service to the customer in the future development and integration of other services, for example Licensing.</p>	<p>R2. To consider further the feasibility of the planning officer on Customer Services duty, to be based from within the One Stop Shop. R3. To consider amendments to the arrangements for “on duty” planning officers to address the issue of customers having to wait.</p>
		<p><u>Accommodation</u> The Planning Officers are located on the second floor of the Union Street building and the Panel expressed a view that the delivery of customer service could be improved if the on duty planning officer was based on the ground floor. Accommodation issues and proposals were considered with the representatives of the Disability Liaison Group.</p>	<p>Please see R1, R2, R17 and R19 for Recommendations relating to accommodation.</p>
	<p>Feedback session with Staff (2 Feb 05)</p>	<p><u>Staff</u> There was a corporate policy for all members of staff to wear their identification badges. A new system would shortly be in place that would enable all members of staff to update their contact details in the internal telephone directory. This would help the person staffing the switchboard.</p>	<p>Please see R3, R5, R6, R18 and R21 for Recommendations relating to Staff.</p>

5. FINDINGS			
Objective/Key Issue	Evidence	Supporting Evidence	Recommendation
		<p><u>Customers</u> The Town /Hall reception would soon have the same corporate brand in terms of decoration, the uniforms worn by staff, name badges and the standard of customer service.</p> <p>The Customer Relations Management (CRM) system would shortly be in operation. This would give each customer a unique reference number and would store all the information in relation to the customer, including requests for service and any special needs. This was part of the Contact Centre project.</p>	
	<p>Presentation by Assistant Head of Customer Services (6 Oct 04 meeting) Feedback session with Staff (2 Feb 05)</p>	<p><u>Security</u> The Management and staff felt that the current security arrangements met their needs as displayed in the security supporting evidence section for the previous objective.</p>	<p>R4. To let staff know how often the panic buttons are tested.</p>

5. FINDINGS			
Objective/Key Issue	Evidence	Supporting Evidence	Recommendation
	<p>Feedback session with Staff (2 Feb 05) Meeting with back office customers (16 March 05)</p>	<p><u>Training</u> The One Stop Shop staff were keen to have further training on the front end services they provided, as this would enable them to give a more detailed service to the customer. There were difficulties in training all advisors, as some worked part time and Customer Services were open all office hours.</p> <p>The development of a training programme for Customer Services was underway in conjunction with Planning Services. Joint training would build closer relationships between the One Stop Shop and back office sections.</p> <p>The new computerised training manual recently purchased for the Revenues and Benefits section and the appointment of the dedicated training officer were supported.</p>	<p><i>R5. To have Customer Services advisors, in particular the supervisors, join in on regular training sessions and new starters to have training with the back office sections, such as Revenues and Benefits and Planning Services.</i></p> <p><i>R6. To train some Customer Services staff to a higher level in certain services to serve as reference points within Customer Services.</i></p> <p><i>Please see R18 and R21 for Recommendations relating to training.</i></p>
	<p>Feedback session with Staff (2 Feb 05) Meeting with back office customers (16 March 05)</p>	<p><u>Computerised systems and dialogues</u> A great deal of work had gone into developing the dialogues, but for services such as Revenues and Benefits the information and legislative requirements were constantly changing requiring the dialogues to be kept up to date. The review of Planning Services business process and dialogues ahead of implementation of the Contact Centre was supported.</p> <p>Planning services queries were complex and could be subjective, for example, the colour of building materials used in conservation area.</p>	<p><i>R7. To establish a policy to ensure that the dialogues used by the advisors are kept up to date for all services provided by the One Stop Shop.</i></p> <p><i>R8. To clarify the point where the customer query requires back office attention.</i></p> <p><i>R9. To load the planning software on more than one computer in the One Stop Shop.</i></p>

5. FINDINGS			
Objective/Key Issue	Evidence	Supporting Evidence	Recommendation
	<p>Feedback session with Staff (2 Feb 05) Meeting with back office customers (16 March 05)</p> <p>Feedback from a representative of the Racial Equality Council (16 March 05)</p>	<p><u>Back office support</u> There would be benefits for back office staff to have time within the One Stop Shop and vice versa to enable each section to appreciate the situations and constraints faced. This had been undertaken with the Revenues and Benefits section and was supported by Planning Services.</p> <p><u>External publicity</u> There was a need to manage the expectations of the public in relation to the services provided by Customer Services.</p>	<p>Please see R2 and R3 for Recommendations relating to back office support</p> <p>R10. To promote the use of the Chorley Borough Council internet site to access information and services.</p> <p>R11. To publish Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) in the One Stop Shop on the different services provided, potentially via the plasma screen.</p> <p>R12. To increase the advertisement of facilities available at the One Stop Shop, for example a leaflet to libraries and community centres or an article in Chorley Borough News.</p>
	<p>Meeting with back office customers (16 March 05)</p>	<p><u>Internal Information</u> To aid as a measure of success the collection of some information would be helpful. The collection of information would depend on the willingness of the customer to provide that information.</p>	<p>R13. To produce a breakdown of the range of inquiries to Customer Services between Revenues and Benefits, Planning Services etc to aid future resource provision.</p> <p>R14. To record the number of queries requiring back office resolution.</p> <p>R15. To record the numbers of Black and Minority Ethnic customers to aid future comparisons</p>

5. FINDINGS			
Objective/Key Issue	Evidence	Supporting Evidence	Recommendation
	<p>Meeting with back office customers (16 March 05)</p>	<p><u>Internal Communication</u> The staff within the One Stop Shop and back office sections were keen to improve internal communication.</p> <p>Ongoing meetings with the management of the Units involved were supported.</p>	<p><i>R16. To set up a One Stop Shop user group with management and staff from all of the Council's Service Units involved and a Member of the Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel.</i></p> <p><i>Please see R4 for Recommendations relating to internal communication.</i></p>
	<p>Feedback session with representatives from the Disability Liaison Group (22 Nov 04)</p> <p>Feedback from a representative of the Racial Equality Council (16 March 05)</p>	<p><u>Service for customers with disabilities</u> The management and staff were committed to continuously improving the service for customers with disabilities, in consultation with the Disability Liaison Group.</p>	<p><i>R17. To use footsteps/arrows directing customers to the Fast Track Reception.</i></p> <p><i>R18. To train staff in basic sign language and to liaise with deaf organisations on other ways to provide services to deaf customers, such as the provision of sign language interpreters by appointment by an external or internal identified resource.</i></p> <p><i>R19. To make the internal entrance and exit doors to the One Stop Shop more accessible, potentially by making the doors semi-automatic push button operated. .</i></p> <p><i>R20. The layout of Interview Room Three to be reconsidered.</i></p> <p><i>R21. To provide a disabled parking space in the vicinity of the One Stop Shop.</i></p>

5. FINDINGS		
Objective/Key Issue	Evidence	Supporting Evidence
	<p>Feedback session with representatives from the Ethnic Minorities Consultative Committee (22 Nov 04)</p> <p>Feedback from a representative of the Racial Equality Council (16 March 05)</p>	<p><u>Service for Black and Minority Ethnic Communities customers</u></p> <p>The management and staff were committed to continuously improving the service for customers with disabilities, in consultation with the Ethnic Minorities Consultative Committee and Racial Equality Council.</p>
		<p>Recommendation</p> <p><i>R22. To advertise the "Language Line" service.</i></p> <p><i>R23. To target Black and Minority Ethnic communities for open evening events in the One Stop Shop and promotion of facilities available in the community.</i></p>

5. FINDINGS			
Objective/Key Issue	Evidence	Supporting Evidence	Recommendation
To review the progress on the development of the Lancashire Shared Services Contact Centre	Internal Audit Report – Panel Meeting (8 June 2005)	<p><u>Service objective</u> The facility was a flag ship development with a service objective to provide customers with a single point of access to Council and Partner services using their preferred method of contact and to provide a quality service that fully meets customer requirements. The customer would access their chosen service over the telephone.</p>	24. To extend the opening hours to provide additional ease of use for in-work customers e.g. appointments outside opening hours and extended hours phone lines.
	Feedback session with Staff (2 Feb 05)	<p><u>Staff</u> Staff felt that the One Stop Shop could take on other services, but that additional training and back office support would be required. There was enthusiasm from the staff for the One Stop Shop to take on other services.</p>	
	Panel meeting (6 April 05)	<p><u>Customer Care Policy</u> The ongoing review of the Comments, Compliments and Complaints procedure was considered and supported. This function was due to transfer to Customer Services.</p>	
	Feedback session with Staff (2 February 05) Meeting with back office customers (16 March 05)	<p><u>Computerised systems and dialogues</u> The need for the dialogues to be reviewed and kept up to date was highlighted.</p>	
	Internal Audit Report – Panel Meeting (8 June 2005)	<p><u>Service for Customers with Disabilities</u> This has been identified as an improvement in services.</p>	R25. To introduce text phone facilities for people with speech and hearing difficulties.

5. FINDINGS			
Objective/Key Issue	Evidence	Supporting Evidence	Recommendation
		<p><u>Customer Relations Management (CRM)</u> This system would shortly be in operation. This would give each customer a unique reference number and would store all the information in relation to the customer, including requests for service and any special needs.</p>	<p><i>R26. To support progress on the implementation of the Lancashire Shared Services Contact Centre and to publicise the services available.</i></p>

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After taking account of the evidence presented to the Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel it was considered that the One Stop Shop has been effective in improving Customer Service and a number of recommendations have been made in certain areas to improve the service to the Customer. The progress of the implementation of the Lancashire Shared Services Contact Centre was reviewed and supported.

The Panel would like to thank those people who have contributed to the Inquiry, in particular the One Stop Shop Staff.

The recommendations of the Panel are shown below with an indication of whether there are financial implications relating to it.

Aims/Objective (a) To assess the effectiveness of the One Stop Shop in improving customer service,

1. That after consideration of the evidence presented to the Panel the One Stop Shop has been effective in improving customer service.

Aims/Objective (b) To assess the current service provision

Service Objective

2. To consider further the feasibility of the planning officer on Customer Services duty, to be based from within the One Stop Shop.
3. To consider amendments to the arrangements for "on duty" planning officers to address the issue of customers having to wait.

Security

4. To let staff know how often the panic buttons are tested.

Training

5. To have Customer Services advisors, in particular the supervisors, join in on regular training sessions and new starters to have training with the back office sections, such as Revenues and Benefits and Planning Services.
6. To train some Customer Services staff to a higher level in certain services to serve as reference points within Customer Services.

Computerised Systems and Dialogues

7. To establish a policy to ensure that the dialogues used by the advisors are kept up to date for all services provided by the One Stop Shop.
8. To clarify the point where the customer query requires back office attention.
9. To load the planning software on more than one computer in the One Stop Shop.

External Publicity

10. To promote the use of the Chorley Borough Council Internet site to access information and services.
11. To publish Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) in the One Stop Shop on the different services provided, potentially via the plasma screen.
12. To increase the advertisement of facilities available at the One Stop Shop, for example a leaflet to libraries and community centres or an article in Chorley Borough News.

Internal Information

13. To produce a breakdown of the range of inquiries to Customer Services between Revenues and Benefits, Planning Services etc to aid future resource provision.
14. To record the number of queries requiring back office resolution. .
15. To record the numbers of Black and Minority Ethnic customers to aid future comparisons.

Internal Communication

16. To set up a One Stop Shop user group with management and staff from all of the Council's Service Units involved and a Member of the Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

Service for Customers with Disabilities

17. To use footsteps/arrows to direct customers to the Fast Track Reception.
18. To train staff in basic sign language and to liaise with deaf organisations on other ways to provide services to deaf customers, such as the provision of sign language interpreters by appointment by an external or internal identified resource.
19. To make the internal entrance and exit doors to the One Stop Shop more accessible, potentially by making the doors semi-automatic push button operated.
20. The layout of Interview Room Three to be reconsidered.
21. To provide a disabled parking space in the vicinity of the One Stop Shop.

Service for Black and Minority Ethnic Communities Customers

22. To advertise the "Language Line" service.
23. To target Black and Minority Ethnic communities for open evening events in the One Stop Shop and promotion of facilities available in the community.

Aims/Objective (c) To review the progress on the development of the Lancashire Shared Services Contact Centre

24. To extend the opening hours to provide additional ease of use for in-work customers e.g. appointments outside opening hours and extended hours phone lines.
25. To introduce text phone facilities for people with speech and hearing difficulties.
26. To support progress on the implementation of the Lancashire Shared Services Contact Centre to publicise the services available.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

R9. To load the planning software on more than one computer in the One Stop Shop does not currently have a financial implication. Officers have explored other ways of making use of existing software applications online and decided that the Public Access planning software could be used for most enquiries currently being processed in the One Stop Shop. This is at no additional cost. However, it places a restriction on the resolution of some enquiries, relating to Building Control, that are limited in numbers. This solution will be revisited in a year to assess whether the depth and demand for planning enquiries has increased.

R17. To use footsteps/arrows to direct customers to the Fast Track Reception. The estimated cost of this recommendation is £500 to £1,000.

R18. To train staff in sign language.

Human Resources are currently considering this as part of plan of training on equality and diversity for the authority, and the cost would be met from the current training budget.

R9. To make the internal entrance and exit doors to the One Stop Shop more accessible, potentially by making the doors semi-automatic push button operated has an estimated cost of £4,000.

R20. The layout of Interview Room Three to be reconsidered has been noted as being difficult due to the physical positioning of the room. Currently the door opens inwards and causes a space problem in the interview room. However, if the door opened outwards it would open onto customers waiting in the Fast Track Reception queue. The cost of this has been estimated at £1,000.

R21. To provide a disabled parking space in the vicinity of the One Stop Shop.

Public Space Services would meet the cost after consultation with Lancashire County Council. Due to the traffic order required this could take up to a year to implement.

R24. To extend the opening hours to provide additional ease of use for in-work customers e.g. appointments outside opening hours and extended hours phone lines.

This would be provided as part of the Contact Centre.

R25. To introduce text phone facilities for people with speech and hearing difficulties.

This would be provided as part of the Contact Centre.

8. APPENDICES

Appendix A	Overview and Scrutiny Project Outline
Appendix B	Scrutiny Inquiry Information Checklist
Appendix C	Scrutiny Inquiry Witness Checklist
Appendix D	Scrutiny Investigation Project Plan and Relevant Minutes from Panel meetings: 26 August 2004 6 October 2004 22 November 2004 25 November 2004 12 January 2005 2 February 2005 24 February 2005 16 March 2004 20 April 2005



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY INQUIRY PROJECT OUTLINE

Review Topic: One Stop Shop/ Lancashire Shared Services Contact Centre

Investigation by: Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Type: Inquiry

Objectives:

- 1 To assess the effectiveness of One Stop Shop in improving Customer Service.
2. To identify any future improvements for customer service.
3. To review progress on development of Lancashire Shared Services Contact Centre.

Desired Outcomes:

1. To maximise improvements to Customer Service resulting from the One Stop Shop.
2. To maximise operational efficiency of the One Stop Shop.

Terms of Reference:

1. To conduct an investigation into the One Stop Shop and Lancashire Shared Services Contact Centre and identify (if any) further improvements.
2. To assess the current service provision.
3. To report on the investigations findings and make recommendation to Overview and Scrutiny Committee consistent with the Inquiry's objectives and desired outcomes.

Key Issues:

1. Customers experience and satisfaction.
2. Staff experience, e.g. security, training.
3. Trade Unions perspective.
4. Operational Issues (relationship with back office functions).
5. Lancashire Shared Contact Centre Partnership arrangements.
6. Opening times.
7. Effectiveness as source of information: leaflets etc.
8. Public Awareness.
9. Accessibility, e.g. for disabled.

Risks:

1. Having desired outcomes beyond the capacity to delivery.

Venue(s):

Committee Room, Town Hall, Chorley

Timescale: Nine months

Start: August 2004

Finish: April 2005

Information Requirements and Sources:

Documents/evidence: *(what/why?)*

- Strategy for the Lancashire Shared Services Contact Centre
- Relevant section of Implementing Electronic Government statement
- Staffing structure/levels etc.
- Security facilities for staff and customers
- Number of customers using the One Stop Shop over a particular time range
- Waiting times for customers to see customer services staff
- Customer satisfaction cards results/statistics
- Complaints procedure and information regarding complaints
- Customer charter
- Information on solutions for issues relating to disabled access/facilities

Witnesses: *(who, why?)*

- Customers
- Trade Unions
- Councillors
- Executive Member
- Revenues and Benefits Manager: Dave Price (as internal customer)

Consultation/Research: *(what, why, who?)*

- Staff
- Customers
- Trade Unions
- Councillors
- Executive Member
- Disability Liaison Group /Ethnic Minorities Consultative Committee
- Development Control Manager: (as recently implemented internal customer)
- Waiting times for customers to see customer services staff
- Customer satisfaction cards results/statistics
- Complaints procedure and information regarding complaints

Site Visits: *(where, why, when?)*

- One Stop Shop: during the morning, to view the facility and speak with staff.
- In the afternoon proposed discussion with Disability Liaison Group/Ethnic Minorities Consultative Committee.

Officer Support:

Lead Officer:	Asim Khan
Democratic Services:	Ruth Hawes
Corporate Policy Officer:	To be identified as required.

Likely Budget Requirements:

<u>Purpose</u>	<u>£</u>
Postage	500
Total	500

Target Body¹ for Findings/Recommendations

(Eg Executive Cabinet, Council, PCT)
Overview and Scrutiny Committee



SCRUTINY INQUIRY INFORMATION CHECKLIST

Name of Inquiry: One Stop Shop/Lancashire Shared Contact Centre

Scrutiny Body: Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel Date: 20 April 2005

Ref.	Information Required	Source	To be sourced by	Received
1	Lancashire Shared Contact Centre Strategy	Strategy document	Mr Khan	6 October meeting
2	Relevant section of IEG Statement	IEG Statement	Mr Khan	6 October meeting
3	Staffing Structure/levels	Management information	Mr Khan	6 October meeting
4	Security facilities for staff and customers	Management information	Mr Khan	6 October meeting
5	Numbers of customers using the One Stop Shop over a particular time range	Management information	Mr Khan	6 October meeting
6	Waiting times for customers to see staff	Management information	Mr Khan	6 October meeting
7	Customer satisfaction card results	Management information	Mr Khan	6 October meeting
8	Customer Charter	Management information	Mr Khan	6 October meeting
9	Information on solutions for issues relating to disabled access/facilities	Management information	Mr Khan	6 October meeting
10	Complaints procedure and information regarding complaints	Management information	Mr Khan	6 October meeting



SCRUTINY INQUIRY WITNESS CHECKLIST

Name of Inquiry: One Stop Shop/Lancashire Shared Contact Centre

Scrutiny Body: Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel – Date: 20 April 2005

Ref.	Witness	Information Required	Date	Venue
1	Customers	Feedback from customer satisfaction cards	6 October 2004 meeting	Union offices Street
2	Representatives from the Disability Liaison Group	Feedback on experience/suggestions for possible improvements	22 November 2004	Union offices Street
3	Representatives from the Ethnic Minorities Consultative Committee	Feedback on experiences/suggestions for possible improvements	22 November 2004	Union offices Street
4	Staff	Consultation with staff	22 November 2004 site visit/ 2 February 2005	Union offices Street
5	Councillors	Feedback on experiences/suggestions for possible improvements	N/A	By letter
6	Revenues and Benefits Manager; and Head of Planning Services (as internal customer)	Feedback on experiences/suggestions for possible improvements	16 March 2005	Gillibrand Street offices
7	Representative from the Racial Equality Council	Feedback on experiences/suggestions for possible improvements	16 April 2005	Town Hall
8	Executive Member for Customers, Policy and Performance	Consideration of draft recommendations and feedback as Executive Member	20 April 2005	Town Hall

SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION – PROJECT PLAN		TOPIC: One Stop Shop/Lancashire Shared Contact Centre													
		2004						2005							
TASK	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
1. TOPIC SELECTED	✓														
2. SCOPE INQUIRY	✓														
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ complete project outline ▪ complete project plan 															
3. COLLECT EVIDENCE															
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ see information checklist ▪ see witness checklist 		4	✓	4	✓	4	✓								
4. CONSIDER EVIDENCE															
5. REPORT															
6. FEEDBACK & ACTION															
7. MONITOR															
															✓
															✓

**CUSTOMER OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
26 August 2004**

04.CUS.53 ITEMS REFERRED FOR CONSIDERATION TO THE CUSTOMER OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL BY THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – ONE STOP SHOP

The Panel received the Scrutiny Topic Selection Assessment regarding The One Stop Shop referred for consideration from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Group Director outlined background information on this topic.

The Group Director advised that the Lancashire Shared Contact Centre was one of the Council's key projects, this included the One Stop Shop as the first phase. The Group Director reported that this was a walk in service to enable the public to access services such as housing, benefits and planning services in one places. This facility had been in operation for around a year. The staff in the One Stop Shop were specifically trained in customer service skills.

The Panel noted that Chorley Borough Council was a member of the Lancashire Shared Contact Centre Partnership, comprising seven authorities within Lancashire, including the County Council. This aimed to be a virtual contact centre where calls would be dealt with by a partner if all lines were busy at Chorley and vice versa. This would enable the extension of opening hours as partner contact centres would be nominated e.g. for specific weekends. The Contact Centre was due to be in operation in the next few months.

The Panel completed an Overview and Scrutiny Inquiry Project Outline for the One Stop Shop.

RESOLVED - That the Panel undertake an Inquiry into the One Stop Shop/Lancashire Shared Contact Centre.

**SPECIAL CUSTOMER OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
6 October 2004**

04.CUS.59 ONE STOP SHOP INQUIRY – PRESENTATION ON THE ONE STOP SHOP

The Panel received an information file for the One Stop Shop Inquiry, comprising documents that the Panel had requested. These documents included: the Joint Chorley/Lancashire Contact Centre Business Case, the Vision Statement entitled “Towards a Shared Service Contact Centre and the relevant section of the IEG Statement. Panel members also received the staffing structure for the section and details of the security facilities for staff and customers. The number of customers using the One Stop Shop and the waiting times for service, along with the customer satisfaction card results up to 1 October 2004 were supplied. Members also received the Customer Charter, the Customer Care Policy and Standards and Complaints Policy. Members also received information regarding disabled access and facilities.

The Panel received a presentation by Asim Khan, Assistant Head of Customer Services. The facility was a flag ship development with a service objective “to provide customers with a single point of access to Council and Partner services using their preferred method of contact and to provide a quality service that fully meets customer requirements”.

The objective would be achieved through the provision of service, a face to face (in the One Stop Shop), via telephone, SMS, email and fax (through the Call Centre) or self-service (on the web site). The same technology would underpin the different solutions to ensure consistency of service.

The vision for the facility was formed out of consultation with staff and customers and mentoring from other local authorities, such as the London Borough of Brent who were Beacon authorities. This mentoring enabled Chorley to learn from experience gained by others who had already implemented a similar facility. The Council had approved the strategy in October 2001.

The One Stop Shop was the first aspect of a phased approach, the second step being the link to the Shared Services Contact Centre. This was a key priority for the Council. The One Stop Shop now incorporated Customer service for Council Tax, Benefits, some aspects of Housing services and more recently, Planning services and Highways.

There had been extensive consultation with staff, trade unions, customers, Members, Health and Safety, Ethnic Minorities Consultative Committee, Disability Liaison Group and Police Liaison Group.

The facility did comply with access requirements for people with disabilities. These included

- a rise and fall desk in the One Stop Shop, with Internet access,
- the provision of hearing loop in the One Stop Shop and interview rooms,
- disabled toilets,
- a good colour scheme for people with visual impairment,

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- a meet and greet service during busy periods and
- helpful, aware and accommodating staff.

The Panel noted that issues had been raised regarding the access doors into the One Stop Shop. The Members would examine this during the site visit of the facility.

There had been human resources issues arising from the development of the One Stop Shop, including a staffing restructure. The recruitment process and progression scheme focussed on customer service. There had been concerns regarding the removal of the safety glass. Staff visited the One Stop Shop at Knowsley to get a first hand feel of what this meant and felt reassured. Also, it was felt that the benefits in customer relations and implementation of CCTV and panic alarms would mitigate the risk.

A training programme had been implemented to action a skills audit. The staff were encouraged to undertake an National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) in Customer Services which complemented the Customer Care Policy and Customer Charter. Staff had been given training on violence and aggression and Health and Safety. Training was undertaken to give staff an appreciation of the back office procedures and to show how the interaction with the customer effected these.

As the Customer Services staff would be serving customers for a variety of services, some of the complex business processes were mapped. Training on the computer systems for the different services was undertaken, including Housing, Revenues and Benefits and the payments system.

There had been a number of Customer Care policies throughout the Council and an opportunity taken to bring these together into a corporate Customer Care Policy.

There had been issues relating to queue management when the facility first opened. The lights that had caused some confusion had been switched off and this had helped the problem.

The business process mapping exercises undertaken were highlighted as important, particularly as business processes are subject to change. All the information collected by staff in the One Stop Shop was delivered electronically to the relevant back office and by hard copy where a signature was required.

During the One Stop Shop project there had been several other competing corporate projects, including allpay, smart cards and the payments system.

The entire ground floor of the Union Street offices had been refurbished in accordance with a Design Brief. The work had been undertaken between January and May 2003. For safety reasons the furniture used in the One Stop Shop was heavy or fixed in place.

The Panel viewed photographs of the ground floor of Unions Street offices before and after the One Stop Shop.

The One Stop Shop had opened on 27 May 2003, had served 10,524 customers in the fast track reception and 36,583 customers in the One Stop Shop. An average of 138 customers had been seen per day with an average wait of 4 minutes. More than 90% of queries were dealt with without the need to refer to the back office. Since August 2004 1,149 Planning customers had been dealt with and 394 Department of Works

and Pensions customers. Three interview rooms were available for more sensitive queries, including one very secure room for use if a customer was known to be violent and aggressive towards staff.

A customer feedback form was given to each customer, with 11% of forms being returned. Some changes had been implemented arising from the feedback received, including a children's play area and a clock.

Chorley Borough Council were the first in Lancashire to have a true generic One Stop Shop and since it's implementation most of the districts in Lancashire had visited, including Lancashire County Council, Pendle Borough Council and Wyre Borough Council.

The Shared Services Contact Centre (SSCC), was a partnership with five other East Lancashire Districts and the County Council, and, was scheduled to go live in April/May 2004. It would provide customers with access to both Council and County Council services. The contracts in relation to this partnership had been complex resulting in delays, however this was a key project for the Council. The number of staff required had been estimated and some would transfer from other services. In the fullness of time this aimed to be a virtual contact centre where a partner could deal with calls if all lines were busy at Chorley and vice versa. This would also enable the extension of opening hours as contact centres would be nominated e.g. for specific weekends.

In response to a query, Mr Khan advised that the Council's switchboard would be part of the Call Centre and that, due to the Town Hall refurbishment the switchboard had relocated to Union Street offices. As an improvement to the switchboard service, staff now asked more questions of callers to ensure the caller was transferred to the correct department and announced each caller transferred. Other improvements had also been made but this was continuously under review given that some customers still experienced delays in getting through.

The Panel noted that currently, a specific member of staff delivered the Planning service, but all staff would be trained to deliver this service. If there was expected to be interest in a particular planning application, full copies of the file would be stored within the One Stop Shop. In time, all of the information would be available to view electronically. For technical enquiries a Planning Officer would be requested to see the customer.

Mr Khan reported that agency staff were not usually employed in the One Stop Shop due the specific training required by staff. Some staff who were employed for 20 hours a week and covered peak times and this complemented the core bank of staff.

In response to a query, Mr Khan reported that the fast track reception was required to filter customers needing further service, contractors and officers requiring access. Quick queries could be dealt with there.

The Chair thanked Mr Khan for his presentation.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the presentation by Mr Khan be noted,**
- (b) That a site visit of the One Stop Shop be held in the next few weeks on a Monday, with a tour of the facility in the morning and discussion with representatives of the Ethnic Minorities Consultative Committee and Disability Liaison Group in the afternoon.**

**CUSTOMER OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SUB-GROUP
22 November 2004**

04.CUS.61 TOUR OF THE ONE STOP SHOP

The Assistant Head of Customer Services welcomed the Members of the Panel to the One Stop Shop facility at the Union Street offices.

The Panel undertook a tour of the One Stop Shop, starting at the Fast Track Reception, Payments Counter, Housing Repair hotline and stands for information leaflets and displaying information regarding ongoing planning applications.

Members went into the One Stop Shop and noted the promotional plasma screen and queue system screen within the waiting area. The waiting area incorporated a children's play area, that, along with a clock, had been implemented in response to comments from Customer feedback.

The Panel observed the main One Stop Shop desk and staff working area. A member of the Customer Service Staff demonstrated the knowledge based dialogue software used to help customers requests for information and services. The Members noted the calm atmosphere, layout of the facility and the absence of security glass.

The three Interview Rooms, each with increasing levels in security were noted. The restroom for the staff and CCTV monitoring room were highlighted. Each of the doors giving access to staff areas required a security fob to gain access.

RESOLVED – That the Tour be noted.

04.CUS.61 FEEDBACK SESSION WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE DISABILITY FORUM

The Chair welcomed Eileen Bee; Disability Forum Co-ordinator, Ken Miller and Judy Daniels to the meeting. Ken and Judy were partially sighted.

The Assistant Head of Customer Services reported that when the One Stop Shop had first opened Judy had visited the facility and noted issues with the height of the door handle bar and mirror in the disabled toilet which had both been adjusted. The sign at the entrance to the facility had also been increased in size. The Panel noted that the size of the interior signs were restricted by the height of the ceiling.

The Panel commented that the provision of the rise and fall counter, for use with customers in a wheel chair, was excellent. Representatives of the Disability Forum stated that there was no reason why a partially sighted customer could not use any of the counters, as long as it was made clear which counter they were to go to. Two of the counters were fitted with the Loop system. The ramp from the outside of the premises directly into the One Stop Shop was noted.

The representatives stated they were impressed with the service that had been received and the computerised systems used within the One Stop Shop. There was an audio and visual method for customers to be aware when their ticket number was called, including an audio facility in the disabled toilet. The Panel heard that when the facility opened a flashing light system used had confused customers so this had been switched off.

The Panel were advised that the colour schemes were acceptable, the contrast between the colours were noted as being the most important aspect. In fact, different colour schemes suited different people with visual impairment. The representatives commended the lighting levels within the One Stop Shop.

The Panel discussed possible measures to assist Customers with disabilities. These included the existing facility for the Fast Track Reception to ask customers whether they had any special needs. The customer services advisor in the One Stop Shop would be made aware of these needs via the computer system. At times when there was additional capacity and busy periods a “meet and greet” service was in operation, this would be extended to escort customers into the One Stop if a special need was identified. The Panel noted that it was not always obvious that a customer had a special need, in some cases there was a need for the customer to advise the staff of their needs.

The Assistant Head of Customer Services advised that a Customer Relations Management (CRM) system would shortly be in operation. This would give each customer a unique reference number and would store all the information in relation to the customer, including requests for service and any special needs. The representatives supported this. There were currently no sign language interpreters within the One Stop Shop.

In response to a query the Assistant Head of Customer Services advised that the Fast Track Reception was required to filter staff, contractors and customers, in addition to allowing the resolution of quick inquiries. Concerns had been raised in regard to the door into the One Stop Shop. The entrance, exit and glass separating the doors were not as clear as they could be.

The representatives of the Disability Forum commended the Council for reviewing the facilities at the One Stop Shop for improvements and taking the views of the Disability Forum into account.

The Chair thanked the representatives of the Disability Forum for their comments.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the feedback be noted,**
- (b) That footsteps/arrows directing customers to the Fast Track Reception be considered,**
- (c) That staff be trained in sign language,**
- (d) That the entrance, exit and glass separating the doors to be made clearer, potentially by making the doors semi-automatic, with further consultation with representatives of the Disability Forum on this issue,**

04.CUS.61 FEEDBACK SESSION WITH THE VICE-CHAIR OF THE ETHNIC MINORITIES CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

The Chair welcomed Mr Allam, the Vice-Chair of the Ethnic Minorities Consultative Committee, to the meeting.

In response to a query the Assistant Head of Customer Services advised that the “Language Line” facility was available within the One Stop Shop. This provided access to over 200 languages, including Urdu. There was no direct translation service available, but the Panel noted that the use of the facility had been limited so far. The “Language Line” facility could be utilised from the home of a customer, by a member of the Customer Service staff, if the customer was housebound.

The Panel heard that consultation had been undertaken with representatives of the Ethnic Minorities Consultative Committee during the implementation of the One Stop Shop. There would be opportunity for further consultation and feedback at the upcoming Eid Festival on 6 December. This event was to be held in conjunction with the Community Leaders and the Borough Council, at All Seasons Leisure Centre where there would be a roadshow promoting the One Stop Shop.

Mr Allam noted that the take up of these services, by those in Ethnic communities was slow and that the services provided for members of the Ethnic community could not be properly tested until the take up increased. Currently, a friend or other member of the community might help a person fill in a form for example.

The Assistant Head of Customer Services advised that some Authorities had recruited members of the ethnic community who had the required skills within the facility. The Panel heard that the Police had a list of people who could be called upon to act as a translator. When the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) started a gentleman, from the ethnic community, had been employed one afternoon a week with great success. There were plans to discuss partnership working with CAB.

The Chair thanked Mr Allam for his contributions.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the feedback be noted,**
- (b) That the Assistant Head of Customer Services attend a future meeting of the Ethnic Minorities Consultative Committee,**
- (c) That an open evening be held at the One Stop Shop to promote the facility to members of the ethnic community,**
- (d) That future partnership arrangements with Citizens Advice Bureau be considered,**
- (e) That the issue of disabled parking spaces in the vicinity of the One Stop Shop be considered**

**CUSTOMER OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
25 November 2005**

04.CUS.76 ONE STOP SHOP INQUIRY - CONSIDERING EVIDENCE

The Panel received a note of their tour of the One Stop Shop that had taken place on 22 November 2004 as well as a note of the discussions with representatives from the Ethnic Minorities Consultative Committee and Disability Liaison Group on how the facility at the Union Street offices operated.

RESOLVED - That the staff who work at the One Stop Shop and the Trade Unions be consulted via questionnaires.

**CUSTOMER OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
12 January 2005**

05.CUS.04 ONE STOP SHOP INQUIRY – INTERVIEW OF STAFF

The Chair accepted, as urgent, consideration of this item not included on the agenda in order to update Members on the One Stop Shop Inquiry.

The Panel noted that a feedback session with Customer Services staff would be held on 2 February 2005 commencing at 2.00pm at the Union Street offices.

RESOLVED – That Councillors Mrs Walsh (Chair), Councillors Birchall, Malpas and E Smith attend the feedback session on 2 February 2005 at 2.00pm.

ONE STOP SHOP INQUIRY – FEEDBACK FROM STAFF

2 February 2005

The Chair welcomed the staff to the information gathering session and made introductions. The Panel explained that the Inquiry had been requested to assess the effectiveness of the One Stop Shop in improving customer service and to identify any improvements for customer service. The Panel had considered all aspects of the One Stop Shop, including the building, security arrangements, business procedures, and facilities for customers with disabilities.

The staff interviewed had worked for the Council for varying periods of time from just over a year to eighteen years. The majority had worked in a similar environment previously and had undertaken the NVQ in Customer Service. Some staff worked part time and others full time.

Do the staff enjoy working at Chorley Borough Council?

All of the staff said that they enjoyed working at Chorley Borough Council and that the One Stop Shop had a nice working atmosphere. Staff within Customer Services were friendly and helpful. Staff liked the fact that they could give each customer really good customer service without rushing, as there was not a set target of customers to be seen per shift. There was a rest room where staff could go for a break if they had seen a customer with upsetting circumstances.

The Panel noted the pride the staff felt in their job and the responsibility of the staff as the face of Chorley Borough Council. Each member of staff said that they would feel more confident in speaking to customers if they had more knowledge about the services they provided.

Training

Staff felt that it would be helpful to see the whole process from the back office through to Customer Services as this would help them to understand why Customers need to bring in certain documents or answer certain questions within the dialogues. Customers did want more information than the staff were trained on, including terminology and back office procedures. The dialogues were good (Team Knowledge software), but additional knowledge of complex services such as benefits and planning was required.

The Panel agreed that it would be helpful for back office departments to spend some time in Customer Services to appreciate the difficulties faced by the staff.

Systems

The customer history log was highlighted as useful for the staff. The dialogues were useful, the Benefits dialogues were currently being reviewed. The Planning dialogues were fine for simple queries, but staff advised that planning customers had different expectations and requested more in depth information.

Communication

A daily brief was now prepared for the staff outlining any information they needed to know. This had improved the communication within the section, especially for those staff who worked part-time. A monthly corporate Team Brief was also heard. A log was kept of any incidents with customers that occurred in the One Stop Shop.

The staff had regular Personal Development Reviews with their manager where they could raise any issues. The management were in the process of clarifying the progression scheme for staff.

Customers

Each member of staff said that customers liked the One Stop Shop. This was partly due to the short waiting times to see a member of staff. Staff felt that customers went away happy with the service they received.

Within the One Stop Shop there were two queues: one for general inquiries and one for planning which could cause confusion. As there was only one desk for planning inquiries there was sometimes a queue. Other Customer Services staff couldn't serve planning customers, even if they were trained on planning inquiries, because each computer did not have the software required.

Comparison with previous Benefits counter

The staff advised that the One Stop Shop was a great improvement from the previous benefits counter. Customers appeared more relaxed without the glass and the waiting times had been greatly reduced.

Security

Staff advised they felt secure and commented that it was better without the security glass as this created a barrier between staff and customers. A panic button was available if required. The One Stop Shop was a calm and pleasant environment and so customers were not usually aggressive,

If customers were aggressive staff would explain circumstances in a certain way as they had been trained to do. The customer would then go away happy with the service received, even if they haven't got the answer they originally wanted.

Back office support

Staff reported that some departments gave very good back office support and that others could greatly improve. The Panel noted that management were currently reviewing this.

Management

Staff advised that they would feel happy to talk to management about ideas for changes or problems. Staff recognised that management needed a positive response from other departments to resolve current issues.

Development

Staff felt that the One Stop Shop could take on other services, but that additional training and back office support would be required. There was enthusiasm from the staff for the One Stop Shop to take on other services.

Suggested Improvements

- The doors into the One Stop Shop and Interview Room Three would benefit from a redesign.
- All members of Council staff to wear a name badge showing their department.
- The internal telephone directory to be kept up to date to help the person manning the switchboard.
- To provide more training for staff on roles before starting to provide the service, e.g. planning, switchboard.
- To provide more training on in depth areas such as benefits and planning.
- To let the staff know how often the panic buttons are checked.
- To consider installing the planning software on more than one computer to enable staff to help out when there were queues at the planning desk.

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- To consider further the back office support for the One Stop Shop.

The best element

Staff said that the best element of the One Stop Shop was the Customer Services staff who went above and beyond their duty to provide an excellent service for the customer.

**CUSTOMER OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
24 February 2005**

05.CUS.07 ONE STOP SHOP INQUIRY – COLLECTING EVIDENCE

The Panel had requested a feedback session with the Revenues and Benefits Manager, the Head of Planning Services and a representative of the Racial Equality Council. The Panel would also have a feedback session with the Executive Member for Customers, Policy and Performance.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That Members of the Panel receive feedback from the Revenues and Benefits Manager, the Head of Planning Services and a representative of the Racial Equality Council on 16 March 2005 commencing at 2.00pm,**
- (b) That a date be confirmed at a later date to receive feedback from the Executive Member for Customers, Policy and Performance.**

05.CUS.08 ONE STOP SHOP INQUIRY – CONSIDERING EVIDENCE

RESOLVED – That the consideration of evidence be deferred until the completion of the feedback session scheduled for 16 March 2005.

**SPECIAL CUSTOMER OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SUB-GROUP
16 March 2005**

05.CUS.13 FEEDBACK FROM THE REVENUES AND BENEFITS MANAGER

The Chair welcomed Dave Price, the Revenues and Benefits Manager, to the meeting. She explained that the Panel would like to receive feedback from him as a back office customer of the One Stop Shop.

The Panel heard that as the Revenues and Benefits section were no longer meeting members of the public face to face this aspect of the workload had decreased. Staff now devoted more time to the more technical aspects of working out benefit claims. 50% of inquiries were dealt with over the phone by the section directly.

The Panel heard that a great deal of work had gone into developing the dialogues used by the customer services, but that as the Revenues and Benefits requirements and systems were constantly changing these needed to be kept up to date. Copies of training notes were passed to customer services and members of the Revenues and Benefits staff had sat with staff. It was suggested that customer services could join in on regular training sessions and that any new starters could have training with the Revenues and Benefits section. A computerised training manual had recently been purchased for Revenues and Benefits and a dedicated training officer had also been appointed. Joint training would also build a closer relationship between the two sections.

In response to a query it was noted that the expectations of Customer Services was very high and it was not possible for the advisors to know everything about each of the services they provided. There was a discussion regarding certain advisors being specialised in certain areas, but it was noted that the line where the customer query needed to be passed over to the back office needed to be clear.

The Revenues and Benefits Manager highlighted that the One Stop Shop provided an improved service to the Customer as they were now able to speak to the Council about any queries in one place. The service received by the Revenues and Benefits section from Customer Services had been very good, there had been meetings between the management and past issues had been resolved.

RESOLVED –

- (a) To thank the Revenues and Benefits Manager for his feedback,**
- (b) That the section showed a commitment to continuously improve the service provided to the customer,**
- (c) To establish a policy to ensure that the dialogues used by the advisors were kept up to date for all services provided by the One Stop Shop,**
- (d) That Customer Services advisors, in particular the supervisors, to join in on regular Revenues and Benefits section training sessions and new starters to have training with the Revenues and Benefits section,**
- (e) To note that joint training would build closer relationships between the One Stop Shop and back office sections,**
- (f) To support the new computerised training manual recently purchased for the Revenues and Benefits section and the appointment of the dedicated training officer,**
- (g) To note the difficulties of training all advisors as some work part time and Customer Services open office hours,**
- (h) To train some Customer Services staff to a higher level in certain services to serve as reference points within Customer Services,**
- (i) To clarify the point where the customer query requires back office attention.**

05.CUS.14 FEEDBACK FROM THE HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL MANAGER

The Chair welcomed Alan Croston, the Head of Planning Services and Wendy Gudger, the Development Control Manager, to the meeting. She explained that the Panel would like to receive feedback from them as a back office customers of the One Stop Shop.

The Head of Planning Services reported that the Development Control, Enforcement and Building Control sections had moved to Union Street offices in August 2004. The Planning Policy section remained at Gillibrand Street offices.

The Panel heard that the reception area at the Gillibrand Street offices had been almost exclusively for planning customers so moving to the One Stop Shop had been a big change for the planning staff and customers. The existing receptionist had moved at the same time and this had been a great help, although she only worked part-time. The administrative arrangements were also organised differently, such as mail and photocopying and the location of the offices on the second floor. These were additional changes that staff needed to adjust to.

In response to a query the Head of Planning Services explained that a further review of the Planning Services business processes was underway in readiness for the implementation of the Contact Centre. It was envisaged that this review would clarify the split between the service provided by Customer Services and the back office. There had also been a recent review of the support staff arrangements within Planning Services. The Panel discussed the possibility for the Planning Officer on duty to be based within the One Stop Shop.

The Head of Planning Services explained that the Unit had targets that had to be met, for example in relation to the Planning Delivery Grant. The Panel noted that this was a key consideration in relation to the funding of the service. The number of planning applications had been consistently high over the past few years, but numbers had levelled off in recent months. This combined with a full complement of Planning Services staff should enable the Unit to focus more on the softer side of the service.

In response to a query the Head of Planning Services stated the commitment of the Unit to continuously improve the service given to customers and the provision of training for the Customer Services advisors. A training programme would be developed in conjunction with Customer Services and Planning Services.

The Panel agreed that Planning was a complex service and that it would be a lot to expect each member of the Customer Services staff to have a comprehensive knowledge of each service they provided. The nature of many Planning queries were noted as being subjective, for example, the colour of building materials used in conservation area. This meant that the percentage of queries that required back office resolution was higher than other services. A large number of queries were dealt with over the telephone by Planning officers.

The Head of Planning Services advised that the move to the One Stop Shop had improved the service provided to the customers by reducing the waiting times. With the planned training programme the service to the customer would be enhanced further. It was acknowledged that due to the complex nature of planning inquiries further analysis and training would have been beneficial prior to the move to the One Stop Shop.

The Panel heard that the Planning Services had developed dialogues for customer for some queries, but that these needed to be reviewed. In fact, the majority of queries to Customer Services were specific to a property or area and could not be resolved by the use of dialogues. A lot of information leaflets and FAQ's were available in the One Stop Shop.

The Panel noted that the nature of Planning Services meant that customers were being told they could, or could not do things, and the rules and reasons why. The regulations and policies involved were also complex and the Panel noted that customers could see the service received in a negative light because of this.

In response to a query the Head of Planning Services reported that a great deal of development had taken place on the Chorley Borough Council web site section in relation to Planning Services. "Planning online" included the Local Plan, public access (for details of current planning applications), the planning portal (a guide to applying for planning permission) and building regulations information. Further developments to the web site were scheduled for later in the year. The Unit aimed to provide an enhanced service to the customers and to be more open and transparent. The enhanced service required resources as the more information made available the more queries were being generated.

The Head of Planning Services agreed that the software used by Customer Services for Planning queries should be loaded on to additional computers, as currently there was only one computer that could access the software.

The Panel discussed the potential for a One Stop Shop user group, with service unit heads and members of staff from the relevant units, to meet on a regular basis to discuss any ongoing issues.

RESOLVED –

- (a) To thank the Head of Planning Services and Development Control Manager for their feedback,**
- (b) That the section showed a commitment to continuously improve the service provided to the customer,**
- (c) To note the difficulties faced by Planning arising from the move over the Union Street,**
- (d) To support the review of Planning Services business process ahead of implementation of Contact Centre,**
- (e) To note that planning services was complex in nature as many queries were subjective, for example, the colour of building materials used in conservation area,**
- (f) To support the development of a training programme for Customer Services in conjunction with Planning Services,**
- (g) To clarify the point where the customer query requires back office attention,**
- (h) To support ongoing meetings with the management of the Units involved,**
- (i) To publish FAQ's in the One Stop Shop on the different services provided, potentially via the plasma screen,**
- (j) To promote use of the Chorley Borough Council internet site to access information,**
- (k) To load the planning software on more than one pc in the One Stop Shop,**
- (l) To consider the feasibility of the planning officer on Customer Services duty to be based from within the One Stop Shop,**
- (m) To consider the provision of two on duty planning officers,**
- (n) To record the number of planning queries requiring back office resolution,**
- (o) To set up a One Stop Shop user group with management and staff from all of the Units involved.**

05.CUS.15 FEEDBACK FROM A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE RACIAL EQUALITY COUNCIL

The Chair welcomed Mr Patel to the meeting. She explained that the Panel would like to receive feedback from him as a representative from the Racial Equality Council.

Mr Patel explained that he was seconded from Lancashire County Council to the Racial Equality Council, an independent organisation that worked within the community. The Panel heard that there were several communities within the Chorley area, including, Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, and Afro-Caribbean. Mr Patel attended the Borough Council's Ethnic Minorities Consultative Committee on a regular basis and had a session at the One Stop Shop each week.

Mr Patel reported that he advised people to go directly to the Council on welfare rights issues and to request an interpreter from the Council. He would deal with issues for people if they were experiencing problems with the Council. The Citizens Advice Bureau had received funding for an interpreter, but this post was currently empty. The Panel noted the use of a corporate strap line for Urdu and Gujarati speakers, and a large print strap line for those with a visual impairment.

The Panel suggested that an open evening specifically for the minority communities be held and further publicity of the facilities provided by the One Stop Shop. It was noted that once an expectation was created to the public the service must then meet the expectation.

In response to a query Mr Patel reported that in Preston, a community outreach officer would go out to Mosques and community centres to provide services or a link to the Council. It was suggested that a person with language skills could man the Fast Track Reception area within the One Stop Shop in the future. It was noted that a "Language Line" facility was available within the One Stop Shop.

The Panel discussed the future development of the service and noted it's positive impact on service to the customer so far.

RESOLVED –

- (a) To thank Mr Patel for his feedback as a representative from the Racial Equality Council,**
- (b) To support the use of a corporate strap line and provision of the "Language Line" facility,**
- (c) To endeavour to have a member of staff with language skills to man the Fast Track Reception area,**
- (d) To hold an open evening event for minority communities in the One Stop Shop,**
- (e) To increase the advertisement of facilities available at the One Stop Shop, for example a leaflet or an article in Chorley Borough News,**
- (f) To record the numbers of minority customers to aid future comparisons.**

05.CUS.16 GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Panel considered a number of recommendations arising from the feedback received throughout the course of the afternoon.

RESOLVED –

General

- (a) To thank the officers and Mr Patel for their feedback,**
- (b) To note that the sections involved showed a commitment to continuously improve the service provided to the customer,**
- (c) To note the difficulties faced by Planning arising from the move over the Union Street,**
- (d) To note that it would be a lot to expect each member of the Customer Services staff to have a comprehensive knowledge of each service they provided,**

- (e) To endeavour to have a member of staff with language skills to man the Fast Track Reception area,
- (f) To support the use of a corporate strap line and provision of the "Language Line" facility.

Training

- (a) To support the development of a training programme for Customer Services in conjunction with Planning Services,
- (b) To have Customer Services advisors, in particular the supervisors, join in on regular training sessions and new starters to have training with the section with the back office sections,
- (c) To note that joint training would build closer relationships between the One Stop Shop and back office sections,
- (d) To support the new computerised training manual recently purchased for the Revenues and Benefits section and the appointment of the dedicated training officer,
- (e) To note the difficulties of training all advisors as some work part time and Customer Services open office hours,
- (f) To train some Customer Services staff to a higher level in certain services to serve as reference points within Customer Services.

Dialogues

- (a) To establish a policy to ensure that the dialogues used by the advisors were kept up to date for all services provided by the One Stop Shop,
- (b) To clarify the point where the customer query requires back office attention,
- (c) To support the review of Planning Services business process and dialogues ahead of implementation of the Contact Centre,
- (d) To note that planning services was complex in nature as many queries were subjective, for example, the colour of building materials used in conservation area,
- (e) To load the planning software on more than one pc in the One Stop Shop.

External Publicity

- (a) To note the need to manage the expectations of the public as to the services provided by Customer Services,
- (b) To promote use of the Chorley Borough Council internet site to access information and services,
- (c) To publish FAQ's in the One Stop Shop on the different services provided, potentially via the plasma screen,
- (d) To hold an open evening event for minority communities in the One Stop Shop,
- (e) To increase the advertisement of facilities available at the One Stop Shop, for example a leaflet or an article in Chorley Borough News.

Information

- (a) To produce a breakdown of the mix of inquiries to Customer Services between benefits, planning etc,
- (b) To record the number of queries requiring back office resolution,
- (c) To record the numbers of minority customers to aid future comparisons.

Internal Communication

- (a) To support ongoing meetings with the management of the Units involved,
- (b) To set up a One Stop Shop user group with management and staff from all of the Units involved.

Accommodation

- (a) To consider the feasibility of the planning officer on Customer Services duty to be based from within the One Stop Shop.

Back office support

- (a) To consider the provision of two on duty planning officers.

**SPECIAL CUSTOMER OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
20 April 2005**

Present: Councillor Mrs Walsh (Chair), Councillors Cullens, Mrs Dickinson, Malpas, Russell and E Smith.

Also present: Executive Member for Customers, Policy and Performance, Councillor Edgerley.

05.CUS.22 ONE STOP SHOP INQUIRY – CONSIDERING EVIDENCE

The Panel received an update report on the Shared Services Contact Centre and noted that the legal paperwork had now been signed and the implementation group was meeting every month.

The supplier would be providing a “managed solution” meaning that the networks, PC’s and software used would be managed and maintained by the supplier. “Northgate” had bought out the supplier who won the contract. This type of solution was core business of this company and they were keen to use the Partnership as a flagship development.

The Group Director advised that the Contact Centre would be open from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday and that the Contact Centre at Lancashire County Council would provide services on Saturday mornings.

The Panel heard that the telephone number 515151 would be retained with a long-term aspiration of this being the number with which to contact the Council. In the short term calls to planning extensions would be routed to advisors with planning experience. An extensive training plan had been developed for the customer advisors.

The Panel discussed the financial implications of the Contact Centre and noted that costs had been shared with the other Partners. There were significant efficiency savings gained through the use of technology and business process re-engineering associated with the Contact Centre. The service to the customer would be enhanced due to the provision of some County Council advisors and services within the Chorley.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the update report be noted,**
- (b) That a progress report be presented to the Panel in the autumn.**

05.CUS.23 ONE STOP SHOP INQUIRY – REPORT

The Panel considered the draft Final Report into the One Stop Shop and Lancashire Shared Services Contact Centre and discussed each recommendation in turn with the Executive Member for Customers, Policy and Performance; Councillor Edgerley.

The Panel agreed that the following recommendations should be put forward to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Executive Cabinet.

Aims/Objective (a) To assess the effectiveness of the One Stop Shop in improving customer service.

1. That after consideration of the evidence presented to the Panel the One Stop Shop has been effective in improving customer service.

Aims/Objective (b) To assess the current service provision

Service Objective

2. To consider further the feasibility of the planning officer on Customer Services duty, to be based from within the One Stop Shop.

3. To consider amendments to the arrangements for “on duty” planning officers to address the issue of customers having to wait.

Security

4. To let staff know how often the panic buttons are tested.

Training

5. To have Customer Services advisors, in particular the supervisors, join in on regular training sessions and new starters to have training with the back office sections, such as Revenues and Benefits and Planning Services.

6. To train some Customer Services staff to a higher level in certain services to serve as reference points within Customer Services.

Computerised Systems and Dialogues

7. To establish a policy to ensure that the dialogues used by the advisors are kept up to date for all services provided by the One Stop Shop.

8. To clarify the point where the customer query requires back office attention.

9. To load the planning software on more than one computer in the One Stop Shop.

External Publicity

10. To promote the use of the Chorley Borough Council Internet site to access information and services.

11. To publish Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) in the One Stop Shop on the different services provided, potentially via the plasma screen.

12. To increase the advertisement of facilities available at the One Stop Shop, for example a leaflet to libraries or an article in Chorley Borough News.

Internal Information

13. To produce a breakdown of the range of inquiries to Customer Services between Revenues and Benefits, Planning Services etc to aid future resource provision.

14. To record the number of queries requiring back office resolution.

15. To record the numbers of minority customers to aid future comparisons

Internal Communication

16. *To set up a One Stop Shop user group with management and staff from all of the Council's Service Units involved and a Member of the Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel.*

Service For Customers with Disabilities

17. *To use footsteps/arrows to direct customers to the Fast Track Reception.*

18. *To train staff in sign language and to liaise with deaf organisations on other ways to provide services to deaf customers.*

19. *To make the entrance, exit and glass separating the One Stop Shop doors clearer, potentially by making the doors push button operated.*

20. *The layout of Interview Room Three to be reconsidered.*

21. *To provide a disabled parking space in the vicinity of the One Stop Shop.*

Service for Ethnic Minority Customers

22. *To advertise the "Language Line" service.*

23. *To target minority communities for open evening events in the One Stop Shop.*

Aims/Objective (c) To review the progress on the development of the Lancashire Shared Services Contact Centre

24. *To support progress on the implementation of the Lancashire Shared Services Contact Centre and to publicise the services available.*

RESOLVED –

- (a) To thank Councillor Edgerley for his feedback on the Inquiry and the draft recommendations,**
- (b) That the amended version of the draft Final Report be emailed to the Members of the Panel,**
- (c) That the draft Final report be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, subject to the amendments discussed by the Panel.**

Chair

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Finance Head of Economic Regeneration (Introduced by the Executive Member for Life and Leisure, Cllr C Hoyle)	Executive Cabinet	30/06/05

ASTLEY PARK HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND - CONTRACT

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To seek approval from Members to enter into a contract with the Heritage Lottery Fund for the restoration of Astley Park.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- This report relates to the corporate priorities of cleaner, greener, safer.

RISK ISSUES

- The issue raised and recommendations made in this report involve risk considerations in the following categories:

Strategy		Information	
Reputation	4	Regulatory/Legal	
Financial	4	Operational	
People	4	Other	

- The key issues for members are firstly that if the grant is not accepted that improvements to the park will be undertaken on an incremental basis over a long period of time and will be dependant on Council funding and urgent items. Secondly, If the grant is accepted the risks will be associated with the long term management and maintenance of the Park. Crucial to this will be the entrepreneurial and marketing skills of the manager.

BACKGROUND

- Members will recall that at the end of last year that the Stage 2 detail proposals for the restoration of Astley Park were submitted for consideration by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). The main objective of the application is to restore the historical character of the Park in order to provide an appropriate setting for the Hall and enhance the quality of the Park environment for local users and general visitors. These works include:

- restoring the historic fabric of the park;
- restoring the coach house and walled garden to provide new facilities including café, classroom and museum exhibition space;
- relocating the play area and pets corner and basic refurbishment of the pavilion;



- improving the condition of the land, woodland and parkland planting;
- restoring footpaths and resurfacing main drives;
- enhancing entrances to the Park.

HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND GRANT PROPOSAL

6. At Stage 1 the HLF asked that the Council reduce the application in order to bring the grant down to below £2 million. The Stage 2 proposals were therefore based on the HLF offer of £1,943,000 which set a ceiling on how much grant HLF were prepared to offer.
7. However, over the last couple of months the HLF asked whether certain items could be put back in as they felt that they were in the interests of the park in the long term. This included more extensive works to the pavilion and the walled garden and increased signage.
8. In April the HLF offered the Council an award of up to £2,004,000 towards the capital cost of £2,431,586 which is 78% of the capital cost and 60% of the overall costs including the enhanced capitalised maintenance over 10 years. The Council's contribution to the capital costs are £427,000 which have increased by £54,000 due to the extra work requested by HLF.
9. In addition to the standard terms and conditions the contract includes a condition requiring a fully costed Maintenance Management Plan within the first 12 months of the project starting.
10. The HLF grant included funding for a Project Officer. This post will provide the interface between the HLF, the Council and the Contractors. Although the Head of Economic Regeneration will continue to be the project leader this post is essential to ensure the day to day management of the Project.

COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES

11. There are no direct HR implications to this report, although consideration does need to be given to the future management of the Hall and Park.

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

12. The slight amendments to the scheme and the finalisation of the proposal means the costs have increased slightly by £59,000. If the recommendations are agreed the additional costs will be added to the Capital Programme and financed accordingly.

CONCLUSION

13. The amendments to the Stage 2 submission are to be welcomed as they will make a valuable contribution to the overall scheme. This does mean that the Council will need to increase its capital contribution. However this does represent value for money as this will lever in £2,004,000 which is 78% of the capital cost of the project.

RECOMMENDATIONS

14. That a Project Officer is appointed to manage the Astley Park Restoration Scheme.
15. That the Council should enter into a contract with the Heritage Lottery Fund to carry out the Astley Park Restoration Works.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

16. To enter into a contract with HLF in order to carry the Astley Park Restoration Proposals.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

17 None.

GARY HALL
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

JANE MEEK
HEAD OF ECONOMIC REGENERATION

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Jane Meek	5285	8 June 2005	REGENREP/89190LM

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Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Legal Services(Introduced by the Executive Leader)	Executive Cabinet	30 June 2005

PROTOCOL FOR MEMBERS AND OFFICERS IN RESPECT OF PROPOSED HOUSING STOCK TRANSFER

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To put in place a protocol for members and officers to avoid conflicts of interest in respect of the proposed Housing Stock Transfer

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- Such a protocol will avoid conflicts of interests and help ensure that the corporate priority of serving our customers better will be met throughout the proposed Housing Stock Transfer process

RISK ISSUES

- The issue raised and recommendations made in this report involve risk considerations in the following categories:

Strategy		Information	
Reputation	✓	Regulatory/Legal	✓
Financial		Operational	
People		Other	

- There would be a reputational risk to the Council, if an appropriate protocol were not put in place, and there was a public perception of conflicts of interest concerning the roles of Members and officers in the proposed Housing Stock Transfer. There would also be a regulatory/legal risk as without a protocol the Council would not be having regard to the recommendations issued by the ODPM in the Housing Transfer Manual-2005.

BACKGROUND

- The Council has applied for a place on the 2005/6 Housing Stock Transfer Programme. This process will involve establishing a new Registered Social Landlord ("RSL"), initially with a Shadow Board of Directors, who if the tenants vote in favour of transfer, will become the governing body of the RSL and will be responsible for negotiating with the Council over the terms of transfer. The Council needs to ensure that it establishes an appropriate degree of independence to avoid conflicts of interest arising. The purpose of the proposed protocol is to avoid such conflicts of interest. Such a protocol will supplement the provisions of the Members' Code of Conduct and Officers' Code of Conduct.

PROTOCOL FOR MEMBERS AND OFFICERS FOR AVOIDING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

6. Arrangements need to be put in place from the early stage of the Housing Stock Transfer process to protect the interests of both Members and Officers, so that the potential for conflict of interest is minimised. Appendix A provides a draft protocol for Members and Officers for avoiding such conflict. The draft was provided by the external legal advisers appointed to advise in respect of the Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT) process and has been further amended by the officers who comprise the Corporate Transfer Group. Appendix B provides a Chorley structure chart pre-ballot, which is designed to eliminate and minimise conflicts of interest.
7. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) has issued guidance in respect of possible conflict in the Housing -Transfer Manual-2005. This guidance is reflected in the draft protocol. One of the potential areas for conflicts of interest is that where Members are serving on the governing body of the prospective new Landlord, shadow or otherwise, they do not participate in the decision making process of the Council in relation to the Transfer. The Executive Cabinet will be the decision making body on behalf of the Council, housing being an executive function. The shadow governing body for these purposes is the Housing Shadow Management Group shown on the far right of the structure chart in Appendix B. The Executive Member for Customers, Policy and Performance and the Executive Member for Housing and Neighbourhood Renewal are both members of the shadow governing body and in accordance with the protocol should not participate in any decision-making process of the Executive Cabinet and Council in connection with Transfer issues. Paragraph 2.3 of the protocol sets out the various steps which should be taken to minimise likely conflicts of interest
8. Paragraph 2.3.6 includes the establishment of a Steering Group to oversee the Transfer. The Steering Group should be chaired by the Officer in negotiations on behalf of the Council post-ballot. This Steering Group will be the Corporate and Housing Team chaired by the Deputy Chief Executive, who is the Council -side Lead officer and the Council's principal advisor on the transfer (as required by Paragraph 4.3 of the draft protocol) Paragraph 3 of the draft protocol deals with the position of officers in the Pre and Post-Ballot Phase and sets out certain principles and guidelines for avoiding conflicts. Members and officers needing advice about the application of the protocol should contact the Monitoring officer in the first instance.

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

10. There are no comments

COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES

10. There are no comments

RECOMMENDATION(S)

11. (a) To agree the Protocol for Members and Officers of Chorley Borough Council for Avoiding Conflicts of Interest.

(b) That the Monitoring Officer has authority to agree amendments to this Protocol subject to reporting such amendments to the next meeting of the Standards Committee .

REASONS FOR DECISION

11. A protocol for Members and Officers needs to be put in place to avoid conflicts of interest arising during the proposed Housing Stock Transfer. Particularly after the ballot,

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

12. None.

ROSEMARY LYON
DIRECTOR OF LEGAL SERVICES/MONITORING OFFICER

Background Papers			
Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
ODPM-Housing Transfer Manual	2005	N/A	www.odpm.gov.uk

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Rosemary Lyon	01257-235810	20 June 2005	ADMINREP/REPORT

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APPENDIX A PROTOCOL FOR MEMBERS AND OFFICERS OF CHORLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL FOR AVOIDING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Protocol is to give guidance and a code by which to operate for Members and Officers of Chorley Borough Council (the "Council") which is proposing to transfer its Housing Stock by way of a Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT).
- 1.2 The Council has applied for a place on the 2005/6 Housing Stock Transfer Programme and the process will involve establishing a new Registered Social Landlord ("RSL") initially with a Shadow Board of Directors who, if the tenants vote in favour of transfer, will become the governing body of the RSL and will be responsible for negotiating with the Council over the terms of transfer. It is normally the case that the Board should comprise 12/15 people, one-third Councillors, one-third tenants and one-third independent persons. They will be described as Directors.
- 1.3 Directors owe a number of specific duties to the new RSL including the overriding requirement to act in the best interest of this organisation and not on behalf of any constituency or any interest group. Councillors also owe clear duties to their local authority.
- 1.4 The transfer of the Housing Stock involves two distinct phases being the Pre-ballot phase when Tenants are consulted and the Post-ballot stage following a "yes vote" and prior to transfer of the stock.
- 1.5 The LSVT will involve the transfer of staff under the TUPE regulations and it is necessarily the case that the employees who may transfer over to the new body taking the stock "the RSL" are those same employees who may have worked on the proposal on behalf of the Council. As the process progresses, and particularly after ballot, employees will be allocated responsibilities in relation to either the Council or the RSL. They will be perceived and will perceive themselves as being either "Council-side" or "RSL-side".
- 1.6 The guidance of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) considers the position of possible conflict within the "Housing Transfer Manual- 2005" and provides the following recommendations;
 - "12.39 *Once it has identified a prospective new landlord, an authority should ensure that it establishes an appropriate degree of independence to avoid conflicts of interest arising. Some Officers and Councillors will inevitably have a dual role working for both the Council and the prospective new*

Landlord during the early stages of the Transfer Proposal and the run up to ballot.;

12.40 *It is important that an authority puts in place at the earliest opportunity arrangements for avoiding conflicts of interest. A report on the issue should be taken to the relevant Committee and a copy included when details of the Transfer proposal are submitted to ODPM. The report should identify possible conflicts and proposed structures and protocols designed to eliminate and minimise them."*

1.7 In accordance with the guidance referred to above, it is necessary to put in place a Protocol which deals with the issue of potential conflicts of interest for both councillors and officers involved in the LSVT process. Such a Protocol will supplement the provisions of Councillors' and Officers' codes of conduct together with relevant professional codes. Members and Officers should have regard to the particular codes.

1.8 Tenant Directors may also find themselves facing conflicts of interest and should also be aware that they must act in the interests of the RSL and not on behalf of any specific tenant or leaseholder group.

1.9 The provisions of this Protocol are intended to ensure fairness in the dealings that underpin a future strong and successful partnership between the Council and the RSL.

2. Steps to be taken by the Council to minimise conflicts of interest for Officers of the Council

2.1 The Council must put in place arrangements from the early stage of the process to protect the interests of both its Councillors and Officers so that the potential for conflict of interest is minimised.

2.2 The Council should, as soon as possible in the pre-ballot stage, make Councillors and Officers of the Council involved in the LSVT process aware of the procedures to be followed with a point of contact for any Councillor or Officer of the Council to address concerns about any likely conflict of interest.

2.3 The Council should make provision for the following:

2.3.1 Ensure that Councillors who are serving on the Governing Board of the prospective new Landlord, shadow or otherwise, do not participate in the decision making process of the Council in relation to the Transfer by the exclusion of those Councillors from Committees when Transfer issues are being discussed;

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- 2.3.2 Ensure that Officers transferring to the new Landlord post-ballot are issued with a copy of this Protocol and sign up to the principles herein;
- 2.3.3 Ensure that there are sufficient resources so that the work necessary for the Transfer can be properly dealt with by Officers in a way that does not result in a conflict of interest eg by having partial secondments;
- 2.3.4 Establish lines of communication to ensure that conflicts of interest do not arise unintentionally. For example, information being passed to any Officer to be "Strictly Private and Confidential";
- 2.3.5 Councillors and Officers of the Council should be made aware of the Housing Corporation's regulatory requirements relating to avoidance to conflicts of interest;
- 2.3.6 To establish a Steering Group to oversee the Transfer involving the full range of Council's interests. The Steering Group should be chaired by the Officer or the Leader in negotiations on behalf of the Council Post-ballot. This will help to provide continuity of information and expertise and help ensure that the Council gets the best deal.

3. The Position of Officers of the Council in the Pre and Post-Ballot Phase

- 3.1 There is a potential for conflict where senior Council Officers will be required to advise both the Council and the RSL. This is deemed to be inevitable in the early stages of the negotiations. Post-ballot, no Officer of the Council should be advising both the Council and the RSL although it will be normal practice for Council Officers to be seconded for a period to work purely for the RSL. A distinction must be made between the provision of factual information which is relevant for both the RSL and the Council.
- 3.2 Officers of the Council must agree to comply with the following principles and guidelines:
 - 3.2.1 To acknowledge the arrangements the Council has put in place to avoid potential conflicts of interest;
 - 3.2.2 To subordinate personal interests to contractual responsibilities to implement the Council's policies and decisions;
 - 3.2.3 To raise and pursue any personal interest relating to employment matters separately through the Council's HR Department in the usual way;

3.2.4 At all times to act with tact and discretion and not to put themselves in a position where they may gain information unwittingly, that could prejudice their position in acting either for the Council or RSL side of the transaction.

4. Officers' Steering Group

- 4.1 It is most important that Officers making key recommendations about the LSVT are not solely those who would transfer to the new landlord and that Officers who are to remain with the Authority have a leading role at all times in advising the Council.
- 4.2 The Officers' Steering Group should be chaired by the Council side Lead Officer who will be the Council's principal advisor on the transfer.
- 4.3 During the period up to ballot, Officers may advise both the Council and the Shadow RSL.
- 4.4 The Council recognises the importance of professional housing input into the Steering Group to ensure that the RSL is capable of operating as an effective partner to the Council as a local housing authority. The Housing Services Manager will be a member of the Steering Group and his or her departmental colleagues will contribute as appropriate until such time as a formal separation of Council and RSL responsibilities is necessary.
- 4.5 While the Steering Group will work together as colleagues in a way that will foster partnership working with the new RSL, it is important for there to be acknowledgement that the relationship will be contractual if there is a yes vote.
- 4.6 After a positive ballot there will be a split of responsibilities as this is when the negotiation about the terms of transfer will take place.
- 4.7 In order to avoid prejudice in the Council's interests at the post-ballot stage, the Council's Lead Officer will determine information that will be shared with colleagues who will transfer and what should remain confidential to the Council side. Likewise, housing representatives on the Steering Group may wish to reserve certain matters until negotiations have commenced.
- 4.8 The Steering Group should organise business in order to reduce the potential for conflicts of interest arising.

5. Avoiding Conflicts of Interest for Councillors

- 5.1 Once the Council's policy has been established in respect of the LSVT, it will be for the members to implement it. The Executive Cabinet will be the decision making body on behalf of the Council .
- 5.2 Councillors who are directors of the RSL should be aware that, in conducting business of the RSL, they should act in the best interest of the RSL at the expense of local authority and personal considerations.
- 5.3 Councillors who are directors of the RSL should be made aware of the Housing Corporation's regulatory requirements relating to avoidance of conflict of interest.
- 5.4 Councillors who are directors of the RSL should absent themselves from all relevant meetings of the Council where stock transfer is being discussed and should not participate in any vote or discussion in relation thereto.

6. General Provisions

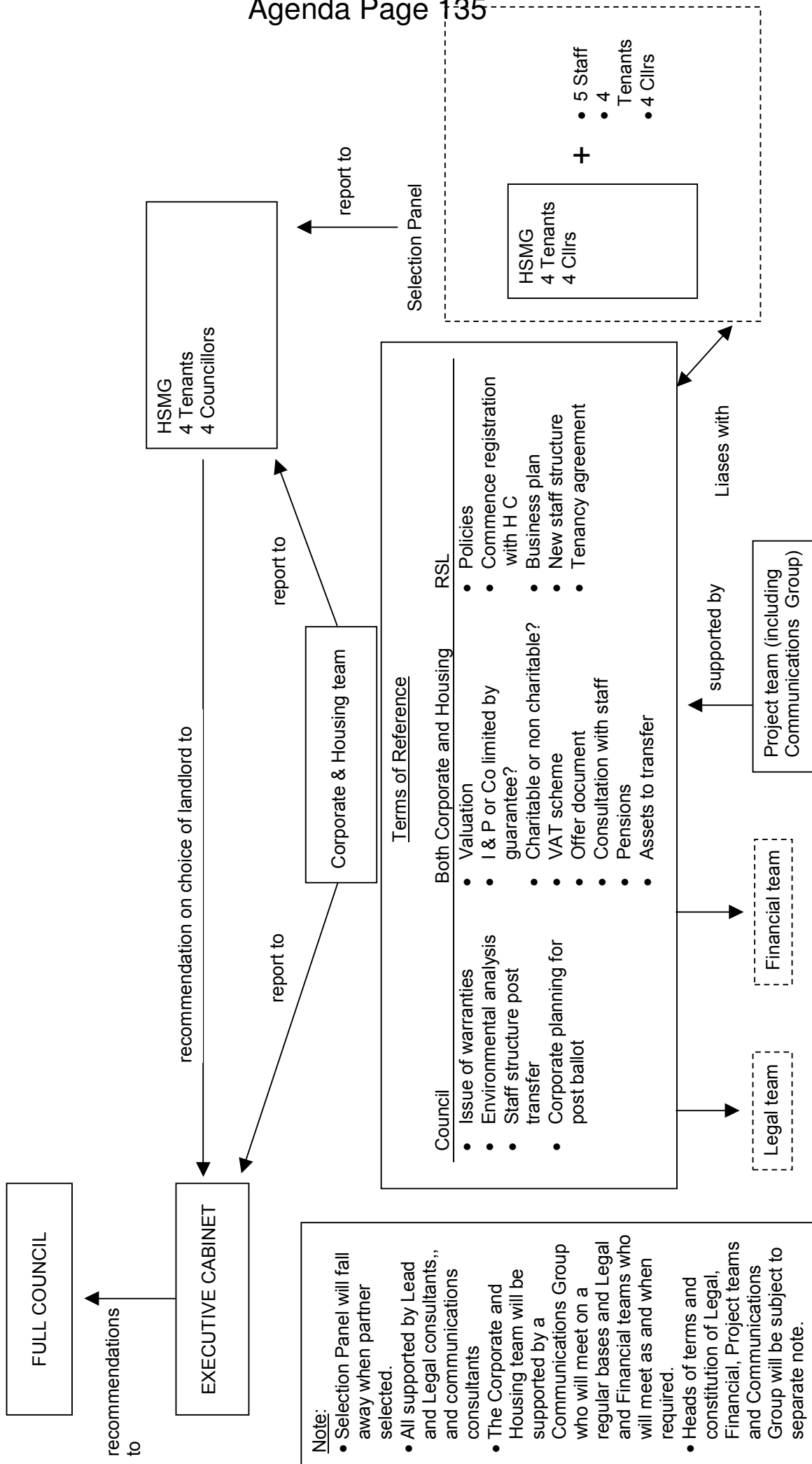
- 6.1 The adoption of a new code of conduct for local authorities from the 22nd of April 2002 means previous dispensations granted by ODPM (formally DTLR) no longer apply. This includes the general dispensations enabling Council tenants to participate in voting matters relating to issues concerning the housing stock. Councillors who are or who have relatives or friends who are Council tenants should declare a personal interest whenever a stock transfer is being considered (other than Councillors who fall into the category in 5 above for which those provisions should apply).
- 6.2 There is currently no advice which indicates whether such an interest may amount to being prejudicial. For the time being the Council is of the view that in general such interests amount to being personal but not prejudicial. In reaching this position the Council has regard to the previous dispensation and the fact that most matters concerning the transfer of the stock will be common to all tenants. It must, however, be stressed that the final responsibility to take that judgement rests under the code of conduct with the individual Councillor. The Councillor should therefore consider whether or not their own particular circumstances would lead a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts to consider that their interest is likely to prejudice their judgement of the public interest in making a decision on a specific matter.

7. Monitoring and Review

- 7.1 The efficacy of the arrangements to put in place conflicts of interest prejudicing the Council's interest will be kept under review by the Monitoring Officer of the Council who will report to the Standards Committee of the Council as appropriate.
- 7.2 It is important that there is sufficient flexibility built into the arrangements to avoid delays while changes are sought and agreed. The Monitoring Officer has the authority to agree amendments to this Protocol subject to reporting such amendments to the next meeting of the Standards Committee.

APPENDIX B

The Chorley Structure Pre-ballot



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Report of	Meeting	Date
Head of Planning Services (Introduced by Councillor A. Lowe. Executive Member for Development and Planning)	Executive Cabinet	30 June 2005

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To advise Members on the consultation responses received to the Draft Statement of Community Involvement (Pre-Submission Public Participation Copy) and
- To approve the Statement of Community Involvement for submission to the Secretary of State and to run parallel a further six-week consultation period.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- To engage all sections of the community to assist in serving our customers better. The new approach to plan making requires greater community involvement

RISK ISSUES

- The issue raised and recommendations made in this report involve risk considerations in the following categories:

Strategy	3	Information	3
Reputation	3	Regulatory/Legal	3
Financial	3	Operational	
People		Other	

- The new approach to plan making offers numerous opportunities to improve in the above areas. The risks identified relate to the possibility of the preparatory process failing to deliver these opportunities in an appropriate manner.

BACKGROUND

- The relevant provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act came into force on 28 September 2004. The Act takes forward proposals for reform of the planning system and provides for the preparation of "Local Development Documents (LDD's) that constitute part of the Local Development Framework (LDF). LDFs will replace Local Plans.
- The Act requires that the local planning authority must produce a Statement of Community Involvement, as part of the Local Development Framework. The Statement of Community Involvement is a document, which sets out the various ways and means of ensuring the engagement and involvement of organisations and the local community in the preparation of the Local Development Framework. The Statement of Community Involvement also

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provides guidance to members of the public, organisations, agents and developers about community involvement in the determination of Planning Applications.

8. The prime purpose of consultation is to improve the planning of development by involving a wide range of interested parties and individuals in decision making through both creating a “dialogue” and relevant information sharing.
9. Planning Policy Statement 12 (PPS12): Local Development Frameworks (September 2004) replaces Planning Policy Guidance Note 12:Development Plans. PPS12 identifies that the Statement of Community Involvement should set out the local planning authority’s policy for involving the community in the preparation and revision of Local Development Documents and planning applications. Community involvement throughout the process of preparing local development documents is essential to achieve local ownership and legitimacy for the policies that will shape the future distribution of land uses and development in an area.
10. Creating Local Development Frameworks: A Companion Guide to PPS12 (November 2004) provides advice on managing the community involvement and preparing the statement of community involvement. The spatial nature of Local Development Frameworks and the focus on implementation means that it will be important to achieve widespread ownership and community buy-in. Authorities will need to be proactive when involving stakeholders and the community, setting out their approach in the Statement of Community Involvement. It indicates the Statement of Community Involvement will be subject to independent examination but will not be a part of the development plan.
11. The Companion Guide to PPS12 states the main benefits of community involvement are
 - Strengthening the evidence base for plans, strategies and planning decisions – stakeholders and local communities can bring a different perspective to planning;
 - Community commitment to the future development of an area - local people can be encouraged to make a difference in their area with long term benefits;
 - Promoting regeneration and investment;
 - Fostering ownership and strengthening delivery – involving communities at an early stages of documentation preparation is known as “frontloading” and will help to resolve issues and thereby avoid the need for lengthy independent examination.
12. The Guide also covers community involvement in planning applications. It provides an opportunity for an authority to set out minimum standards, the statutory requirements for publicising such applications as well as the ground rules for community participation.
13. For small applications, it is likely to be sufficient to meet the statutory requirements that apply once an application is submitted to a local authority. Other planning applications such as those that give rise to local controversy, those that are on sensitive sites or those that are significant in scale, may require wider community consultation. Where this is the case it is advisable to commence consultation at the pre-application stage. This will require the participation of the developer or applicant. Statements of community involvement should encourage developers to undertake pre-application discussions and early community consultation. However, the Statement cannot prescribe that this is done. It is not mandatory.
14. The Companion Guide states that authorities will need to achieve appropriate balances in terms of the content of the statement of community involvement, recognising the limits of an authorities resources. Statements should be concise, not overly prescriptive, written in plain language and be no longer than 25 pages. Authorities should avoid over-specifying what they will do in respect to each local development document or each type of planning application.
15. **Initial Consultation:** -Prior to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act coming into force your Officers published a first draft of the Statement of Community Involvement and

put it out for a limited period of consultation between 29 June 2004 and 16 July 2004. Participants were specifically asked how they would like to be involved in planning proposals for the Borough. A broad range of people were consulted including parish councils, the Citizen Panel, "statutory" bodies/groups, community groups, interested parties/groups, local organisations, hard to reach groups, planning consultants and developers. A total of 34 comments were received.

EXAMINATION OF THE SOUNDNESS OF THE STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- 16 **The Concept of Soundness** – A feature of the old development plan system was that once a plan was put on deposit, the procedure thereafter was entirely to do with considering objections and whether the plan should be changed to take on board changes sought by objectors. This system did not ask whether the plan was a good one, which successfully addressed the needs and issues of an area; only whether it should change to accommodate particular interests.
- 17 The new system changes fundamentally the process of validation of plans, by moving from an inquiry into objections to an examination into the soundness of the plan. The new process of examination is essentially about whether it is a good plan.
- 18 **The Tests of Soundness** – The soundness of the Statement of Community Involvement is effectively defined by paragraph 3.10 of Planning Policy Statement 12, which, sets out nine tests of soundness. The function of an independent examination is primarily to assess the submitted document against these nine tests. The presumption will be that the Statement of Community Involvement is sound unless it is shown to be otherwise as a result of evidence considered at the examination. A hearing will only be necessary where one or more of those making representations want to be heard. While individuals and organisations may wish to see the document changed to accommodate their interests or concerns, the examination will not ask whether the document should change to accommodate what is sought. Rather, it will ask whether the document is sound in relation to each of the tests, and if not how it should be changed to render it so. As part of this examination the Inspector will also consider, in respect of most documents that make up the Local Development Framework, how each objection affects overall matters of sustainability.
- 19 Potential objectors will therefore need to frame their representations in a manner, which deals with both the overarching issue of soundness and, more particularly, sustainability, to stand any chance of being successful. These are formidable hurdles to overcome, especially for local people and interest groups that do not use professional planning advisers. Although the Planning Aid service could assist such parties there will also be an onus on the Council to explain what is required in advance.
- 20 In assessing whether the Statement of Community Involvement itself is sound the Inspector will determine whether the:
 - local planning authority has complied with the minimum requirements for consultation as set out in the regulations;
 - local planning authority's strategy for community involvement links with other community involvement initiatives e.g. the community strategy
 - Statement identifies in general terms which local community groups and other bodies will be consulted;
 - Statement identifies how the community and other bodies can be involved in a timely and accessible manner;
 - methods of consultation to be employed are suitable for the intended audience and for the different stages in the preparation of local development documents;
 - resources are available to manage community involvement effectively;

- Statement shows how the results of community involvement will be fed into the preparation of development plan documents and supplementary planning documents;
- authority has mechanisms for reviewing the Statement of Community Involvement; and
- Statement clearly describes the planning authority's policy for consultation on planning applications.

PRE SUBMISSION PUBLIC PARTICIPATION CONSULTATION AND COMMENTS RECEIVED

- 21 In February 2005 the Council sent the draft pre-submission Statement for consultation to neighbouring authorities, parish councils, Lancashire County Council, the Highways Agency, and the North West Regional Assembly in accordance with Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.
- 22 The draft Statement was placed on public deposit for a six-week period from 7 March to 18 April 2005. A total of 38 have been received and the majority of these wished to be notified of future progress of the Local Development Framework. The remaining comments have been limited but for most respondents the document is welcomed in principle. These comments and your Officers responses are attached at Appendix 1. Any proposed changes are shown in bold and underlined. Deletions are shown as strike throughs. The complete document is shown at Appendix 2.
- 23 **MAIN CHANGES.** The main changes to the Statement (see Statement page numbers) are:
- Refer to the Regional Spatial Strategy and replacement Joint Structure Plan 2001-2016 as these are part of the development plan. (para 3.1, page 6).
 - Insert Diagram on Local Development Framework Structure (after para 3.1, page 7).
 - Identify all documents have to be prepared, and planning applications considered, in accordance with the adopted Statement of Community Involvement. The Council will have to submit a Statement of Compliance with each submitted Development Plan Document (para 3.7, page 8),
 - Insert Diagram to show the Stages for Preparing a Statement of Community Involvement (para 4.2, page 8).
 - Explain the concept of soundness and set out the tests of soundness (see paras 16 to 20 of this report and para 4.5 of SC1, page 9)
 - Amend and expand Table 1-Opportunities for Community Involvement in the Types and Stages of the Local Development Framework - to clarify different consultation stages. (pages 12-19)
 - Expand section on Council website to identify representations can be submitted online via the Council's website and adopted Local Development Documents will also be published on the website (para 5.9, page 20)
 - Clarify the Council will respond to requests from community groups and organisations by undertaking presentations or discussion forums as appropriate. In doing so, the Council hopes to be able to exploit significant areas of expertise and local knowledge (expand para 5.11, page 22)
 - Clarify the planning system is plan led with planning applications determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material consideration indicate otherwise. (para 6.1, page 24).
 - Expand list of what a developer should consider in respect of what effects the proposals have on a surrounding area to include underground/overhead utility infrastructure and designing out crime. (para 8.2, page 26).
 - Publicise the Council's web link – Public Access for Planning - provides details of current planning applications and the public can follow the progress of an application, make a comment, search a weekly list of applications and decisions, view historic applications and view property details including maps (para 9.12, pages 27-28).

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- New section on Resources and Management to reflect Council resources, processes in terms of staff time and availability, accommodation and funding for community exercises and consultation on large applications. (Section 10, page 28).
- New Section on Feedback to identify how results of consultation will be reported and inform the Local Development Documents and decisions on planning applications. Also covers how those making representations will get feedback and be informed about the progress and outcomes (Section 11, page 28)
- New Section on Evaluating the Consultation period to cover the review of future participating processes in respect of the Local Development Framework and consultation on planning applications (Section 12, page 29)
- Refer that any person or organisation who wishes to be notified when Local Development Framework documents are under consideration may request to be placed on a database of consultees by contacting the Planning Policy Section. (Appendix 2, page 33)

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 24 An Equality Impact Assessment has been done, although its findings will be the subject of consultation when the Statement of Community Involvement itself is placed on public deposit in September 2005.
- 25 The main matter the Assessment has highlighted is the need to ensure that invitations for people to attend exhibition and focus groups type events should ask them whether they have any languages or disability difficulties that would hinder their participation and offer them assistance. Also the diversity of people attending events and using response forms will need to be monitored by recording race, disability and gender details.
- 26 A wide range of readily accessible venues will be used to try and ensure a full cross section of the community have equal opportunity to become involved not just in terms of racial and disability diversity but also in terms of gender. This is in addition to ensuring that the full range of representative groups are contacted to seek their views.

NEXT STAGES

- 27 The next stages having considered the representations received (Appendix 1) is to:
- prepare and submit the Statement of Community Involvement to the Secretary of State for independent examination along with a Statement of Compliance as required by Regulation 28 in September 2005.
 - On the same date the Council must publish a notice and formally invite representations for a statutory 6-week period (September to October 2005) as required by Regulation 29.
 - Any objections received will be considered by an independent Inspector. These will hopefully be through written representations, although there is provision for a hearing to be held in March 2006.
 - The Inspector's Report will be binding on the Council and changes will be incorporated into the then adopted Statement (July 2006).

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

- 28 A sum of £200,000 has been allowed in the Council's Continuation Budget for the production of the Local Development Framework. The resource requirements identified in this report will need to be met from this sum.

COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES

- 29 There are no Human Resources implications to this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 30 That Members approve the revised Statement of Community Involvement for a further six-week period of consultation, and submission to the Secretary of State.
- 31 Delegate any minor text amendments to the Head of Planning Services in consultation with the Executive Member for Development and Planning

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 32 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 has replaced the existing system of local, structure and unitary development plans with Local Development Frameworks which is the non statutory term for the portfolio of local development documents which will comprise the spatial planning strategy for a local planning authority's area. The Act requires that the local planning authority produce a Statement of Community Involvement, as part of the Local Development Framework. The Council has complied and has prepared the Statement of Community Involvement document, which sets out the various ways and means of ensuring the engagement and involvement of organisations and the local community in the preparation of the Local Development Framework. The Statement of Community Involvement also provides guidance to members of the public, organisations, agents and developers about community involvement in the determination of Planning Applications. .

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 33 None as subject to statutory regulations as now prepared.

ALAN CROSTON
HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES

Background Papers			
Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
Local Development Frameworks Planning Policy Statement 12 and Planning Policy Statement Companion Guide	18. 02. 04	FLP14	Gillibrand Street
Pre-Submission Statement of Community Involvement	11.01.05	FLP14	Gillibrand Street

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Alison Marland and Alistair Gemmell	5281	20 June 2005	ADMINREP/REPORT

Ref.	Organisation	Comments	Council Response
0001	Brindle Parish Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst acknowledging the discretion of case officers in deciding the extent of neighbour notification, more open and transparent consultation is required when dealing with neighbourhood consultations. Level of consultation not sufficient – should be greater public involvement in the procedure. 	<p>Section 9 of the Statement of Community Involvement sets out how the Council involves the community when a planning application is received. It is considered the extent of consultation proposed provides sufficient community involvement without resulting in over notification.</p> <p>It is not possible to know and directly notify everyone who may have an interest in a planning application. All applications are publicised through the weekly list and any person or organisation may comment on a planning application.</p> <p>The parish council are encouraged to play a role in promoting greater public involvement where it is considered to be necessary.</p>
0002	Adlington Town Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Fine words butter no parsnips” All prior notices and advance publications should give at least one month and preferably six weeks for responses in order that Parish and Town Councils may consider their response. Adequate notice also required of invitations to forums, focus groups, workshops etc. Attendance of Borough Councillors and officers at Parish and Town Council meetings to be encouraged. Parish/Borough Council liaison meetings to be held more regularly and frequently to improve communications. Section 7 - suggests involving local ward members in a community involvement exercise, however, those members who are on the Planning Committee would not wish to be involved as it would prevent them from speaking at committee. Need to reach ethnic minority women using specific focus groups, interpreters and translated material and involve local mosque. 	<p>The time pressures of Parish and Town Councils are noted and, where possible, the Council will be flexible in allowing adequate time for responses. However, often consultation is subject to statutory time limits. These are an important part of the Government’s agenda for speeding up the planning system.</p> <p>Agreed. The Council will aim to respond positively to requests for officers to attend meetings where these are likely to be constructive.</p> <p>Such liaison meetings have a wider remit and are outside the scope of the Statement of Community Involvement.</p> <p>Comments noted. Training for Councillors is proposed.</p>
0003	Steven Abbott Associates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 7 - suggests involving local ward members in a community involvement exercise, however, those members who are on the Planning Committee would not wish to be involved as it would prevent them from speaking at committee. Need to reach ethnic minority women using specific focus groups, interpreters and translated material and involve local mosque. 	<p>The Statement of Community Involvement refers to involving ethnic minorities, exactly how this done will be decided at the time involvement is sought. However the Statement needs to refer to the Council’s legal responsibilities.</p> <p>Add to paragraph 5.13 “The Council will have regard to the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 to promote racial equality and the Disability</p>
0004	Preston & West Lancashire Racial Equality Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to reach ethnic minority women using specific focus groups, interpreters and translated material and involve local mosque. 	<p>The Statement of Community Involvement refers to involving ethnic minorities, exactly how this done will be decided at the time involvement is sought. However the Statement needs to refer to the Council’s legal responsibilities.</p> <p>Add to paragraph 5.13 “The Council will have regard to the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 to promote racial equality and the Disability</p>

0005	Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Voluntary sector' should not be used as a "catch all" grouping. Voluntary sector organisations vary widely in remit, size and resources and degree to which they can and would want to be involved with LDF process will vary accordingly and this should be accounted for. • Wildlife Trust may be better consulted in a similar way to statutory bodies and groups operating in the same field due to our sub-regional level of operation and broad biodiversity remit. 	<p>Discrimination Act 1995."</p> <p>Comments noted. Page 19 of PPS12 highlights that the voluntary and community sector has a vital role to play in engaging communities. The Council has a database of consultees wanting to be consulted of the different stages of the Local Development Framework and any individual or group can be added as requested.</p> <p>The Wildlife Trust is included in the database of consultees referred to above and will be consulted accordingly throughout all the Local Development Framework stages (see changes to Appendix 2 relating to Ref. 0011 & 0012)</p> <p>Comments Noted. The Council await publication of these model policies.</p>
0006	National Playing Fields Association (NPFA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPFA to be consulted where appropriate, taking into account its limited resources. Documents considered appropriate are: Core Strategy, Generic Development Control Policies and Supplementary Planning Documents concerning Provision for Outdoor Sport and Children's Play and Planning Obligations. • It is intended to prepare a set of model policies, which will provide the essence of the NPFA's representations at the 'preferred options' stage. At 'submission' stage, NPFA will check contents of documents and comment as it sees fit. • Unable to participate in local discussion groups. • No desire in the foreseeable future to be consulted on planning applications as a matter of routine. 	
0008	Lancashire County Council (Joint Structure Plan Group)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reference in the draft SCI should be made to the RSS and replacement Joint Structure Plan 2001-2016 as these are part of the development plan. 	<p>Agreed. Amend second part of paragraph 3.1. Delete "<u>LDFs will replace Local Plans</u>" and replace with "<u>The Local Development Framework will consist of a 'portfolio' of Local Development Documents that will comprise the spatial plan for the Borough, replacing the current Local Plan Review. Local Development Documents include Development Plan Documents that are part of the statutory development plan and non-statutory Supplementary Planning Documents. The Development Plan also consists of the Joint Lancashire Structure Plan. Eventually this will be replaced with a Regional Spatial Strategy, for which the North West Regional Assembly will be responsible for preparing.</u>"</p> <p>Insert Diagram after paragraph 3.1 to show format of the Local Development Framework Structure</p>

			<p>Add “Regional Spatial Strategy” to Glossary of Planning Terms (Appendix 1) to read “Sets out the region’s policies in relation to the development and use of land and forms part of the Development Plan for the Borough. The North West Regional Assembly, as the region’s regional planning body, is responsible for preparing the Regional Spatial Strategy”</p> <p>Add at end of paragraph 3.2 “All Local Development Documents must show conformity with the Statement of Community Involvement. This is not applicable to the Regional Spatial Strategy”.</p> <p>All comments noted.</p> <p>It is accepted ‘consultation fatigue’ and opposition to new development may be an issue, however, the Council will endeavour to generate interest in any proposal through the consultative process.</p> <p>The Statement of Community Involvement accepts this at paragraph 7.3 and identifies options for community consultation that can be agreed with the local planning authority at the pre-application stage.</p> <p>See paragraph 7.2. Training for Councillors is proposed</p> <p>Agreed - see paragraph 6.2. Duplication of consultation can be avoided by thorough pre-application discussions.</p> <p>The guidelines set out in PPS12 and the Companion guide will help ensure consistency between local authorities. The Statement of Community Involvement is subject to independent examination by the Government. This facility is something we hope to develop in the future when resources permit.</p>
0009	Higham & Co.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support involvement of community in planning process. • Important that ‘consultation fatigue’ is avoided and consultation is optimised to the benefit of the planning process. • Should be recognised that the majority of public are wary of change and are in opposition to new development • Community involvement should be appropriate to scale of proposed development. • Options for consultation should be agreed between local planning authority and applicant at pre-application stage. • Councillors need to be alerted to the importance of their involvement prior to planning application being made. • Important that there is not duplication between consultations carried out by local planning authority and by developer. Local planning authority’s procedures adequate in most cases. • Consistency needed amongst local planning authorities. • Plans & drawings should be available online. • Regarding Local Development Documents, it is not always possible for developers to identify development proposals at Issues and Options stage. 	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Appendix 2 highlights organisations to be consulted <u>alongside</u> local residents and does not signify relative importance. The</p>
0011	David Woods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seems that every possible avenue of consultation has been considered. • List of consultee organisations arouses suspicion that local residents are least important. 	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Appendix 2 highlights organisations to be consulted <u>alongside</u> local residents and does not signify relative importance. The</p>

		<p>local residents are least important.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillors, being elected to serve their communities, should be given latitude to make decisions and face consequences of that at the ballot box. 	<p>Council has a list of members of the public who wish to be consulted on Local Development Documents. Add at the top of Appendix 2: <u>“Any person or organisation that wishes to be notified when Local Development Framework documents are under consideration may request to be placed on a database of consultees by contacting the Planning Policy Section”</u></p> <p>Key planning decisions are made democratically by elected Members at Development Control Committee, Cabinet and Full Council meetings.</p>
0012	<p>Michael Prescott - Chorley Environmental Forum (17/03/05)</p> <p>Chorley Environmental Forum (24/03/05)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 2 - Chorley Environmental Forum omitted from list of Voluntary Sector organisations. • Re. para 5.4: Feedback from Members Working Group required as meetings held in private. 	<p>The Chorley Environmental Forum is considered as an “Environmental organisations/group” and is included in the consultee database. The Statement of Community Involvement seeks to involve the widest possible range of interests. Appendix 2 outlines the broad types of organisation included in the consultee database rather than specifically mentioning all individual organisations, as many of these will change over time. Add at top of Appendix 2: <u>“The following types of organisations are held on this database”</u></p> <p>The Local Development Framework and Community Strategy Member Work Group is not a full standing committee of the Council and has no decision-making powers. All key decisions are made democratically by elected Members at Cabinet and Full Council.</p>
0016	Derek Warner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement of Community Involvement appears thorough and all embracing but based on experience CBC is poor at community involvement. Believe they do not grasp either the principles or the application of both good communications or community involvement. • Part of the difficulty is the element of divided responsibility e.g. between LCC and CBC. Focus for local community involvement and consultation should be vested in Parish Councils. 	<p>Strengthening community and stakeholder involvement in the development of local communities is a key aim of the revised planning system and of Local Development Frameworks. The Statement of Community Involvement sets out how the Council will achieve this.</p> <p>Comment Noted. Parish Councils can play an important role in local community involvement and consultation in addition to other groups and individuals.</p>
0017	Broadway Malyan on behalf of Westbury Homes (Holdings) Ltd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement of Community Involvement could be better laid out to distinguish clearly between community involvement in the plan preparation process (combine Sections 3,4 and 5) and community involvement in development control (combine Sections 7,8 and 9). Separate section on resource implications. Would allow better understanding, particularly from point of view of public. 	<p>Capitalise all of Section 4 heading. Amend Contents page accordingly. Distinction between community involvement in the plan preparation process and community involvement in development control is considered clear enough.</p> <p>Insert new section 10 <u>“Resources and management”</u> (see below: Ref: 0029)</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Para 4.14 implies only two opportunities for involvement where PPS12 Companion Guide advises community involvement is an on-going process. Does not show pre-submission statutory consultation on Council's preferred options. Strongly suggest the use of a diagram that sets out clearly how the community can get involved in the stages of plan preparation (eg South Ribble BC). • Draft Statement of Community Involvement does not explicitly address how the local authority will take account of the community's comments in the preparation of Development Plan Documents. Suggested that after each round of consultation the Council should issue a consultation statement that sets out: how the community has been consulted, who has been consulted, whether there is any relevant participation from related programmes and strategies, a summary of responses received and the number; and how the Council has addressed the main points and issues raised by the consultation in the Development Plan Documents. • Need to consider weight to be given to the community's comments in the context of national and regional policy, sustainability and other objectives: ultimately a political decision taken by elected Council Members. Important SCI explains this point. • Statement of Community Involvement should recognise the interrelationship of Development Plan Documents with other programmes. • No reference made in the draft Statement of Community Involvement to landowners: should be explicitly recognised as a category of the community in the box entitled 'Opportunities for Community Involvement in the Different Stages of the Local Development Framework'. • Developers and other applicants are not required to consult with the community on planning applications therefore paras. 8.1 and 8.2 conflict with para. 6.2 which 	<p><u>Insert</u> diagram after paragraph 4.2 (<u>Figure 3.1 from PPS12: The Statement of Community Involvement Process</u>) to show all statutory consultation stages and that community involvement is ongoing throughout pre-production and production stages.</p> <p><u>Insert</u> Diagram after paragraph 3.1 to show format of the Local Development Framework Structure.</p> <p><u>Insert</u> new Section 11 "<u>Feedback</u>" (details below: Ref. 0029)</p> <p>References have been made to the Joint Lancashire Structure Plan and Regional Spatial Strategy in para 3.1. All comments on national and regional policy, sustainability and other objectives will be taken on board in the context of Government guidance and existing adopted plans. Para 4.22 of PPS12 states " After commencement of the Act there will no longer be a requirement for local development documents to be in general conformity with structure plans. However the structure plan policies will still be a material consideration and will remain part of the development plan until superseded by the regional spatial strategy."</p> <p><u>Amend</u> Table 1 to highlight interrelationship of Development Plan Documents and other programmes.</p> <p><u>Add "Landowners"</u> to Appendix 2. Groups to be Consulted column, Table 1: <u>Amend</u> to read "<u>Developers/Agents and Landowners</u>"</p> <p>Paragraph 6.2 acknowledges community involvement is not a mandatory requirement when submitting a planning application and this section highlights benefits of community involvement.</p>
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		<p>establishes that community involvement is not a mandatory requirement. SCI should instead encourage developers to provide a Record of Community Involvement, as good practice. Para. 8.2 should be deleted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A significant omission is reference to the benefits of electronic information. Does not mention opportunities for e-planning that are already available on the website. (e.g. publication of Development Plan Documents, electronic submission of representations, access to decision notices, on-line submission of applications and mapping) There are also other opportunities for community involvement via the Internet. 	<p>Paragraph 7.1 advises enlightened developers should regard community involvement as an opportunity to explain and refine their proposals rather than a constraint on their intention. Paragraphs 7.1, 8.1 and 8.2: <u>Replace “should” with “are encouraged to”</u> (see GONW comments, Ref 0029) Paragraph 8.2 to be retained to ensure comprehensive approach to the Record of Community Involvement. <u>Expand</u> section on Council’s website at paragraph 5.9. <u>“The Council will publish proposals upon its website and invite suggestions. Representations can be submitted online via the website. All adopted Local Development Documents will also be published on the website.”</u></p> <p>Insert paragraph at end of section 9. <u>“The Council’s Website link – Public Access for Planning – provides details of current planning applications. You can follow the progress of an application, make a comment, search a weekly list of applications and decisions, view historic applications and view property details including maps”</u></p> <p>We hope to develop our website to facilitate the on-line submission of planning applications and allow access to submitted plans in the future when resources permit.</p> <p>It is noted and appreciated that Age Concern can play an important role in helping the Council engage with older people. The Council will have regard to the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995</p> <p><u>Add Northwest Regional Development Agency to Appendix 2</u></p> <p><u>Add “Landowners” to Appendix 2.</u> Groups to be Consulted column, Table 1: <u>Amend</u> to read <u>“Developers/Agents and Landowners”</u></p> <p>Paragraph 7.7.2 of <i>Creating Local Development Frameworks - A Companion Guide to PPS 12</i> states that “Failure by the applicant to consult [the community] could lead to objections being made which could be material to the determination of the application”. The Statement of Community Involvement stresses that developers can benefit from community involvement.</p> <p>Paragraph 6.6 lists the types of planning applications that should be subject to community involvement. It is considered</p>
0018	Age Concern Lancashire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age Concern wish to be involved and to support community involvement with older people e.g. through planned ‘Older Peoples Forums’ and Community Development staff. 	
0019	Northwest Regional Development Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency has been omitted from the list of consultees detailed at Appendix 2. 	
0020	Property Group, LCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should ‘land owners’ be included on the list of consultees with regard to Local Development Documents? What would happen if developer does not undertake recommended community involvement (as not mandatory)? May be better to specify in more detail (i.e. no. of houses, floorspace etc) exactly what type of development should be subject to community involvement. 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would be better to make it clear at this stage that planning system is 'plan led' so people have a better understanding over what issues can be taken into account in the planning application process? 	<p>that greater detail, by way of specific 'thresholds' etc., would be unduly inflexible and too prescriptive. Agreed. Add at paragraph 6.1 after first paragraph <u>"The planning system is plan led with planning applications determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material consideration indicate otherwise."</u> Yes. Included on database of consultees.</p>
0021	United Utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 5 – Presume United Utilities classified as "Statutory bodies and groups"? • Para 6.2 - Detailed consultation is required if buildings or structures are proposed in proximity to our electricity, water supply and wastewater networks. Local planning authorities are given free access to Internet asset mapping service. • Para 7.4 – Suggest that developers obtain plans of underground/overhead utility infrastructure in preparation for planning the layout/feasibility of their development. • Para 8.2 – List should include plans of underground/overhead utility infrastructure. 	<p>Comments Noted. This is considered a responsibility of developers, which is technical in nature and not directly related to community involvement. Further guidance on asset mapping service would be welcome.</p>
0022	The British Wind Energy Association (BWEA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BWEA emphasises that the SCI should follow guidance of PPS12 and recommendations contained in PPS22. Also PPS 1: processes required for effective community involvement. • May be appropriate to explain how community involvement will be undertaken in case of wind energy development. Appropriate methods of community involvement will vary depending on the scale of the proposal and the stage of the planning process. • Local planning authorities may wish to consider informing local communities about renewable energy before any schemes are submitted in their area. • Companion Guide to PPS22 and 'South West Public Engagement Protocol' provides further guidance. • Emphasise importance of highlighting in Statement of Community Involvement what level of community involvement they consider appropriate. 	<p>Add "<u>underground/overhead utility infrastructure</u>" to list at paragraph 8.2.</p> <p>Regard has been given to all appropriate guidance in the drafting of the Statement of Community Involvement.</p> <p>Comments noted. In order to keep the Statement of Community Involvement succinct (<i>Creating Local Development Frameworks - A Companion Guide to PPS 12</i> states they should be no longer than 25 pages (para. 7.4.2)) it is not possible to explain how community involvement will be undertaken for different subjects or issues. The proposed Development Plan Document and Supplementary Planning Document on "Sustainable Resources" will help inform local people about renewable energy and climate change. Planning Officers, in consultation with developers, will advise whether proposals would benefit from community involvement and if so how this might be carried out (paragraph 6.2).</p>
0023	David Hoole	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pledge of Involvement should read "All comments will be taken into account" rather than "Try to take account of comments". More positive and shows a willingness to listen fully to all comments put forward. • Use of Internet not being fully utilised for public involvement, especially of younger people. 	<p>Amend penultimate pledge by deleting <u>"Try to"</u></p> <p>Comments noted. Further efforts will be made to encourage web-based involvement.</p>

0024	National Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be up-to-date guidance available to public on government policy (e.g. housing quotas and densities) and the effect these have upon planning decisions. • Welcome document and the range of consultation mechanisms proposed. • Requested that documents are available in full, including all illustrative material such as diagrams and charts on website as this helps facilitate consultation. • National Trust not specifically referred to in Appendix 2. Clearly the Trust potentially features as one of the generic groups but it would be helpful to be assured that the Trust's interests are known and that it will be consulted accordingly. 	<p>All Local Development Documents will include a section setting out the national policy context. Further information available on ODPM website: www.odpm.gov.uk</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>See paragraph 5.9. All consultation material will continue to be available, in full, on the Council's website where possible.</p> <p>The National Trust is included on Council's consultee database.</p>
0025	Countryside Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sections of the community that may be hard to reach (paras 5.1, 5.12 and Table 1) include people living and working in rural areas. May look more closely at how you can successfully engage local rural and urban fringe communities and take on board their local information, views and solutions – the Agency's publications 'Village Design Statements' and 'Town Design Statements' will be of assistance. • Local Development Framework process is a real opportunity for planning authorities to help people to prepare community plans, elements of which are suitable for incorporation into area plans and Supplementary Planning Documents and for there to be a reflection of community-suggested solutions in core strategy and proposals maps. 	<p>Comments noted. <u>Insert new paragraph 5.14 "The Council will respond to requests from community groups and organisations by undertaking presentations or discussion forums as appropriate. In doing so, the Council hopes to explore significant areas of expertise and local knowledge."</u></p> <p>Encouragement and advice will be provided on the preparation of parish plans and design statements where requested.</p> <p>Agreed.</p>
0026	Chorley Play Partnership & Positive Action in Chorley East & Tatton Community Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regarding roles that can be played by different groups and best ways of informing the community about proposals, it is important to make use of existing networks, community meetings, newsletters etc. to supplement any new meetings set up specifically – would be welcomed as find that people respond more to these than 'official-seeming' initiatives. Also, voluntary and community organisations within an area can feel disaffected and discounted. • Table One – could this be more specific? Some local organisations are particularly important, for example Chorley Play Partnership, Chorley & District Neighbourhood Watch Association, Victim Support, Home 	<p>The Council fully appreciates the role <u>all</u> different groups can play in community consultation and this is reflected in the Statement of Community Involvement.</p> <p>Comments noted. Table 1 is not intended to be specific rather it highlights how generic groups of consultees will be consulted. "General Public, Local Organisations and Hard to Reach Groups" will comprise a wide range of organisations.</p>

		<p>Start. N.B. Chorley Partnership not all-inclusive: many local groups and organisations not involved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Para 5.12 – ‘Older people’ is the term generally preferred to ‘elderly people’. • Para 8.2 – Table should include crime prevention/designing out crime. • Para 9.2 – Need to make more effort to let people know where they can look at <u>planning applications</u> (weekly list). 	<p>We would welcome contact details of the groups mentioned plus any others that may be appropriate in order that they are included in our consultation</p> <p>Amend list at paragraph 5.13 to read “<u>Older people</u>” instead of “<u>Elderly People</u>”</p> <p>Add “<u>designing out crime</u>” to table at paragraph 8.2</p> <p>See paragraph 9.2. Interest groups can request copies of the weekly list free of charge.</p> <p>Comments noted.</p>
0028	Development Planning Partnership on behalf of Tesco Stores Ltd.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appreciate the Council’s desire to front load and rationalise the consultation process for Local Development Framework documents and planning applications. • Important to recognise that developers, including Tesco, should be seen as a fundamental component to successful planning and should be fully consulted on all LDF documents. • Para 6.6 - Accept that these types of developments should constitute community involvement but it is possible that a lack of focus may lead to a degree of ambiguity when deciding what constitutes a large-scale development, particularly in retail planning terms. Extent of pre-application consultation programme will depend on site’s allocated status, sensitivity of surround land users, political environment, media interest, need for development. Anticipated that early discussions with Council will reveal whether scale of application will require applicant to undertake pre-application consultation and the extent of this consultation. • Suggest applicants draw up a pre-application consultation plan and for this to be agreed upon by the Council. Plan could identify who is to be consulted and via what method, the officer who would be dealing with the application and a timeframe which both parties could work to. Could greatly aid the later production of the Record of Community Involvement and could be presented to the Council prior to any consultation, agreed or amended accordingly. Would provide the developer with a degree of certainty that they are on the right track at an early stage and should limit delays. Such methods are utilised by the telecoms industry, which works towards a ‘Traffic Light 	<p>‘Developers’ included in Table 1 and in Appendix 2. Tesco included on consultee database. Other can be included at their request.</p> <p>Comments noted. Paragraph 6.2 states that pre-application discussions are encouraged and Officers can advise on whether proposals would benefit from community involvement and if so how this might be carried out. See also Section 7.</p> <p>Preparation of a ‘pre-application consultation plan’ by applicants may prove useful to both parties. Although to be encouraged, community involvement is not mandatory and the preparation of such plans should be at discretion of applicants. Insert after para 7.1 “<u>The Council will support ways to encourage consultation. At the pre-consultation stage the Council will accept as an option a pre- application consultation plan to be drawn up by the applicant with the Council based on an initial appraisal of the proposal. This could identify who is to be consulted ,via what method and a timescale which both the applicant and Council could work to. This would assist in the preparation of the</u></p>

<p>0029</p>	<p>Government Office for the North West (GONW)</p>	<p>Model', which has been agreed as best practice guide with government: would endorse a similar assessment model to ensure greater deal of certainty whilst maintaining a degree of flexibility.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 7 should make reference to a pre-application stage whereby the applicant and the Council firstly agree a consultation plan based on an initial appraisal of the proposal. This will assist developers to arrange which forms of community consultation suggested in paras 7.3 and 7.4 are appropriate or required for their development. Paragraphs only encourage developers to undertake certain types of consultation there is a lack of clarity on what type or size of development would require what scope of consultation. Section 4 – Make clear that the Statement of Community Involvement is one of the elements of the Local Development Framework (e.g. insert an Statement of Community Involvement heading near start of section and insert word 'other' in para 4.6 after the first word). Para 4.7 and Glossary should make clear that Statements of Community Involvement (as well as Supplementary Planning Documents) are Local Development Documents which are not Development Plan Documents. 	<p><u>Record of Community Involvement (See Section 8)."</u></p> <p>See comment above. Statement of Community Involvement states at pre-application stage Planning Officers in consultation with developers will advise whether proposals would benefit from community involvement and if so how this might be carried out through consultation and preparing a Record of Community Involvement (para. 6.2 and Section 7&8). This could be done by drafting a formal plan. Paragraph 6.6 lists the types of planning applications that should be subject to community involvement. It is considered that greater detail, by way of specific 'thresholds' etc. would be unduly inflexible.</p> <p><u>Insert heading "The Statement of Community Involvement" at start of paragraph 4.2 and add "This a local development document but is not subject to sustainability appraisal. Diagram 1 shows the stages for preparing a Statement of Community Involvement" Add after last sentence para 4.2, "and 34 reponses were received"</u></p> <p><u>Delete para 4.3 and insert new "In February 2005 the Council sent a draft Statement for pre-submission consultation to neighbouring authorities, parish councils, Lancashire County Council, the Highways Agency, and the North West Regional Assembly in accordance with Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. The draft Statement was placed on public deposit for a six-week period from 7 March to 18 April 2005 in accordance with Regulation 26. A total of 38 responses were received"</u></p> <p><u>Delete para 4.4 and insert "Further representations were sought when the document was submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination in accordance with Regulation 28. The report produced by the Inspector will be binding . The Council cannot change the content and will adopt and publish the document."</u></p> <p><u>Add "Other" after the first word in para. 4.6.</u></p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Para 4.5 – should be expanded to explain concept of soundness and set out tests in para 3.10 of PPS12 so that members of the public are aware that their objections need to relate to soundness. 	<p><u>Insert</u> Diagram after paragraph 3.1 to show format of the Local Development Framework and Development Plan. Paragraph 3.6 also states that the SCI is not part of the development plan. <u>Add</u> to Glossary Statement of Community Involvement entry “ <u>The Statement of Community Involvement is not a Development Plan Document</u>”</p> <p><u>Delete</u> para 4.5 and <u>Insert</u> “<u>The Tests of Soundness – The soundness of the Statement of Community Involvement is effectively defined by paragraph 3.10 of the Planning Policy Statement 12 (PPS12): Local Development Frameworks (September 2004) which sets out nine tests of soundness. The function of an independent examination is primarily to assess the submitted document against these nine tests. The presumption will be that the Statement of Community Involvement is sound unless it is shown to be otherwise as a result of evidence considered at the examination. A hearing will only be necessary where one or more of those making representations want to be heard.</u></p> <p><u>In assessing whether the Statement of Community Involvement is sound the Inspector will determine whether the:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>local planning authority has complied with the minimum requirements for consultation as set out in the regulations;</u> • <u>local planning authority’s strategy for community involvement links with other community involvement initiatives e.g. the community strategy</u> • <u>Statement identifies in general terms which local community groups and other bodies will be consulted;</u> • <u>Statement identifies how the community and other bodies can be involved in a timely and accessible manner;</u> • <u>methods of consultation to be employed are suitable for the intended audience and for the different stages in the preparation of local development</u>
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	<p>documents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> resources are available to manage community involvement effectively; Statement shows how the results of community involvement will be fed into the preparation of development plan documents and supplementary planning documents; authority has mechanisms for reviewing the Statement of Community Involvement; and Statement clearly describes the planning authority's policy for consultation on planning applications." <p>Para. 4.14 already states "Submission of Preferred Options to Secretary of State and opportunity to make representations" prior to "Independent Examination" stage but Amend bullet points numbers four and five as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Preparation of Preferred Options and opportunity to make representations "Submission to Secretary of State and opportunity to make representations" <p>Delete Para 5.2 details of Council's budget. Insert new heading Section 10 to read "<u>Resources and Management</u> A realistic approach to community involvement must reflect the resources available to the Council for involving the community in development plan proposals. The availability of resources will have a bearing on the scale and methods of consultation the Council carries out. Consideration will therefore be given to staff capacity, timescale, budgets and accommodation.</p> <p>The Council recognises the risks to delivery of the documents in the timescales set out in the Local Development Scheme due to the size of the staff resource. However it is committed to achieving the targets it has set itself and believes they are realistic.</p> <p>Preparation of the Local Development Documents will be undertaken primarily by the 7 existing planning policy staff. However should the need arise there are sufficient financial resources available to cover the costs of external</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Para 4.14 – Needs to be expanded to include all the stages of preparation of Development Plan Documents. Before independent examination there is another formal stage, namely the submission of the Development Plan Document to the Secretary of State. Para 5.2 – Not necessary to contain figures setting out actual costs (may become out-of-date before Statement of Community Involvement reviewed). Recommend management of processes in terms of staff time and availability, accommodation, funding for community exercises etc is set out. Should also make clear that there are sufficient resources available to manage wider consultations on large applications, and build flexibility into the Statement of Community Involvement to allow additional community involvement work to be undertaken as issues emerge or develop.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> resources are available to manage community involvement effectively; Statement shows how the results of community involvement will be fed into the preparation of development plan documents and supplementary planning documents; authority has mechanisms for reviewing the Statement of Community Involvement; and Statement clearly describes the planning authority's policy for consultation on planning applications." <p>Para. 4.14 already states "Submission of Preferred Options to Secretary of State and opportunity to make representations" prior to "Independent Examination" stage but Amend bullet points numbers four and five as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Preparation of Preferred Options and opportunity to make representations "Submission to Secretary of State and opportunity to make representations" <p>Delete Para 5.2 details of Council's budget. Insert new heading Section 10 to read "<u>Resources and Management</u> A realistic approach to community involvement must reflect the resources available to the Council for involving the community in development plan proposals. The availability of resources will have a bearing on the scale and methods of consultation the Council carries out. Consideration will therefore be given to staff capacity, timescale, budgets and accommodation.</p> <p>The Council recognises the risks to delivery of the documents in the timescales set out in the Local Development Scheme due to the size of the staff resource. However it is committed to achieving the targets it has set itself and believes they are realistic.</p> <p>Preparation of the Local Development Documents will be undertaken primarily by the 7 existing planning policy staff. However should the need arise there are sufficient financial resources available to cover the costs of external</p>

	<p><u>assistance in the form of studies. In addition staff members are working closely with colleagues and partners to adopt a positive approach to involving external groups and individuals. Existing networks linked to other plans and strategies such as the Community Strategy are well utilised. A number of officers have also been trained in and utilised public engagement and participation skills (known as "facilitation skills"), including the design and management of stakeholder consultation events.</u></p> <p><u>The Council has a budget to support the requirements identified in the Local Development Scheme including resources to hire premises to hold exhibitions, workshops, focus groups and meetings; publicity including statutory notices; and costs associated with statutory procedures prior to adoption e.g. public examination costs, independent Inspector's fees and legal costs. The Council has a choice in range and size of public and private venues that it can hire for community consultation events.</u></p> <p><u>The Council has used its Planning Delivery Grant to increase investment in the planning service in terms of additional staff. The Development Control Section has recently been expanded to have the capacity required to deal with an increased level of planning applications. It is considered that the requirement for consultation on planning applications will be met by the 10 existing development control staff and financial resources available."</u></p> <p>Delete Table 1 heading "Stages of the Local Development Framework". Insert at main heading after Different "Types and Stages"</p> <p>See changes to Table 1 as described below:</p> <p>Delete "Most LDDs" Delete "Sustainability Appraisal Reports" from Column 1 and Insert into next three columns.</p>	<p>Table 1 – Top row headed "Stages of the Local Development Framework" needs to be amended as next row down relates to different types of Local Development Documents, rather than stages. Also Sustainability Appraisal Reports (second row, second column) are not Local Development Documents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rather than stating "Most Local Development Documents including..." it would be preferable to state exactly which documents are included. Suggest that references to Sustainability Appraisal Reports be moved to the next
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	<p>three columns (as such reports are required for Development Plan Documents and Suds, but not for Statements of Community Involvement), showing the opportunities for consultation at key stages in the preparation of the Sustainability Appraisal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the second column, the stages referred to (issues and options report, preferred options stage) are not relevant for Statements of Community Involvement, so this should be amended. Stages referred to in third and fourth column should be expanded to include issues and options; preferred options; submission Development Plan Document; and examination. • Para 6.6 –In order to clarify which types of applications should be subject to community involvement, type and scale of application considered “large scale”; “major” and “sensitive” should be specified. • Sections 7 and 8 - Word “should” to be avoided. It should be clear from the wording of these sections that practices, including listing the effects on the surrounding area, are not a requirement. • Appendix 2 – Check that includes everyone that should be consulted after Annex E of PPS12 is considered. • Should make mention of the fact that all documents will need to be prepared, and planning applications considered, in accordance with the adopted Statement of Community Involvement requirements and that the Council will have to submit a statement of compliance with each submission Development Plan Documents • The Statement of Community Involvement could usefully say more about how Chorley will link consultation exercises for Development Plan Documents with such exercises for other community involvement initiatives, including the community strategy (test of soundness i). • Consideration should be given to whether it would be appropriate for the Statement of Community Involvement 	<p>Delete stages as requested and Insert as requested in third and fourth columns to read <u>“(Issues and Options Report); consultation period for Preferred Options and Submission to Secretary of State, and independent examination.</u> <u>Opportunity to make representations at Preferred Options stage and Submission to Secretary of State stage.</u></p> <p>Note other changes to Table 1 to clarify stages</p> <p>Community involvement is not mandatory (para 6.2) and imposing more specific requirements may be detrimental to encouraging greater community involvement. Do not consider “large scale”, “major” and “sensitive” should be specified. It is considered that greater detail, by way of specific ‘thresholds’ etc. would be unduly inflexible and too prescriptive.</p> <p>Paragraphs 7.1, 8.1 and 8.2: Replace ‘should’ with <u>“are encouraged to”</u></p> <p>Comments Noted. Appendix 2 has been checked against Annex E of PPS12. No further amendments required. Expand paragraph 3.7 <u>“All documents have to be prepared, and planning applications considered, in accordance with the adopted Statement of Community Involvement. The Council will submit a Statement of Compliance with each submitted Development Plan Document”</u></p> <p>The Community Strategy was launched in June 2005 and the Council will continue to consult the Chorley Partnership on the stages of the Local Development Framework and be consulted on the actions within the Community Strategy</p> <p>List in Table 1 Local Development Document’s in generic</p>
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appropriate for the Statement of Community Involvement to identify Development Plan Documents dealing with certain topics (e.g. housing), where you will consult those groups involved in their delivery or affected by their implementation.

- It is not clear how the results of consultation will be reported and inform the content of Local Development Documents and decisions on planning applications. It is also not clear how those making representations will get feedback and be informed about progress and outcomes. (tests of soundness vii: how the results of community involvement will be fed into the preparation of Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents.

terms and add statement of conformity to read:
“Area Action Plans”: (e.g. Town Centre)
 Topic based documents: (e.g. sustainable resources).
 Site Specific Allocations
 Proposals Map

To include:

- Sustainability Appraisal Reports.
- Statement of Conformity.”

Insert New Section 11 **“Feedback”** to read
“Feedback is a vital part of any consultation process. It enables people to see how their view has been taken into account and what has happened as a result. Participants need to know that they have been listened to, and that consultation has made an effective contribution, if they are to have confidence in the process and a willingness to take part in future initiatives.

Acknowledgements will be sent to all those submitting formal representations, giving details of subsequent stages and dates of preparation where known. The Council will aim to respond to any general queries raised in relation to the document preparation process.

Following each period of consultation on any Local Development Document, the Council will prepare a “Responses Report” which will set out the comments received, the Council’s consideration of the comments and whether any change is required as a result of the comment. It is envisaged that the response will be reported to Executive Cabinet. The Report will be published on the Council’s website. Those who have submitted a formal representation will be notified of the Council’s response to their particular comments.”

Insert new Section 12 **“Evaluating the Consultation Process”**

“The consultation process for the preparation of Local Development Documents will be subject to ongoing monitoring and evaluating that will consider.”

- The Statement of Community Involvement should set out arrangements for monitoring and review. It should set out how the Council will learn from the experience and improve the arrangements where necessary (“Creating

		<p>Local Development Frameworks" Table 7.1).</p>	<p>monitoring and evaluating that will consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>what was done to engage stakeholders in terms of consultation processes and resources;</u> <u>what was achieved;</u> <u>what has happened as a result of consultation.</u> <p><u>The Council's staff and members, those participating in face-to-face stakeholder events and a sample of those responding to consultation through other means will be invited to provide feedback and make any suggestions for improvement.</u></p> <p><u>This information will help to inform and review future participating processes in respect of the Local Development Framework and consultation on planning applications.</u></p>
0030	Dr Ruth Wilson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If implemented it should be helpful to local development and contains some very pertinent points. 	<p>Comments noted.</p>
0031	Mr S Llewellyn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant effort has been made to identify many possible sources of consultation without any direct reference to the time factor associated with such widespread consultation procedures, the organisation of this activity, and the workload it will impose upon the Council Staff. Table 1 – Tediously repetitive and in some cases not very specific. I am surprised that Council Members do not appear to be invited to make representations outside the umbrella of Council Meetings, although sure that they will do so where necessary. Column 3 (Core Strategy): Media to be notified for consultation - would it be more appropriate to identify role as "dissemination of information and generation of public comment"? Omission of "Notification of adopted SPDs" in column 4 (The Media). PDP should read DPD in column 3, Statutory bodies and groups. 	<p>Resource and management implications discussed in new section (Section 10, see Ref. 29). A timetable for consultation on all proposed documents is set out the Local Development Scheme.</p> <p>Table 1 highlights how generic groups of consultees will be consulted. As there is some overlap between different groups and between different documents, repetition is necessary. Further detail is provided in the SCI where required as too much information would over-complicate the table.</p> <p>Councillors are consulted on all Local Development Documents and are able to make comments out with Council Meetings</p> <p>Paragraph 5.10 describes role of media. Press releases will be sent to newspapers in order to inform the public of opportunities to become involved in the process. Statutory notices will also be published in local newspapers.</p> <p>Add "Notification of adopted SPDs" to final column in row relating to The Media.</p> <p>Amend accordingly.</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Para 5.3 – Suggest the transfer of the Table 1 to the end of Section 3 because para 5.3 beginning ‘The text below...’ to 5.14 provide useful guidance on the way in which various groups will be involved in the consultation process and they help to make sense of the Table. • Para 5.9 – Focus Groups are an excellent idea. It would be helpful if the document outlined proposals on how such groups might be established • Para 5.11 – Thematic groups no longer meet regularly as separate entities. It is proposed that representatives of relevant groups be invited to combine as necessary to consider specific proposals. • Appendix 2 – ‘Council for the Protection of Rural England’ now ‘Campaign for the Protection of Rural England’. • Friends of the Earth Chorley Group disbanded in 2004. 	<p>Two paragraphs numbered 3.2 – Renumber. ‘The text below’ referred to in second part of paragraph 5.3 supports Table 1 therefore is better placed after the table.</p> <p>The Council will initiate these during consultative stages of Development Plan Documents. The Council will respond to requests from community groups and organisations by undertaking presentations or discussion forums as appropriate. In doing so, the Council hopes to explore significant areas of expertise and local knowledge. Groups have been suspended until actions decided. The Chorley Partnership will notify all its members and organisations of the new procedures.</p> <p>Amend Appendix 2 accordingly. Consult regional Friends of the Earth group.</p>
0032	NWRA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Para 3.1 - It would be useful to include additional information that sets out the role of the Regional Spatial Strategy as part of the statutory development plan. Suggest that the following wording be added after the third sentence of paragraph 3.1: “The statutory development plan for Chorley will consist of certain local development documents and the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) that will be prepared by the North West Regional Assembly (NWRA). Paragraphs 4.7 to 4.13 of this Statement of Community Involvement set out the detail of various development plan documents and associated material that will be produced by the Council” • Useful to include a diagram that sets out the type and status of various planning policy documents. South Ribble Borough Council has produced such a diagram (Figure 1) in their draft Statement of Community Involvement. • The statutory development plan will continue to include the adopted Joint Lancashire Structure Plan until the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy is adopted. It may be useful to refer to paragraph 4.22 of PPS12 which outlines 	<p>Agreed. Amend second part of paragraph 3.1. Delete “LDFs will replace Local Plans” and replace with “The Local Development Framework will consist of a ‘portfolio’ of Local Development Documents that will comprise the spatial plan for the Borough, replacing the current Local Plan Review. Local Development Documents include statutory development plan and non-statutory Supplementary Planning Documents. The Development Plan also consists of the Joint Lancashire Structure Plan. Eventually this will be replaced with a Regional Spatial Strategy, for which the North West Regional Assembly will be responsible.”</p> <p>Insert Diagram after paragraph 3.1 to show format of the Local Development Framework.</p> <p>See proposed revision above. Additional information may over complicate.</p>

		<p>the continuing role of Structure Plans over the next three or more years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Para 3.2 - May be useful to highlight the regional planning consultation/public participation process to show the links between the requirements for Statement of Community Involvement in preparing local development documents and the consultation/public participation requirements for Regional Spatial Strategy. • The columns in Table 1 dealing with the core strategy, other development plan documents and supplementary planning documents, could include in the statutory bodies and groups section a further bullet point noting the need to seek an opinion from the NWRA regarding the general conformity of the aforementioned documents. 	<p>Diagram at paragraph 3.1 shows relationship between Regional Spatial Strategy and Local Development Documents. Not necessary to refer to consultation/public participation requirements for Regional Spatial Strategy.</p> <p>Not necessary to include in Table 1. Stated in the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. NWRA identified as a consultee in Appendix 2.</p>
0033	Brothers of Charity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget for community involvement for the hire of premises and publicity, including statutory notices, does seem rather low bearing in mind the intentions of the framework (p. 11). 	<p>Specific reference to budget (paragraph 5.2) to be deleted following advice from GONW but it will be kept under review. See Section 10 – Resources and Management (Ref. 29).</p>
0034	The Emerson Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sections 6, 7 and 8 - Overly prescriptive, paras 8.1 and 8.2 in particular. Suggest the wording be altered. At the beginning of paragraphs 8.1 and 8.2, it should read 'A developer should be encouraged to' as per section 7.7.2 of <i>Creating Local Development Frameworks - A Companion Guide to P.P.S. 12</i> indicates. 	<p>GONW advise the word "should" is to be avoided. (See Ref. 0029). Section 6 states the community involvement is mandatory but, in accordance with Section 7.7.2 <i>Creating Local Development Frameworks - A Companion Guide to P.P.S. 12</i>, but actively encourages applicants to undertake early consultation.</p> <p>Paragraphs 7.1, 8.1 and 8.2: Replace 'should' with 'are encouraged to'</p> <p>Comments noted.</p>
0035	RPS on behalf of Prime Resorts Ltd.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Council's efforts in engaging a full range of community stakeholders and interested parties through the processes outlined in the draft Statement of Community Involvement. • Object to the methods for consultation for businesses, developers/agents and other interested parties in relation to all documents listed in Table 1. Does not conform to PPS12 (para 4.1 and 4.2). • Should be encouraging business, developers/agents and other interested parties to become involved in the preparation of the plans during the evidence gathering stage. This can be done through informal representations or meetings, held in commercial confidence, so Chorley 	<p>This section and Table 1 as amended (See GONW Ref 29 amendments) provides information on opportunities for community involvement in the different types and stages of the Local Development Framework.</p> <p>Insert at para 5.12 <u>"The Council will respond to requests from community groups and organisations by undertaking presentations or discussion forums as appropriate. In doing so, the Council hopes to explore significant areas of expertise and local knowledge"</u>.</p>

	<p>Borough Council may introduce potential proposals into the Issues and Options reports and into Local Development Documents and which can therefore be fully assessed within the formal consultation processes of the Local Development Framework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Businesses, Developers/Agents and Other Interested Parties rows, Table 1 should be amended as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Informal meetings" and "Informal Representations" should be added to first line in "How Consulted?" box in all four columns. "Evidence Gathering/Focus Groups/Workshops/Touring Exhibitions" also inserted as first line in column 3 (core strategy). "Notification of publication of draft LDD for consultation" and "Opportunity to make representations" inserted as second and third lines in second column (most LDD) for these groups. For Other Development Plan Documents (column 4), "Opportunity to formulate planning policy in relation to Area Action Plans" and "Notification of adopted Development Plan Documents" to be added as second and last lines respectively Consultation process with regard to Supplementary Planning Documents for these groups should be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Evidence Gathering/Informal Meetings/Informal Representations "Opportunity to formulate planning policy in relation to Area Action Plans" "Notification of consultation period for draft SPDs" "Opportunity to make representations" "Notification of adopted SPDs" Para 5.11 - Object to Chorley Borough Council not defining "Consult". Should be encouraging community stakeholders and interested parties to become involved in the consultation process as advised in PPS12. Following paragraph should be added below table on page 15: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "In addition, where community stakeholders and 	<p>Amend to insert "<u>Informal meetings and Informal Representations</u>" in all four columns</p> <p>Amend to add "<u>Evidence Gathering/Focus Groups/Workshops/Touring Exhibitions</u>" to Core Strategy column.</p> <p>Agree see amendments to Table 1 (GONW: Ref 29)</p> <p>This is adequately covered by the amendments to Table 1</p> <p>This is adequately covered by the amendments to Table 1</p> <p>See comment above. Site Allocations Development Plan Document will provide opportunity for large-scale development to be brought forward and for formal consultation within the Local Development Framework process. The Statement of Community Involvement also encourages greater public involvement at the application and pre-application stages of such proposals.</p>
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		<p>interested parties are proposing large-scale development, Chorley Borough Council will encourage informal discussions, meetings and correspondence to be held in commercial confidence between the Council and these parties. This is to ensure that proposals are brought forward at an early stage in the process, thus enabling the Council to incorporate policies and proposals at the Issues and Options stage and therefore allow the public to publicly assess any proposals through formal consultation within the Local Development Framework process.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Para 8.2 – Support • Para 9.2 – local libraries should be added to the circulation list for the weekly planning applications list. • Appendix 2 – Support but object to Prime Resorts Limited not being included within the “Other Consultees” section and request it be added. As owners of biggest tourist attraction in the district it is important that the company is consulted at an early stage. 	<p>Comment Noted</p> <p>Weekly list is sent to Central Library for distribution to other libraries in the Borough.</p> <p>See Council response above (Ref. 12). Appendix 2 outlines the broad types of organisation included in the consultee database rather than specifically mentioning all organisations, as many of these will change over time. Prime Resorts are included in consultee database and will be consulted at early stage in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement.</p> <p>Included in consultee database. See Section 9. Organisations and individuals cannot be consulted unless statutorily or as ‘neighbours’. Can keep track of all applications through the weekly list.</p>
0036	Sanderson Weatherall on behalf of Royal Mail Property plc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request clients are included upon list of consultees (Appendix 2) as part of the Local Development Framework preparation and to be notified of major applications as identified in draft Statement of Community Involvement. 	<p>Definition of Spatial Planning Approach contained in Glossary (Appendix 1). The new system of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents will adopt a spatial planning approach. Spatial Planning goes beyond traditional land use planning to bring together and integrate policies for the development and use of land with other policies and programmes which influence the nature of places and how they function. That will include policies which can impact on land use but which are not capable of being delivered solely or</p>
0037	James W. Phillipson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of pledges welcome, esp. No. 9 regarding producing easy to read publications. Statement of Community Involvement easier to understand than most but some parts still difficult to understand e.g. “Spatial Planning Approach” 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appendix 2 very extensive but omits farmers, who are still major land users. 	<p>mainly through the granting or refusal of planning permission and which may be implemented by other means. Agreed. Amend Appendix 2 to add “<u>Landowners and major land users, including farmers</u>”.</p>
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Representation Received – No Comments. Will continue to be on the consultee database or added if applicable.

0007	Network Rail	No specific comments at this early stage but would appreciate continued updates and further consultation as the plan progresses.
0010	British Waterways	No specific comments to make. Look forward to working with you with regard to production of Local Development Framework.
0013	Kate Motley	Requested copy of Draft Statement of Community Involvement
0015	Jane Watson	Requested copy of Draft Statement of Community Involvement
0014	Betty Crook	Would welcome opportunity to develop views in writing or to attend meetings.
0027	Peacock & Smith on behalf of Wm Morrison Supermarkets plc.	Request to be consulted on the preparation of Local Development Framework.
0038	Malcolm Judd & Partners on behalf of National Grid Transco	Request to be kept informed of the progress of the Local Development Framework for Chorley.

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Chorley Borough
Local Development
Framework

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
SUBMISSION TO SECRETARY OF STATE

~~DRAFT~~

~~March~~ SEPTEMBER 2005

~~(PRE-SUBMISSION PUBLIC PARTICIPATION COPY)~~

This information can be made available to you in larger print or on audio tape, or translated into your own language. Please telephone 01257 515281 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 آپ کی اپنی زبان میں بھی کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ یہ خدمت استعمال کرنے کیلئے براہ مہربانی اس نمبر پر ٹیلیفون

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OUR PLEDGE TO INVOLVE

The Borough Council is committed to Equality and Diversity.

We will:

- Give as much prior notice of involvement opportunities and advance publication of our proposals as possible.
- Seek to involve everyone who has a comment to make on the documents we produce and those affected by planning applications.
- Go out to easily accessible popular venues in local communities across the Borough to explain our proposals and offer advice.
- Encourage participation in drafting proposals through the use of forum and other meetings, focus groups and workshops.
- Aim to engage with all relevant agencies and representative groups so they can be involved, including those that are hard to reach.
- Work in partnership with other organisations.
- Give people equal opportunity to contribute.
- Widely publicise our intentions by way of letters, emails, posters, leaflets, our website, notices in local newspapers and through press and other media releases.
- Produce easy to read and attractive publications and offer these in different languages and formats.
- Make our publications available at libraries and sub-post offices in settlements without a library.
- Carefully listen to and read what is put to us.
- Accurately record and make publicly available the comments that are made.
- Faithfully report all comments received to those making decisions within the Council.
- ~~Try to~~ Take account of all comments made and learn from the experience.
- Publicise what decisions are taken and inform respondents.

Councillor Adrian Lowe
Executive Member for Development and Planning

This Statement has been subject to a full Equality Impact Assessment

CONSULTATION ON THIS STATEMENT

This draft Statement **has been submitted to the Secretary of State and is** on public deposit from ~~7 March~~ **?? September** 2005 for a six week period – a duration which is set by statutory legislation. ~~The deadline for comments is 5pm on Monday 18 April 2005. Representations not received by then at the following addresses will not be considered.~~ : **Any person or organisation that has an interest in matters relating to the development of the Borough can make representations on this document.**

Comments made at the submission stage will be forwarded to the Secretary of State for examination by an independent inspector. As such if you feel comments made at the pre-submission SCI have not been taken in to account , then you must again comment to this effect during consultation on the submitted version.

Please complete the comment form and return it to the address below no later than 5pm, Monday ? October 2005.

On line via www.chorley.gov.uk/planning

By e-mail – planning.policy@chorley.gov.uk

By post Planning Policy Section
 Chorley Borough Council
 Council Offices
 Gillibrand Street
 Chorley
 Lancs
 PR7 2EL

Alternatively this form can be faxed to the following number 01257 515211

In addition an electronic version of this form can be found on the Council's web site at www.chorley.gov.uk/planning. This form is in "Word" format and you can type in your response and return it as an e-mail attachment to planning.policy@chorley.gov.uk. Alternatively, the form can be printed off and returned via any of the above means.

Statement of Community Involvement (Draft)

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document sets out the Borough Council's proposals for the involvement of the local community in the:

- Preparation of the new Local Development Framework - the new name for a Local Plan. This will comprise a series of Local Development Documents, which will set out policies and proposals relating to the development and use of land in the Borough (these documents will replace the current Local Plan). (See Section 4).

And

- In the determination of Planning Applications. (See Section 6-10).

1.2 The aim of the Statement of Community Involvement is to ensure that all sections of the community, from individual members of the public through to representative organisations, have the opportunity to participate in the preparation of planning proposals for the Borough's towns, villages and countryside.

2. PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF CONSULTATION

2.1 The prime purpose of consultation is to improve the planning of development by involving a wide range of interested parties and individuals in decision making through both creating a "dialogue" and relevant information sharing.

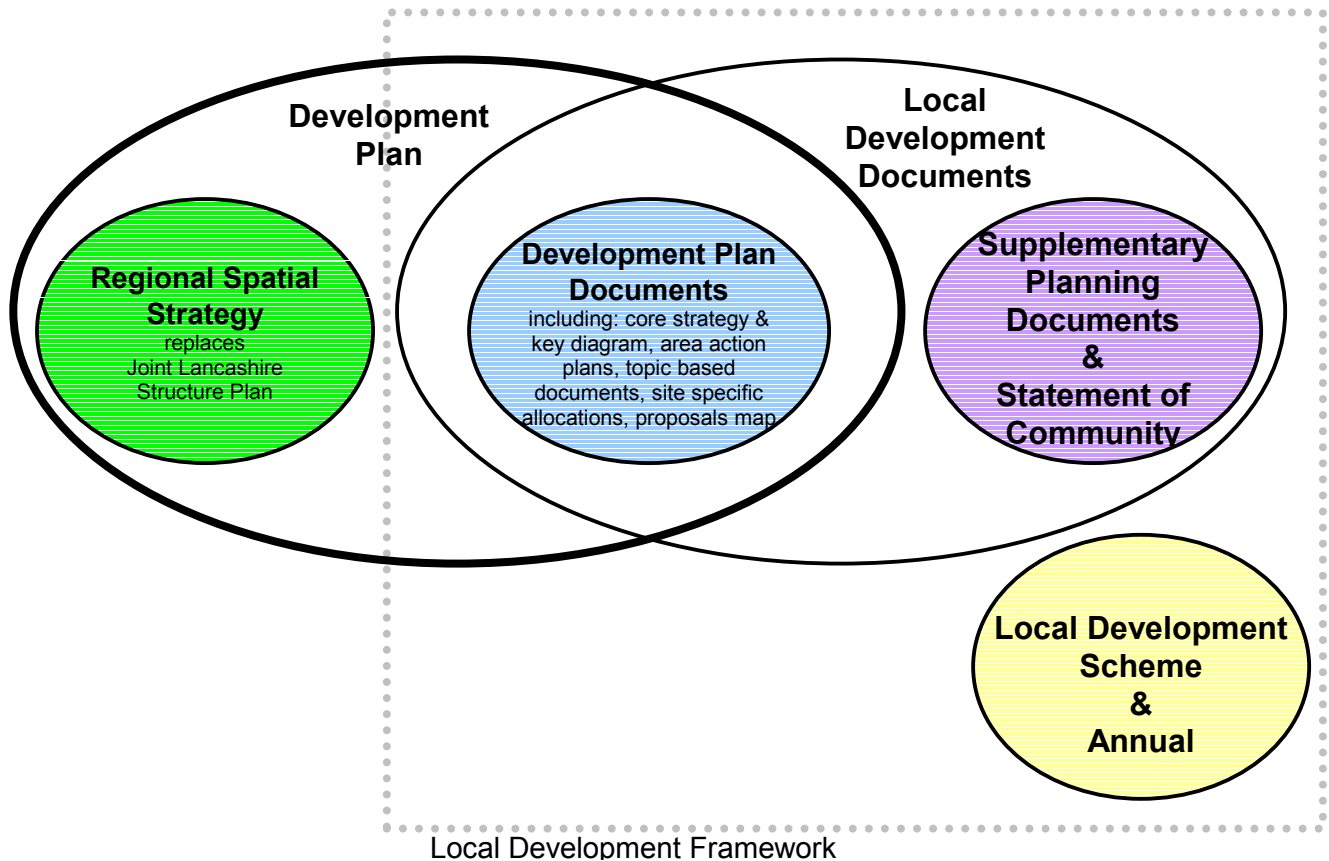
2.2 The benefits of involving a wider range of people and organisations in decision-making can result in:

- A greater public ownership and ability to influence the decision making process
- An enhanced sense of contributing to the community
- More attention to public priorities
- Obtaining value for money
- A better understanding of the way services and the Borough Council work
- Broader sharing of responsibilities
- More contribution to problem solving
- Greater potential for effective and efficient use of resources

3. NATIONAL POLICY

3.1 The relevant provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act came into force in September 2004. The Act takes forward proposals for reform of the planning system. The Act provides for the preparation of "Local Development Documents (LDD's) that constitute part of the Local Development Framework (LDF). ~~LDFs will replace Local Plans.~~ **"The Local Development Framework will consist of a 'portfolio' of Local Development Documents that will comprise the spatial plan for the Borough, replacing the current Local Plan Review. Local Development Documents include Development Plan Documents that are part of the statutory development plan and non-statutory Supplementary Planning Documents. The Development Plan also consists of the Joint Lancashire Structure Plan. Eventually this will be replaced with a Regional Spatial Strategy, for which the North West Regional Assembly will be responsible for preparing."** Appendix 1 contains a Glossary of Planning Terms. **Diagram 1 shows the Local Development Framework Structure.**

Diagram 1 – Local Development Framework Structure



- 3.2 The Act requires that each Council as a local planning authority must produce a Statement of Community Involvement, as part of the Local Development Framework. **All Local Development Documents must show conformity with the Statement of Community Involvement. This is not applicable to the Regional Spatial Strategy**
- 3.3 **Planning Policy Statements.** These will replace Planning Policy Guidance Notes and they are intended to be a more succinct explanation of national planning policy. Planning Policy Statement (PPS)12: Local Development Frameworks (October 2004) identifies that the Statement of Community Involvement should set out the local planning authority's policy for involving the community in the preparation and revision of Local Development Documents and in deciding planning applications. Community involvement throughout the process of preparing Local Development Documents is essential to achieve local ownership and legitimacy for the policies that will shape the future distribution of land uses and development in an area.
- 3.4 Information should be included on how the principles of community involvement apply to different types of Local Development Document e.g. Core Strategy, Area Action Plans or Site Allocation Development Plan Documents and to Supplementary Planning Documents.
- 3.5 The Government's principles for community involvement are that it should be:
- appropriate to the level of planning;
 - concentrated at the beginning of the process i.e. front loading of involvement;
 - involve methods of involvement relevant to the communities concerned;
 - a continuous process, not a one-off event;
 - transparent and accessible; and
 - planned for involvement.

3.6 Creating Local Development Frameworks: A Companion Guide to PPS12 (November 2004) provides advice on managing the community involvement and preparing the Statement of Community Involvement. The spatial nature of Local Development Frameworks and the focus on implementation means that it will be important to achieve widespread ownership and community buy-in. Authorities will need to be proactive when involving stakeholders and the community, setting out their approach in the Statement of Community Involvement. It indicates the Statement of Community Involvement will be subject to independent examination but will not be part of the development plan. (See Section 4)

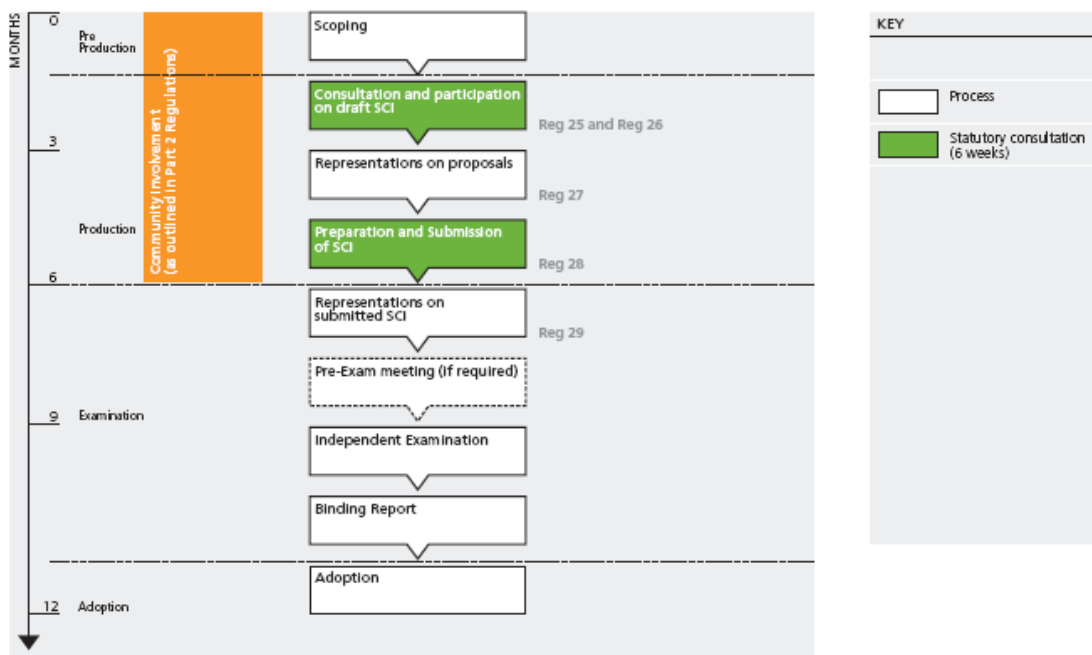
3.7 The Guide also covers community involvement in planning applications. It provides an opportunity for an authority to set out minimum standards, the statutory requirements for publicising such applications as well as the ground rules for community participation. **All documents have to be prepared, and planning applications considered, in accordance with the adopted Statement of Community Involvement. The Council will submit a Statement of Compliance with each submitted Development Plan Document.**

4. **PLANNING POLICY
KEY ELEMENTS AND PROGRESS OF THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (LDF)**

4.1 The new planning system for plan preparation requires the involvement of local people from the earliest stage onwards and is known as “front loading”.

4.2 **The Statement of Community Involvement. This is a Local Development Document but is not subject to sustainability appraisal. Diagram 2 below shows the Statement of Community Involvement Process.**

Diagram 2 - Statement of Community Involvement Process



Prior to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act coming into force Chorley Borough Council published a first draft of this Statement of Community Involvement and put it out for a limited period of consultation between 29 June 2004 and 16 July 2004. Participants were specifically asked how they would like to be involved in planning proposals for the Borough.

A broad range of people and organisations were consulted **and 34 responses were received.**

~~4.3 From the comments received and taking into account the new guidance this revised draft Statement has been prepared and placed on deposit for a six-week period in March and April 2005 to allow for consultation and participation during which time representations can be received.~~

4.3 In February 2005 the Council sent a draft Statement for pre-submission consultation to neighbouring authorities, parish councils, Lancashire County Council, the Highways Agency, and the North West Regional Assembly in accordance with Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. The draft Statement was placed on public deposit for a six-week period from 7 March to 18 April 2005 in accordance with Regulation 26. A total of 38 responses were received.

~~4.4 A later version of this Statement of Community Involvement will then be submitted to Government for independent examination. Representations will again be invited within a six-week period, which is likely to be September and October 2005. The Government's preferred method for dealing with representations on the Statement is by written representations. However objectors can exercise their right to appear before an Inspector at a hearing.~~

4.4 Further representations were sought when the document was submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination in accordance with Regulation 28. The report produced by the Inspector will be binding. The Council cannot change the content and will adopt and publish the document.

~~4.5 The Inspector appointed will assess the "soundness" of the Statement. The Inspector will determine whether the local planning authority has:~~

- ~~• Complied with the minimum requirements for consultation;~~
- ~~• Shown links with other community involvement initiatives e.g. the community strategy.~~

~~The report produced by the Inspector will be binding upon the Council.~~

4.5 The Tests of Soundness – The soundness of the Statement of Community Involvement is effectively defined by paragraph 3.10 of the Planning Policy Statement 12 (PPS12): Local Development Frameworks (September 2004) which sets out nine tests of soundness. The function of an independent examination is primarily to assess the submitted document against these nine tests. The presumption will be that the Statement of Community Involvement is sound unless it is shown to be otherwise as a result of evidence considered at the examination. A hearing will only be necessary where one or more of those making representations want to be heard.

In assessing whether the Statement of Community Involvement is sound the Inspector will determine whether the:

- local planning authority has complied with the minimum requirements for consultation as set out in the regulations;**
- local planning authority's strategy for community involvement links with other community involvement initiatives e.g. the community strategy**
- Statement identifies in general terms which local community groups and other bodies will be consulted;**
- Statement identifies how the community and other bodies can be involved in a timely and accessible manner;**

- methods of consultation to be employed are suitable for the intended audience and for the different stages in the preparation of local development documents;
- resources are available to manage community involvement effectively;
- Statement shows how the results of community involvement will be fed into the preparation of development plan documents and supplementary planning documents;
- authority has mechanisms for reviewing the Statement of Community Involvement; and
- Statement clearly describes the planning authority's policy for consultation on planning applications.

- 4.6 The **other** key elements of the Local Development Framework are identified below and the Glossary of Terms in Appendix 1 provides further clarification. The existing adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review will retain its development plan status (i.e. be saved) for at least three years from the date of commencement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (September 2004).
- 4.7 **Local Development Documents.** The Chorley Local Development Framework will comprise a series of Local Development Documents (LDDs) eventually covering all planning topics except minerals and waste matters. For these there will be a separate framework, prepared by Lancashire County Council. Some Local Development Documents will have the status of Development Plan Documents and will be subject to an independent examination (and subsequent mandatory acceptance of the Inspector's Report), whilst others will have the status of Supplementary Planning Documents.
- 4.8 **Development Plan Documents.** These will not be restricted to matters that may be implemented through the planning system, but will also include the spatial aspects of other strategies such as the Community Strategy. Two examples of Development Plan Documents are the Core Strategy and Area Action Plans.
- 4.9 **Core Strategy.** A fundamental aim of the reforms to the planning system is to slim down the number and content of policies. Local planning authorities will therefore be required to produce shorter, more focused, core policies under the Local Development Framework system which set out the broad spatial strategy for the Borough.
- 4.10 **Area Action Plans.** Local planning authorities may also bring forward Area Action Plans for small parts of the Borough where there are proposals for major change or conservation.
- 4.11 **Supplementary Planning Documents.** These will contain guidance which elaborates on and helps to implement the policies contained within Development Plan Documents
- 4.12 **Sustainability Appraisal.** Documents produced, as part of the Local Development Framework will be subjected to a combined strategic environmental assessment and sustainability appraisal. These will test how the proposals may impact on environmental, social and economic considerations. The results will be set out in a report and this will be subject to community involvement.
- 4.13 **Local Development Scheme.** To programme the Local Development Framework process local planning authorities are required to produce a Local Development Scheme setting out a timetable for producing Local Development Documents. The Local Development Scheme will be submitted to the Secretary of State for consideration and approval by the end of March 2005.

4.14 All Development Plan Documents need to go through the following stages of preparation and consultation:

- Evidence Gathering
- Identification of Issues and alternative Options for solving them
- Pre-submission community involvement and consultation on Issues and Options and opportunity to make representations
- Preparation of Preferred Options **and opportunity to make representations**
- Submission of Preferred Options to Secretary of State and opportunity to make representations
- Independent Examination (usually a Public Inquiry)
- Inspector's Report
- Adoption

4.15 Consultation on Supplementary Planning Documents is a formal requirement before they can be adopted but they do not go through the submission, independent examination and inspector's report stages.

5. **THE RANGE OF ROLES THAT CAN BE PLAYED BY DIFFERENT GROUPS**

5.1 As stated the aim of this Statement of Community Involvement is to ensure that all sections of the community have an opportunity to participate in the preparation of planning proposals for the Borough's towns, villages and countryside.

~~5.2 A realistic approach to community involvement must reflect the resources available to the Council for involving the community in development plan proposals. The Council's budget will be confirmed in February 2005 and the bid for the hire of premises to hold exhibitions, workshops, focus groups and meetings is £400 for each year. The bid for publicity including statutory notices is £4,000 for 2005/6 and in subsequent years.~~

5.32 Table 1 starting on the next page identifies when the community will be consulted and how this is intended to be done for the different stages of preparing the Local Development Documents. All documents will be placed on the Council's website as well as being available in paper form.

Opportunities for Community Involvement in the Different Types and Stages of the Local Development Framework

Stages of the Local Development Framework*		Table 1	
Most Local Development Documents (LDD) including	Core Strategy (CS)/Key Diagram Including:	Other Development Plan Documents (DPDs) including	Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) Including
Statement of Community Involvement including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement of Conformity Sustainability Appraisal Reports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainability Appraisal Report Statement of Conformity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area Action Plans: (e.g Town Centre) Topic based documents: (e.g. sustainable resources). Site Specific Allocations Proposals Map To include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainability Appraisal Reports. Statement of Conformity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable Resources SPD: Planning Contributions SPD: <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainability Appraisal Reports Statement of Conformity
Groups to be Consulted	How Consulted?	How Consulted?	How Consulted?
Borough Councillors	4 Meetings & Council approval	4 Meetings & Council approval	4 Meetings and Council approval
Council Units	4 Evidence Gathering/ Meetings and formulation of LDDs. Notification of pre –submission consultation stage (Issues and Options Report) – consultation period for Preferred Options and Submission to Secretary of State Opportunity to make representations at pre-submission consultation stage and Preferred Options stage and during Submission to Secretary of State stage. Independent Examination Notification of adopted Local Development Document.	4 Evidence Gathering/ Meetings & formulation of DPDs Notification of consultation periods for DPDs (Issues and Options Report); consultation period for Preferred Options and Submission to Secretary of State, and independent examination. Opportunity to make representations at Preferred Options stage and Submission to Secretary of State stage. Notification of adopted DPDs	4 Evidence Gathering Meetings & formulation of SPD. Notification of consultation period for SPDs. Opportunity to make representations Finalise SPD and Notification of adoption

Table 1

Stages of the Local Development Framework*		Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)	
Most Local Development Documents (LDD) including	Core Strategy (CS)/Key Diagram Including:	Other Development Plan Documents (DPDs) including	Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) including
<p>Statement of Community Involvement including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement of Conformity • Sustainability Appraisal Reports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Appraisal Report • Statement of Conformity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Action Plans: (e.g Town Centre) • Topic based documents: (e.g. <u>sustainable resources</u>). • Site Specific Allocations • Proposals Map <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Sustainability Appraisal Reports.</u> • <u>Statement of Conformity</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Resources SPD; • Planning Contributions SPD; <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Appraisal Reports • Statement of Conformity
Groups to be Consulted	How Consulted?	How Consulted?	How Consulted?
<p>Chorley Partnership (Over 80 local organisations who aim to work together to improve the Borough and the delivery of services)</p>	<p>4 Evidence Gathering/ Meetings.</p> <p>Notification of pre –submission consultation stage (Issues and Options Report); –consultation period for Preferred Options and Submission to Secretary of State</p> <p>Opportunity to make representations at pre-submission consultation stage and Preferred Options stage and during Submission to Secretary of State stage.</p> <p>Independent Examination</p> <p>Notification of adopted Local Development Document.</p>	<p>4 Evidence Gathering/Meetings.</p> <p>Notification of consultation periods for DPDs</p> <p>(Issues and Options Report); consultation period for Preferred Options and Submission to Secretary of State, and independent examination.</p> <p>Opportunity to make representations at Preferred Options stage and Submission to Secretary of State stage</p> <p>Notification of adopted DPDs</p>	<p>4 Evidence Gathering</p> <p>Notification of consultation periods for SPDs</p> <p>Opportunity to make representations</p> <p>Finalise SPD and Notification of adoption</p>

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Stages of the Local Development Framework*		Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)	
Most Local Development Documents (LDD) including	Core Strategy (CS)/Key Diagram Including:	Other Development Plan Documents (DPDs) including	Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) including
<p>Statement of Community Involvement including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement of Conformity • Sustainability Appraisal Reports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Appraisal Report • Statement of Conformity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Action Plans: (e.g Town Centre) • Topic based documents: (e.g. sustainable resources). • Site Specific Allocations • Proposals Map <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Appraisal Reports. • Statement of Conformity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Resources SPD; • Planning Contributions SPD; <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Appraisal Reports • Statement of Conformity
Groups to be Consulted	How Consulted?	How Consulted?	How Consulted?
<p>Statutory bodies and groups</p>	<p>4 Evidence Gathering/ Meetings.</p> <p>Notification of pre –submission consultation stage (Issues and Options Report); consultation period for Preferred Options and Submission to Secretary of State</p> <p>Opportunity to make representations at pre-submission consultation stage and Preferred Options stage and during Submission to Secretary of State stage.</p> <p>Independent Examination</p> <p>Notification of adopted Local Development Document.</p>	<p>4 Evidence Gathering/ Meetings.</p> <p>Notification of consultation periods for DPDs (Issues and Options Report; consultation period for Preferred Options and Submission to Secretary of State, and independent examination.</p> <p>Opportunity to make representations at Preferred Options stage and Submission to Secretary of State stage</p> <p>Notification of adopted DPDs</p>	<p>4 Notification of consultation periods for SPDs</p> <p>Opportunity to make representations</p> <p>Finalise SPD and Notification of adoption</p>

Table 1

Stages of the Local Development Framework*		Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)	
Most Local Development Documents (LDD) including	Core Strategy (CS)/Key Diagram Including:	Other Development Plan Documents (DPDs) including	Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) including
<p>Statement of Community Involvement including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement of Conformity Sustainability Appraisal Reports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Sustainability Appraisal Report</u> <u>Statement of Conformity</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area Action Plans: (e.g Town Centre) Topic based documents: (e.g. sustainable resources). Site Specific Allocations Proposals Map <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Sustainability Appraisal Reports.</u> <u>Statement of Conformity</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Sustainable Resources SPD;</u> <u>Planning Contributions SPD;</u> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Sustainability Appraisal Reports</u> <u>Statement of Conformity</u>
Groups to be Consulted	How Consulted?	How Consulted?	How Consulted?
<p>General Public, Local Organisation s and Hard to Reach Groups</p> <p>4 Evidence Gathering/ Focus Groups/ Workshops, Touring Exhibition.</p> <p>Notification of pre –submission consultation stage (Issues and Options Report); –consultation period for Preferred Options and Submission to Secretary of State</p> <p>Opportunity to make representations at pre-submission consultation stage and Preferred Options stage and during Submission to Secretary of State stage.</p> <p>Independent Examination</p> <p>Notification of adopted Local Development Document.</p>	<p>4 Evidence Gathering/ Focus Groups/Workshops, Touring Exhibition/.</p> <p>Notification of Core Strategy for consultation (Issues and Options Report); consultation period for Preferred Options and Submission to Secretary of State, and independent examination</p> <p>Opportunities to make representations at Preferred Options stage and Submission to Secretary of State stage.</p> <p>Notification of adopted DPDS</p>	<p>4 Evidence Gathering, Focus Groups/Workshops, Planning for Real, Touring Exhibition</p> <p>Notification of consultation period for Area Action Plans/ Site Specific Allocations</p> <p>Notification of consultation periods for DPDS (Issues and Options Report); consultation period for Preferred Options and Submission to Secretary of State, and independent examination.</p> <p>Opportunity to make representations at Preferred Options stage and Submission to Secretary of State stage</p> <p>Notification of adopted Proposals Map which also identifies any saved policies</p>	<p>4 Evidence Gathering Notification of consultation periods for SPDs</p> <p>Opportunity to make representations</p> <p>Finalise SPD and Notification of adoption</p>

Table 1

Stages of the Local Development Framework*		Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)	
Most Local Development Documents (LDD) including	Core Strategy (CS)/Key Diagram Including:	Other Development Plan Documents (DPDs) including	including
<p>Statement of Community Involvement including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement of Conformity • Sustainability Appraisal Reports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Appraisal Report • Statement of Conformity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Action Plans: (e.g Town Centre) • Topic based documents: (e.g. <u>sustainable resources</u>). • Site Specific Allocations • Proposals Map <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Sustainability Appraisal Reports.</u> • <u>Statement of Conformity</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Resources SPD; • Planning Contributions SPD; <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Appraisal Reports • Statement of Conformity
Groups to be Consulted	How Consulted?	How Consulted?	How Consulted?
<p>Businesses</p> <p>4 Evidence Gathering/ Focus Groups/ Workshops, Touring Exhibition/ Informal meetings and Informal Representations</p> <p>Notification of pre –submission consultation stage (Issues and Options Report);-consultation period for Preferred Options and Submission to Secretary of State</p> <p>Opportunity to make representations at pre-submission consultation stage and Preferred Options stage and during Submission to Secretary of State stage.</p> <p>Independent Examination</p> <p>Notification of adopted Local Development Document.</p>	<p>4 Evidence Gathering/ Focus Groups/Workshops, Touring Exhibition/Informal meetings and Informal Representations.</p> <p>Representations. :</p> <p>Notification of Core Strategy for consultation (Issues and Options Report); consultation period for Preferred Options and Submission to Secretary of State, and Independent examination</p> <p>Opportunity to make representations at Preferred Options stage and Submission to Secretary of State stage.</p> <p>Notification of adopted DPDs</p>	<p>4 Evidence Gathering/ Focus Groups/Workshops Touring Exhibition/Informal meetings and Informal Representations</p> <p>Notification of consultation periods for DPDs (Issues and Options Report); Preferred Options and Submission to Secretary of State, and independent examination.</p> <p>Opportunity to make representations at Preferred Options stage and Submission to Secretary of State stage</p> <p>Notification of adopted DPDs</p>	<p>4 Evidence Gathering / Informal meetings and Informal Representations</p> <p>Notification of consultation periods for SPDs</p> <p>Opportunity to make representations</p> <p>Finalise SPD and Notification of adoption</p>

Table 1

Stages of the Local Development Framework*			
	Most Local Development Documents (LDD) including	Core Strategy (CS)/Key Diagram Including:	Other Development Plan Documents (DPDs) including
	<p>Statement of Community Involvement including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement of Conformity Sustainability Appraisal Reports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Sustainability Appraisal Report</u> <u>Statement of Conformity</u> 	<p>Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Sustainable Resources SPD;</u> <u>Planning Contributions SPD;</u> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Sustainability Appraisal Reports</u> <u>Statement of Conformity</u>
Groups to be Consulted	How Consulted?	How Consulted?	How Consulted?
<p>Developers/ Agents and <u>Landowners</u></p>	<p>4 Evidence Gathering/ Focus Groups/Workshops, Touring Exhibition/ <u>Informal meetings and Informal Representations.</u></p> <p>Notification of pre –submission consultation (<u>Issues and Options Report</u>); <u>consultation period for Preferred Options</u> and Submission to Secretary of State</p> <p>Opportunity to make representations at pre-submission consultation stage and <u>Preferred Options stage</u> and <u>during Submission to Secretary of State stage.</u></p> <p><u>Independent Examination</u></p> <p><u>Notification of adopted Local Development Document.</u></p>	<p>4 <u>Evidence Gathering/ Focus Groups/Workshops, Touring Exhibition/ Informal meetings and Informal Representations.</u></p> <p>Notification of Core Strategy for consultation (<u>Issues and Options Report</u>); <u>consultation period for Preferred Options and Submission to Secretary of State, and independent examination</u></p> <p>Opportunity to make representations <u>at Preferred Options stage and Submission to Secretary of State stage.</u></p> <p><u>Notification of adopted DPDs</u></p>	<p>4 Evidence Gathering/ <u>Informal meetings and Informal Representations</u></p> <p>Notification of consultation periods for SPDs</p> <p>Opportunity to make representations</p> <p><u>Finalise SPD and Notification of adoption</u></p>

Table 1

Stages of the Local Development Framework*

		Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) including	
Most Local Development Documents (LDD) including	Core Strategy (CS)/Key Diagram Including:	Other Development Plan Documents (DPDs) including	Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) including
<p>Statement of Community Involvement including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement of Conformity Sustainability Appraisal Reports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainability Appraisal Report Statement of Conformity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area Action Plans: (e.g Town Centre) Topic based documents: (e.g. sustainable resources). Site Specific Allocations Proposals Map <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainability Appraisal Reports. Statement of Conformity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable Resources SPD; Planning Contributions SPD; <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainability Appraisal Reports Statement of Conformity
<p>Groups to be Consulted</p>	<p>How Consulted?</p>	<p>How Consulted?</p>	<p>How Consulted?</p>
<p>Other Interested Parties</p>	<p>4 Evidence Gathering/ Focus Groups/Workshops, Touring Exhibition/ Informal meetings and Informal Representations.</p> <p>Notification of pre –submission consultation stage (Issues and Options Report); consultation period for Preferred Options and Submission to Secretary of State</p> <p>Opportunity to make representations at pre-submission consultation stage and Preferred Options stage and during Submission to Secretary of State stage.</p> <p>Independent Examination.</p> <p>Notification of adopted Local Development Document.</p>	<p>4 Evidence Gathering/ Focus Groups/Workshops, Touring Exhibition/ Informal meetings and Informal Representations.</p> <p>Notification of consultation periods for DPDs</p> <p>(Issues and Options Report); consultation period for Preferred Options and Submission to Secretary of State, and independent examination.</p> <p>Opportunity to make representations at Preferred Options stage and Submission to Secretary of State stage</p> <p>Notification of adopted DPDs</p>	<p>4 Evidence Gathering/ Informal meetings and Informal Representations</p> <p>Notification of consultation periods for SPDs</p> <p>Opportunity to make representations</p> <p>Finalise SPD and Notification of adoption</p>

Table 1

Stages of the Local Development Framework*

	<p>Most Local Development Documents (LDD) including</p> <p>Statement of Community Involvement including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement of Conformity • Sustainability Appraisal Reports. 	<p>Core Strategy (CS)/Key Diagram Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Appraisal Report • Statement of Conformity 	<p>Other Development Plan Documents (DPDs) including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Action Plans: (e.g Town Centre) • Topic based documents: (e.g. sustainable resources). • Site Specific Allocations • Proposals Map <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Appraisal Reports. • Statement of Conformity 	<p>Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Resources SPD; • Planning Contributions SPD; <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Appraisal Reports • Statement of Conformity
<p>Groups to be Consulted</p>	<p><u>How Consulted?</u></p>	<p><u>How Consulted?</u></p>	<p><u>How Consulted?</u></p>	<p><u>How Consulted?</u></p>
<p>The Media</p>	<p>4 Press Releases and Publicity Invitations.</p> <p>Notification of pre –submission consultation stage (Issues and Options Report); consultation period for Preferred Options and Submission to Secretary of State and Independent Examination.</p> <p>Notification of adopted Local Development Document.</p>	<p>4 Notification of Core Strategy for consultation (Issues and Options Report); consultation period for Preferred Options and consultation period for Submission to Secretary of State, and independent examination</p> <p>Notification of adopted DPDs</p>	<p>4 Notification of consultation periods for DPDs (Issues and Options Report); consultation period for Preferred Options and Submission to Secretary of State, and independent examination.</p> <p>Notification of adopted DPDs</p>	<p>4 Notification of consultation periods and adoption of for SPDs</p>

5.34 The text below explains the different types of involvement and how each consultation/consultee group will be consulted as referred to in Table 1. Appendix 2 identifies a broad list of Consultees who will be consulted during the different stages of the Local Development Framework.

Elected Members (Borough Councillors)

5.45 A cross-party Member Working Group will meet regularly to guide preparation of the Local Development Framework and Review of the Community Plan (to be known as the Community Strategy). The latter will involve joint work with the Chorley Partnership and will set a broad vision for the Borough which the Local Development Framework will implement through spatial planning policies. The Member Working Group will consider issues and proposed solutions after taking account of the comments made by the local community. This group is politically balanced and has no decision-making powers. It reports direct to the Council's Executive Cabinet and meetings of all Councillors – The Full Council. The Member Working Group will meet as and when the different stages of plan preparation are reached. The meetings are held in private.

5.56 The Council's Executive Cabinet and the Full Council will make the necessary decisions and these meetings of Councillors are held in public.

Council Units

5.67 There will be joint working by all relevant Council departments (Units) drawing on the experience of extensive contacts the staff (Officers) have with the community.

5.78 Planning Policy Officers responsible for preparing the Local Development Framework have already held detailed discussions with development control colleagues (who deal with planning applications) on the effectiveness of existing planning policies. Regular consultations will be undertaken with development control staff throughout the process.

Parish Councils

5.89 The Borough Council will consult directly with local Parish Councils and assist them to become fully involved. Some Parishes are preparing Parish Plans and this will provide further information which can be fed into and taken account of in the Local Development Framework.

Local People

5.910 The public will be able to receive and disseminate information, participate in the development of policies, proposals or options for an area, respond to consultation and receive feedback from the Council when reporting back on formal representations. Participation will be through the following methods of community involvement and communication:

- **The Chorley Borough News** (the Borough's community newspaper) will ensure that the whole community is informed of the key elements of the consultation stages of the process.
- **The Council's website** (www.chorley.gov.uk/planning)/e-mail. The Council will publish proposals on its website and will invite suggestions. **Representations can be submitted online via the website. All adopted Local Development Documents will also be published on the website.** Members of the Planning Policy Team can be contacted via e-mail at planning.policy@chorley.gov.uk. It is acknowledged that not all local residents have access to Information Technology, especially the elderly, and therefore we will continue to produce paper versions of all documents. We will also have them available for viewing at Chorley Town Hall, the Borough Council Offices at Union Street and Gillibrand Street, all libraries in the Borough and at post offices in

villages without a library. The Planning Policy Team can be contacted on (01257) 515280/1/2; 515295 and 515741

- **Focus Groups** made up of local people to allow interactive discussion on planning issues and possible ways forward.
- **Touring an Exhibition of issues, options and proposals** around local libraries, village halls, leisure centres and other public places where Planning Officers will be able to discuss the proposals at specified times. People will be free to submit comments at the exhibitions or use one of the other methods available.
- **Workshops at Exhibition Venues** will allow people to interact through group working to come up with proposals for their area within set planning restrictions e.g. national and regional planning guidance.
- **The Citizen's Panel.** This is made up of approximately 1,500 Chorley Borough residents, selected at random and is therefore a cross section of the community who are asked to comment at intervals on Council initiatives. The membership of the Panel is changed every few years. They will be consulted about planning issues and proposals for the Borough.
- **Planning for Real.** This approach can be particularly suitable at the local neighbourhood level such as when Area Action Plans are proposed. Under the guidance of a facilitator it allows a local community to have "hands on" exercises in trying out possible on-the-ground planning and environmental solutions.
- **Planning Aid.** The Council has signed up to the Planning Aid concordat. This means it will support and promote the use of Planning Aid for use by local people. This is a free independent advice service on all aspects of planning. The aim of the services is to enable people to understand the planning system and how best they can make their views known.
- **Individual Contact.** Members of the public and any organisations can make formal objections or supporting representations at the Local Development Framework stages. The Council will consider representations. Anyone who makes a comment will be included on our electronic database and will automatically be kept informed at all subsequent stages of the process. Unresolved objections to Development Plan Documents will be considered by an independent Inspector.

Media

5.4011 The Council will draw attention to what is going on by issuing and publishing:

- **Media releases** (for local newspapers and broadcasters)
- **Internet website** (www.chorley.gov.uk/planning)
- **Public notices**
- **Leaflets**
- **Posters.**

Local Organisations

5.4112 The Council propose to:

- **Consult.** The Council has an extensive list of consultees made up of representatives from the private, public and community/voluntary sector that will be consulted. (See table below and Appendix 2)

• Businesses	• Councillors
• Developers/Agents	• Parish Councillors
• Statutory Bodies and Groups	• Central, Regional and Local Government
• Voluntary Sectors	• Government Related Agencies and Partnerships
• The Media	• Other Interested Parties

The Council will respond to requests from community groups and organisations by undertaking presentations or discussion forums as appropriate. In doing so, the Council hopes to be able to exploit significant areas of expertise and local knowledge.

- **Involve Forums** made up of representatives of local organisations.
- **Work with the Chorley Partnership.**
The Government clearly identifies Local Development Documents as one of the key mechanisms for delivering Community Strategy (Plan) objectives. Many of the elements of the Community Plan for the Borough of Chorley 2002-2005 (October 2002) and its Review (which will be adopted in June 2005) will have spatial aspects that can be addressed through the land use planning system.

The Chorley Partnership is a group of many organisations. One of its tasks is preparing the Community Strategy and driving it forward, as well as monitoring and reporting on progress. Each of the Partnership's five thematic groups (Sustainable Environment, Local Community, Health and Well Being, Life Long Learning and Thriving Economy) meet regularly to provide points of access with a range of key stakeholders. In addition to being involved in the Community Strategy the thematic groups will be involved in each stage of the Local Development Document preparation. The key stakeholders are representatives from the private/public and community/voluntary sectors.

Engage Hard to Reach Groups

5.123 The Council will seek to involve all sections of the community including:

- **Young People**
- **Ethnic Minorities**
- **Elderly People** Older people
- **Mobility Impaired Groups**
- **Visually Impaired and Hearing Impaired People**
- **Other Minority Groups**

The Council will have regards to the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 to promote racial equality and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

5.14 The Council will respond to requests from community groups and organisations by undertaking presentations or discussion forums as appropriate. In doing so, the Council hopes to explore significant areas of expertise and local knowledge.

- 5.135 To engage these groups the Council will take the following action during the consultation exercise:
- Maintain contact with all schools and colleges and work with any school or college that is keen to get involved with the process
 - Make effective use of the Chorley District Youth Council
 - Ensure a cross-section of the community is consulted through the Citizens Panel
 - Consult the Chorley and South Ribble Disability Forum
 - Consult the Ethnic Minority Consultative Committee
 - Identify any other similar group and inform them of the Plan process by attending their meetings
 - Make proposals available for inspection in a wide variety of locations and different formats.

- 5.146 The Council will provide documents when requested in:
- **Large Type**
 - **Braille**
 - **Audio** and
 - **Translations.**

6. DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

How Can A Developer Involve the Community Within A Proposed Development?

- 6.1 The Borough Council received about 1500 planning applications in 2004. Any person or organisation (including a government department or other public authority or body) may support or object to a planning application proposal. The Council is committed to involving the community in deciding planning applications. It is important that applicants and their agents play their part in fulfilling this commitment during the preparation of their proposals. **The planning system is 'plan-led' with planning applications determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material consideration indicate otherwise.**
- 6.2 Although community involvement is not a mandatory requirement when submitting a planning application, the Council, backed by national guidance, believes that genuine engagement with the surrounding community before the submission of a formal application can be beneficial for all those involved. Officers in the Planning Services Unit encourage developers to have pre-application discussions with them. Officers can advise on whether proposals would benefit from community involvement and if so how it might be carried out through consultation and preparing a Record of Community Involvement (See Sections 7 and 8). Small-scale proposals such as house extensions or advertisements will not require community involvement
- 6.3 Section 9, sets out the Council's role in involving the community when a planning application is received for determination.
- 6.4 A developer should start to consider community involvement as early as possible in the design of a scheme. Time should be set aside to allow for adequate community involvement in the overall programme of the development scheme.

What are the Benefits to the Developer of Community Involvement?

- 6.5 A genuine exercise can:
- Provide an opportunity to explain proposals before minds are made up on the basis of possibly inaccurate information;
 - Save time in obtaining a decision on a planning application;
 - Produce more certainty about the outcome;
 - Create a more sustainable and acceptable development;
 - Avoid appeals and call-in procedures.

Type of Developments that would Benefit from Community Involvement.

- 6.6 A developer should regard community involvement as an opportunity to explain and refine proposals rather than as a constraint on proposals. Local people are generally interested to learn about proposals they feel may affect them. People also realise there can be advantages to new development as well as disadvantages, e.g. more jobs, more facilities, improved environment. Consequently a range of proposals would benefit from community involvement. The following types of planning applications should be subject to community involvement:
- Large scale industrial and commercial development;
 - Large scale residential development;
 - Major new educational or institutional buildings;
 - Major infrastructure projects such as roads, pipelines or overhead power lines.
 - Smaller development on sensitive sites;
 - Changes of use of buildings or land for purposes which are likely to be controversial;
 - Developments where opportunities for community benefits may be available (e.g. the upgrading of a facility used by the community);

- Mineral extraction proposals; *
- Waste processing schemes. *

*In Chorley these matters are dealt with by Lancashire County Council.

Community Involvement in Planning Applications should also apply:

- where there are issues of scale and controversy, or are contrary to and/or are out of line with the Local Development Framework policy;
- where the application is broadly in accordance with the Local Development Framework but raises controversial issues or detail i.e. those that will require a Transport Assessment.

6.7 Small-scale proposals such as house extensions or advertisements will not require community involvement. However, applicants are encouraged to discuss their proposals with the occupiers of neighbouring property who will be affected and to take account of their concerns where possible. This can reduce the need for changes after the application has been submitted to the Council, increase the prospect of planning permission being granted and speed up the time taken for proposals to be dealt with.

7 WHAT ARE THE BEST WAYS OF INFORMING THE COMMUNITY ABOUT PROPOSALS?

7.1 Developers ~~should~~ **are encouraged to** incorporate community involvement into their development programme to allow for enough time to be devoted to involve the community in a particular scheme. Enlightened developers should regard community involvement as an opportunity to explain and refine their proposals rather than a constraint on their intention. **The Council will support ways to encourage consultation. At the pre-consultation stage the Council will accept as an option a pre-application consultation plan to be drawn up by the applicant with the Council based on an initial appraisal of the proposal. This could identify who is to be consulted, via what methods and a timescale which both the applicant and Council could work to. This would assist in the preparation of the Record of Community Involvement (See Section 8).**

7.2 Councillors for the relevant Borough Ward, where the proposal is to be sited, should be informed by applicants of proposals no later than the local community and preferably in advance. Larger development proposals may affect more than one Ward.

7.3 The options are:

- Arrange a meeting with relevant Ward Councillors;
- Circulate a letter and statement in the locality explaining proposals with plans or a diagram;
- Circulate a specially prepared leaflet;
- Arrange an exhibition and invite local people;
- Arrange a press release/advertisement in local newspapers;
- Arrange a public meeting;
- Arrange a meeting with particular groups in the community.

7.4 A developer should remember to:

- Have pre-application discussions with planning officers;
- Give adequate advance publicity to exhibitions, meetings or events;
- Keep a record of addresses written to and the information supplied;
- Keep a record of press advertisements, press releases and notices;
- Keep a record of all persons attending exhibitions and (if possible) meetings;

- Retain all comment slips filled in by people attending exhibitions or meetings.

8 **RECORD OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

8.1 A developer ~~should~~ **is encouraged to** provide a Record of Community Involvement to the Borough Council when submitting an application setting out those steps taken to engage the local community. The Record should indicate:

- The types of community involvement sought;
- Summary of responses received from the community;
- Minutes of public meetings
- Main points of objection;
- Other matters raised;
- Developer comments on the responses received;
- Amendments made to the proposed development as a result of community response.

8.2 A developer ~~should~~ **is encouraged to** also consider what effects the proposals have on the surrounding area. This should include:

• access arrangements	• effect on trees
• car parking	• nature conservation
• traffic generation	• protected species
• public right of way affected	• Listed buildings
• noise and disturbance	• Conservation Area
• use in unsocial hours	• scale of development
• odours	• height/mass of development
• disruption during construction	• attraction of crowds
• drainage problems	• pollution potential
• ground conditions	• effect on watercourse
• employment potential	• other significant effects
• underground/overhead utility infrastructure	• crime prevention

9 **HOW DOES THE COUNCIL INVOLVE THE COMMUNITY WHEN A PLANNING APPLICATION IS RECEIVED?**

9.1 **Statutory Consultation.** The Council has a list of bodies that may need to be consulted on a planning application. Not all bodies are consulted on each application. Who is consulted will vary with the type of proposal and location. Statutory consultees (those organisations which the Council have to contact) have 21 days in which to respond.

9.2 **Wider Community.** The Planning Services Unit sends a weekly list of applications to a local newspaper - the Chorley Guardian. Some applications are publicised in this newspaper but this is at the editor's discretion. Copies of the weekly list are also sent to Councillors. Interest groups who have requested the weekly list receive these free of charge. All Parish Councils receive two copies of the weekly list. The weekly list is available for viewing on the Council's website www.chorley.gov.uk/planning

9.3 The Council also place public notices in the Chorley Guardian referring to development proposals that are: a departure from the local development plan; a major application; development affecting a right of way; a planning application with an Environmental Statement; or a planning application affecting a listed building. Listed Building applications and Conservation Area consent applications are also advertised in the press. In addition a site notice is displayed.

9.4 **Individual Consultation.** This is in line with the Council's Code of Practice. Occupiers of neighbouring premises most likely to be affected by a proposal are notified individually by letter that an application has been received. They are invited to inspect the application and make any written observations within 21 days.

9.5 **Extent of Neighbour Notification.** As a general rule the adjoining occupiers to a proposal are notified. In practice, this means properties bordering an application site will receive individual notification of that application. Clearly, within a rural area there may be no neighbouring properties, so it is left to the case officer's judgement how far the neighbour notification should apply, but site notices are also used where appropriate. The Council will also display a site notice if it is unclear who owns the application site. In respect of large applications which may have an impact over a wide area – such a major road proposal – many residents will be consulted.

9.6 In respect of a Listed Building/Conservation Area application, in addition to a site notice and press notice, individual neighbour letters will be sent.

Involvement of the Community during the Processing of a Planning Application

9.7 Negotiation is a very important and a crucial part of the process of determining a planning application. The aim is steering development towards a more acceptable form and therefore acting in a positive manner. This dialogue between planning officers and developers/professional advisors is something that the Government and this Council actively encourages.

9.8 Certain proposals will generate much public interest and may result in many letters of objection. Where amendments are made that make changes to the description of the proposal the case planning officer will re-consult the Parish Council, statutory consultees and any neighbours. Bearing in the mind the Government's expectation that applications should be decided in as short a time as possible a reduced response time to re-notification may be set (normally between 10-14 days). Significant amendments negotiated on Listed Building applications, or applications within Conservation Areas are re-advertised. No re-advertisement would normally take place on minor amendments. Essentially re-notification is at the discretion of the case officer within the above framework.

Involvement of the Community After a Decision is Taken on a Planning Application.

9.9 **Wider Community:** A letter is sent to any Parish Council who wrote in, to advise them of the decision on the planning application (whether or not it was determined by officers under delegated powers or at a Committee of Councillors). Any local interest groups who made comments at the planning application stage are also advised by letter of the decision. All planning decisions are published on the Council's website.

9.10 **Individual Notification:** All neighbours who wrote in are advised in writing of the decision on the planning application.

9.11 If an appeal is lodged against refusal of permission the Council will notify in writing all those involved in the original application and advise them of the process to be followed and the arrangements for sending in of any representations.

9.12 **The Council's Website link – Public Access for Planning – provides details of current planning applications. You can follow the progress of an application, make a comment, search a weekly list of applications and decisions, view historic applications and view property details including maps.**

10 RESOURCES AND MANAGEMENT

- 10.1 A realistic approach to community involvement must reflect the resources available to the Council for involving the community in development plan proposals. The availability of resources will have a bearing on the scale and methods of consultation the Council carries out. Consideration will therefore be given to staff capacity, timescale, budgets and accommodation.
- 10.2 The Council recognises the risks to delivery of the documents in the timescales set out in the Local Development Scheme due to the size of the staff resource. However it is committed to achieving the targets it has set itself and believes they are realistic.
- 10.3 Preparation of the Local Development Documents will be undertaken primarily by the 7 existing planning policy staff. However should the need arise there are sufficient financial resources available to cover the costs of external assistance in the form of studies. In addition staff members are working closely with colleagues and partners to adopt a positive approach to involving external groups and individuals. Existing networks linked to other plans and strategies such as the Community Strategy are well utilised. A number of officers have also been trained in and utilised public engagement and participation skills (known as "facilitation skills"), including the design and management of stakeholder consultation events.
- 10.4 The Council has a budget to support the requirements identified in the Local Development Scheme including resources to hire premises to hold exhibitions, workshops, focus groups and meetings; publicity including statutory notices; and costs associated with statutory procedures prior to adoption e.g. public examination costs, independent Inspector's fees and legal costs. The Council has a choice in range and size of public and private venues that it can hire for community consultation events.
- 10.5 The Council has used its Planning Delivery Grant to increase investment in the planning service in terms of additional staff. The Development Control Section has recently been expanded to have the capacity required to deal with an increased level of planning applications. It is considered that the requirement for consultation on planning applications will be met by the 10 existing development control staff and financial resources available.
- 11 FEEDBACK
- 11.1 Feedback is a vital part of any consultation process. It enables people to see how their view has been taken into account and what has happened as a result. Participants need to know that they have been listened to, and that consultation has made an effective contribution, if they are to have confidence in the process and a willingness to take part in future initiatives.
- 11.2 Acknowledgements will be sent to all those submitting formal representations, giving details of subsequent stages and dates of preparation where known. The Council will aim to respond to any general queries raised in relation to the document preparation process.
- 11.3 Following each period of consultation on any Local Development Document, the Council will prepare a "Responses Report" which will set out the comments received, the Council's consideration of the comments and whether any change is required as a result of the comment. It is envisaged that the response will be reported to Executive Cabinet. The Report will be published on the Council's

website. Those who have submitted a formal representation will be notified of the Council's response to their particular comments."

12 EVALUATING THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

12.1 The consultation process for the preparation of Local Development Documents will be subject to ongoing monitoring and evaluating that will consider:

- what was done to engage stakeholders in terms of consultation processes and resources;
- what was achieved;
- what has happened as a result of consultation.

12.2 The Council's staff and members, those participating in face-to-face stakeholder events and a sample of those responding to consultation through other means will be invited to provide feedback and make any suggestions for improvement.

12.3 This information will help to inform and review future participating processes in respect of the Local Development Framework and consultation on planning applications.

Note: This glossary is not in alphabetical order.

Local Development Framework A non-statutory term for the various inter-related Local Development Documents, which will comprise the Framework. The new system is designed to allow authorities to decide which combination of documents best suits their circumstances. The ability to produce various documents rather than one plan should make it easier to keep policies and proposals up to date.

Regional Spatial Strategy **Sets out the region’s policies in relation to the development and use of land and forms part of the Development Plan for the Borough. The North West Regional Assembly, as the region’s regional planning body, is responsible for preparing the Regional Spatial Strategy**

Spatial Planning Approach Local Development Frameworks will be spatial rather than purely land use plans. Traditionally, the land use planning system has focused upon the regulation and control of the use of land. The aim is to go beyond this, to take account of the strategies and plans of other agencies not traditionally involved in the land use planning system but who also have an impact on how sites and buildings are used.

Local Development Scheme A public statement identifying which documents will be produced, in what order and when over a three year rolling programme. It will also identify whether existing Local Plan policies will be merged together, replaced or deleted, over time.

Statement of Community Involvement A Statement, which explains to local communities and organisations how they can be involved in the preparation and revision of Local Development Documents, and consideration of planning applications. It also identifies the steps the authority will take to help enable this involvement. The Statement of Community Involvement is not a Development Plan Document.

Development Plan Documents They are the key documents within a Local Development Framework as they have development plan status. As such they will be subject to extensive community involvement, sustainability appraisal and independent examination.

Development Plan Documents include:

- A core strategy;
- Site specific allocations;
- Area action plans (where needed);

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- Other development plan documents;
- A proposals map

Local Development Documents

There are two types:

- Development Plan Documents
- Supplementary Planning Documents

Supplementary Planning Documents

They are documents, which expand upon policy or provide further implementation details to policies in the Development Plan Documents. They do not have development plan status and are not subject to independent examination. They will be subject to rigorous procedures of community involvement and sustainability appraisal. They can include design guides, site development briefs, or topic-based documents. They cannot be used to allocate land or contain policies that should be subject to independent examination.

Core Strategy

Sets out the key elements of the planning framework for the area. It should comprise a spatial vision and strategic objectives for the area; a spatial strategy; core policies and a monitoring and implementation framework. It should include clear objectives for achieving delivery. It must be kept up to date and all other Development Plan Documents must be in conformity with it.

Site Specific Allocations

The allocation of land for specific uses (including mixed uses) must be set out in a Development Plan Document. It will allow an authority to update allocations in light of changes to other Local Development Documents or implementation on the ground. Site allocations should not form part of the Core Strategy.

Area Action Plans

Prepared to provide the planning framework for areas where significant change or conservation is needed. A key feature will be the focus on implementation. They should:

- Deliver planned growth areas;
- Stimulate regeneration;
- Protect areas particularly sensitive to change;
- Resolve conflicting objectives in areas subject to development pressures; or
- Focus the delivery of area based regeneration initiatives.

Adopted Proposals Map

A map, at a registered scale, that illustrates all the policies contained in the Development Plan Documents that are specific to areas on the ground. The adopted Proposals Map has the status of a separate Development Plan Document, which must be revised as each new Development Plan Document is adopted.

Front-Loading

This is more active involvement of community, organisations and commercial interests earlier in the plan preparation process than has traditionally occurred. The aim is to seek consensus on essential issues. It also offers people and organisations a greater opportunity to influence plan content by sharing their knowledge and views with planners.

Sustainability Appraisal

This is a tool for appraising the social, environmental and economic effects of plan strategies and policies from the outset of the preparation process. This ensures that decisions are made that accord with sustainable development objectives. It incorporates the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

This is the process of evaluating the environmental impacts of proposed policies, plans and programmes as required by European Directive 2001/42/EC. It is incorporated into the Sustainability Appraisal.

Saved Policies or Plans

Existing adopted development plans are automatically saved for three years from the date of the commencement of the Act (28 September 2004). Any policies in old style development plans adopted after this date will become saved policies for three years from their adoption or approval. During this three-year period local planning authorities should aim to bring forward Local Development Documents to replace saved policies in accordance with the Local Development Scheme. However some policies may be saved for longer than three years to allow relevant Development Plan Documents to be completed and adopted.

BROAD LIST OF CONSULTEES

Appendix 2

Any person or organisation that wishes to be notified when Local Development Framework documents are under consideration may request to be placed on a database of consultees by contacting the Planning Policy Section. The following types of organisations are held on this database:

Elected Representatives

Member for Parliament
County Councillors

District Councillors
Parish Councils

Government and Related Agencies and Partnerships

North West Regional Assembly
Government Office for the North West
Northwest Regional Development Agency
Lancashire County Council (various departments)
Adjoining District/Metropolitan Councils
Police and other emergency services
Environment Agency
Countryside Agency
Health Providers/Primary Care Trust
Higher Education Institutions
Highway Agency
HM Inspector of Health and Safety (Explosives)

English Partnerships
English Nature
English Heritage
Health Authority
Sport England
Schools and Colleges
Department of Employment
HM Prison Service
Strategic Rail Authority
British Waterways
Ministry of Defence
Department of Trade and Industry

Communities/Residents

Residents Associations, local and adjacent areas
Residents Associations, general area

Voluntary Sector

Social housing providers
Community transport providers
CVS
Wildlife trusts and societies
Civic Society
Disability Groups
Faith bodies
Elderly person's groups
Pre school providers

Racial Equality Council
Transport 2000
Sport organisations/groups
Environmental organisations/groups
Mental health groups
Ethnic organisations
Womens' groups
Youth Groups

Other Consultees

Water Company
Electricity, gas and telecom providers
National Grid Company
~~Council~~ **Campaign** for the Protection of Rural England
Coal Authority
Bus companies
Friends of the Earth
National and local businesses/companies
The House Builders Federation
Local/area papers and radio etc
The Gypsy Council

Commission for Racial Equality
Rail companies
National Playing Fields Association
Chambers of commerce
National and local house builders
Planning consultants
Professional associations
Members of the Citizens Panel
Estate Agents and developers
Church Commissioners
Travellers Association

Landowners and major land users, including farmers

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**SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT
PLANNING DELEGATION- AMENDMENT TO THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION**

Background

Part 8 of the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 gives powers to local authorities to deal with complaints regarding high hedges.

The Local Government (Functions & Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 have been amended. Under these regulations the responsibility for all functions relating to high hedges rests with Council.

Accordingly, the Constitution needs to be amended to reflect these new powers.

It is therefore proposed that the following wording be inserted into:

Appendix 2 Part I Miscellaneous Functions

"47A Powers relating to complaints about high hedges Part 8 of the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003.

It is also necessary to allocate these functions to a Committee. It is therefore proposed that these powers be delegated by Council to Development Control Committee.

It is therefore proposed that the following wording be inserted into Appendix 2 Part B in paragraph 2 below the Development Control Committee heading.

(d) powers relating to complaints about high hedges.

It is proposed that the Head of Planning Services be given delegated powers to deal with complaints about high hedges except for setting the fee level, which will remain the responsibility of the Development Control Committee.

It is therefore proposed that the existing wording of paragraph 9.12 Appendix 2 which states " Authority to serve a remedial notice in respect of high hedges under section 69 of the Anti- Social Behaviour Act 2003 " be deleted and replaced with the following ;

" Authority to exercise all powers (except for setting fee levels) under Part 8 of the Anti- Social behaviour Act 2003 in relation to complaints relating to high hedges."

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Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Legal Services (Introduced by the Executive Member for Traffic and Transportation)	Executive Cabinet	30/06/05

PERCY STREET, CHORLEY – PROPOSED STOPPING UP, SECTION 116, THE HIGHWAYS ACT 1980

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To consider a proposal for the stopping up, i.e. permanent extinguishment as a highway of Percy Street, Chorley.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

2. The report does not affect any corporate priorities.

RISK ISSUES

3. The report contains no risk issues for consideration by Members.

BACKGROUND

4. Percy Street, Chorley, is an unclassified road, that leads off the west side of King Street and forms a cul de sac. The street is a publicly adopted highway, comprising a two-lane carriageway, flanked on either side by footways, and runs in a north westerly direction to terminate in the form of a cul de sac. The street is adjoined on both sides by the premises of the former Employment Training Group (on the south side by an enclosed play area, a prefabricated office building and highway landscaping, and on the north side by offices and a private car park. There are no vehicular accesses leading off the street.
5. The entire former Employment Training Group (ETG) site is within the ownership of the Council. Since the winding up of the ETG in November 2003, the offices have been used by the Council for temporary accommodation purposes. However, this use is shortly to cease and the Council has no further plans to use the site for office or any other purposes. In the circumstances therefore the Council proposes to offer the site as whole for sale and redevelopment.
6. Percy Street in its present form simply serves to bisect the former ETG/King Street offices site into two halves. The only other frontager is a retail/electrical company occupying a property fronting the by-pass, the flank (side) frontage boundary wall of whose car park adjoins a small length of the north side of the street at the head (termination) of the street. Opposite this car park on the other side of the street is a landscaped area of highway land. Thus, if the street were stopped up, the land on which street sits would revert to the adjoining landowners, principally the Council, albeit with a small area reverting to the above mentioned company and possibly also to Lancashire County Council.

Continued....



7. Although Percy Street serves no wider purpose for vehicular use other than to provide a facility for roadside parking, the adjoining footways (pavements) form a pedestrian through route from King Street through to the Town Centre By-pass. In this respect, however, it may be noted that King Street itself has a junction with the Town Centre By-pass only a few metres away from Percy Street. The existence of this pedestrian route in such close proximity to Percy Street, means that the pedestrian route by way of Percy Street provides arguably little more than a duplicate facility in this regard and may therefore be considered unnecessary.

STATUTORY POSITION AND STATUTORY UNDERTAKERS

8. Section 116 of the Highways Act 1980 provides that a highway may be stopped up if a highway authority consider the highway is “unnecessary.” The actual power to authorise the stopping up of a highway is, however, actually vested in the Magistrate’s Court and thus a local authority wishing to pursue a stopping up proposal must make application to the Court. Clearly as this Council is not a highway authority, then the first preliminary step would in fact be to obtain the consent of Lancashire County Council to the proposal.
9. On receipt of the County Council consent, the procedure governing the stopping up highways, as set down by the provisions of Section 116, the Highways Act 1980, further requires that public notice of the proposal be published in the local press and in the London Gazette, giving the public at large the opportunity to submit an objection. At the same time, local authorities are formally required by Schedule 12, Part I of the Highways Act, 1980 to consult with statutory undertakers (electricity, gas, water, telecom etc) on the basis that the latter might have apparatus sited on, in or above the length of highway in question and thus would have a material interest in the matter.
10. The various service apparatus normally to be found in, on or over highways, is sited there simply by virtue of the fact that the land concerned possesses the status of highway. This enables such service apparatus to be sited in, on or over the land without having to obtain any permission from or pay any rental to a landowner, and likewise to access the apparatus without need for permission or payment of a fee. The stopping up of a highway means that the surface of the highway itself and the land on which it sits revert to private ownership, normally to the nearest adjoining landowner/s. Thus, once the land concerned becomes private land, statutory undertakers no longer have the assured right to place or maintain service apparatus in the land as previously. Accordingly, when a road is stopped up statutory undertakers can opt to remove their apparatus and recharge the cost of this to the local authority (Schedule 12, Part II of the Highways Act, 1980).

APPRAISAL

11. It is normally standard practice to obtain a formal undertaking from the person/body requesting the stopping up of a highway to the effect that the latter will cover all the costs entailed in bringing the stopping up into being. However, in this instance, it is the Council itself that is pursuing the above course of action. cursory inspection of the street shows the presence of a large sewer manhole cover and a small hydrant type cover. Consultations with statutory undertakers will reveal the extent to which the street serves as a conduit for the siting of service apparatus. However, given that it is the hope that the site of the “King Street” offices, situated either side of Percy Street, may be redeveloped, the presence of services in the area of highway to be stopped up and a potential for the removal of the those services with the costs this may entail, will have to be borne in mind. Should it transpire that statutory undertakers choose to remove their apparatus from Percy Street and recharge the cost to the Council, then I shall present a further report on this before proceeding with an attempt to secure the requisite Court Order for the stopping up of the street.

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

12. There are no comments from the Director of Finance.

COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES

13. There are no comments from the Head of Human Resources.

RECOMMENDATION

14. That subject to the consent of Lancashire County Council, the making of a Court Order be pursued for the stopping up of Percy Street, Chorley, running from its junction with King Street, Chorley, in a westerly direction for its entire length to the termination of the street.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

15. Percy Street is in the form of a cul de sac. It is flanked on both sides by offices and has little residual use as a highway. It is not a vehicular through route and serves mainly as parking facility during the day for vehicles associated with the use of the "King Street" offices. At other times there is little if any other vehicular use. The street serves as a pedestrian route, however, there is a nearby alternative route, i.e. out of King Street onto the town centre by-pass and thus the stopping up of Percy Street would not unduly prejudice pedestrian movements in the area. Thus the retention of Percy Street for highway purposes is considered unnecessary.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

16. The only alternative option in dealing with the status of Percy Street as a public highway would be to take no action, thereby leaving Percy Street in being as a public highway.

ROSEMARY A LYON
DIRECTOR OF LEGAL SERVICES

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
G Fong	5169	20 June 2005	LEGALREP

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Report of	Meeting	Date
Director Of Legal Services (Introduced by the Executive Member for Transport and Transportation)	Executive Cabinet	30/06/05

TEMPLE WAY, CHORLEY – PROPOSED STOPPING UP, SECTION 116, THE HIGHWAYS ACT 1980

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To consider a request for the stopping up, i.e. permanent extinguishment as public highway of Temple Way, Chorley.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

2. The report does not affect any corporate priorities.

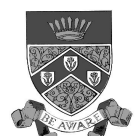
RISK ISSUES

3. The report contains no risk issues for consideration by Members.

BACKGROUND

4. Temple Way, Chorley, is an unclassified road, that leads off the north side of that length of Millenium Way (A.674), which links Preston Road (A.6) at Hartwood roundabout with Junction 8 of the M.61, and runs in a northerly direction for a distance of 120 metres to the entrance of the Mormon Temple. The road is a publicly adopted highway, comprising a two-lane carriageway, flanked on either side by footways. The sole function of the road is to provide access to the Temple site.
5. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints has submitted a formal request, asking that the Council initiate the requisite statutory procedures to stop up, i.e. permanently extinguish Temple Way as a public highway.
6. It may be noted that the land to the east of the Temple complex is undeveloped and of open aspect. Originally this area was held in a different ownership and outline planning permission had been granted for the building of offices and a hotel. This was why Temple Way was originally put forward for adoption as a public highway, since at that time it was envisaged that the said highway might well serve more than one development/user. The Church, however, subsequently acquired this area and the above proposals have thus fallen into abeyance. It may be observed that the Church could potentially at some time in the future advance proposals of its own for the development of this land. Should such proposals be for development unrelated to the Temple, then the question would arise as to how highway access to such a development would be gained. Thus it has been pointed out to the Church that, should a subsequent proposal for development transpire in relation to the currently undeveloped area of land east of the Temple complex, it is unlikely that the creation of a second highway access off the A.674 would be countenanced to serve such new development. In response the Church have stated

Continued....



that it is their intention that the eastern half of the site should serve permanently as only a landscaped area to compliment the Temple development.

7. Given that the impetus for pursuing the stopping up of the road concerned derives, at least in part, from a desire to control the unforeseen and unsuitable level of vehicular parking that on occasion takes place along the road, it is possible that the Church may decide to erect some form of control/barrier to regulate entry into the stopped up length of highway. Accordingly, the Church have been advised that If such a measure were to be implemented, then the Council would want to be satisfied that the nature of any control/barrier would have to be such as not give rise to road safety problems, e.g., by placing a barrier so close to Temple Way's junction with the A.674 so as to prevent vehicles fully executing a turn off the main highway. The Council would also want to ensure that any structure erected conformed with Planning regulations.

STATUTORY POSITION AND STATUTORY UNDERTAKERS

8. Section 116 of the Highways Act 1980 provides that a highway may be stopped up if a highway authority considers the highway is "unnecessary." The actual power to authorise the stopping up of a highway is, however, actually vested in the Magistrate's Court and thus a local authority wishing to pursue a stopping up proposal must make application to the Court. Clearly as this Council is not a highway authority, then the first preliminary step would in fact be to obtain the consent of Lancashire County Council to the proposal.
9. On receipt of the County Council consent, the procedure governing the stopping up highways, as set down by the provisions of Section 116, the Highways Act 1980, further requires that public notice of the proposal be published in the local press and in the London Gazette, giving the public at large the opportunity to submit an objection. At the same time, local authorities are formally required by Schedule 12, Part I of the Highways Act, 1980 to consult with statutory undertakers (electricity, gas, water, telecom etc) on the basis that the latter might have apparatus sited on, in or above the length of highway in question and thus would have a material interest in the matter.
10. The various types of service apparatus normally to be found under highways, is sited there simply by virtue of the fact that the land concerned possesses the status of highway. This enables the service apparatus concerned to be sited in, on or over the land without having to obtain any permission from or pay any rental to a landowner, and likewise to access the apparatus without need for permission or payment of a fee. The stopping up of a highway means that the surface of the highway itself and the land on which it sits revert to private ownership, normally to the nearest adjoining landowner/s. Thus, once the land concerned becomes private land, statutory undertakers no longer have the assured right to place or maintain service apparatus in the land as previously. Accordingly, when a road is stopped up statutory undertakers can opt to remove their apparatus and recharge the cost of this to the local authority (Schedule 12, Part II of the Highways Act, 1980).
11. Accordingly, given that the stopping up of highways often takes place at the behest of a private interest, then it is standard practice to obtain a formal undertaking from the applicant that they not only cover the costs involved in obtaining the Court Order, but also meet any such cost as may arise from statutory undertakers exercising their right to remove service apparatus affected as a result.

APPRAISAL

12. Temple Way serves only to provide vehicular and pedestrian access to the Mormon Temple and its associated complex of buildings. Its has come to be used on an opportunistic basis by the public at large for parking purposes. It was never intended that the road should be used for on-street parking and such practice causes obstruction to traffic travelling to and from the Temple complex. The situation could be treated by way imposing a prohibition on vehicular parking, however this would require the provision of

signing and carriageway markings, and would create a necessity for monitoring and enforcement in what is otherwise a relatively remote location. Given that the road has no use other than to serve in essence as a private driveway to the Temple complex, the stopping up of the highway concerned would have no impact on highway usage generally.

COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES

13. There are no comments from the Head of Resources.

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

14. There are no comments from the Director of Finance.

RECOMMENDATION

15. That subject to the consent of Lancashire County Council, and the agreement of the applicant to meet all the costs involved, the Council pursue the making of a Court Order for the stopping up of Temple Way, Chorley, running from the back edge of the highway boundary on the north side of Millenium Way in a northerly direction for its entire length to the entrance leading into the Temple grounds.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

16. Temple Way serves exclusively as an access road to the Mormon Temple. Its use as a parking facility by members of the public at large was never envisaged and such practice is detrimental to the safe and effective functioning of the road as the sole means of access to and from the Temple complex. The stopping up of the highway concerned would have no impact on highway usage generally.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

17. The only alternative options in dealing with this request would have been either to impose some form of vehicular waiting prohibition on the road with the attendant requirement to lay down and maintain carriageway markings and erect the accompanying poles and plates on which the nature the prohibition would be specified, and thereafter devote resources to the monitoring and enforcement of the prohibition, or to refuse to pursue the making of the requisite Court Order, thereby leaving the situation as it is.

ROSEMARY A LYON
DIRECTOR OF LEGAL SERVICES

Background Papers			
Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
Letter from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints	23 May 2003	2903	Legal Services, The Coach House, Duxbury
	17 February 2005		

Report Author	Doc ID
G Fong	LEGALREP

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Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Legal Services (Introduced by Executive Member for Traffic and Transportation)	Executive Cabinet	30/06/05

CROSSE HALL LANE, CHORLEY – PROPOSED SCHEME OF PRIVATE STREET WORKS

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To consider a proposal to approve the implementation of a private street works scheme in respect of a length of Crosse Hall Lane, Chorley.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

2. The report does not affect any corporate priorities.

RISK ISSUES

3. The report contains no risk issues for consideration by Members.

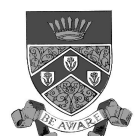
BACKGROUND

4. Crosse Hall Lane, leads off the east side of Eaves Lane, running in an easterly direction to the Leeds and Liverpool Canal and beyond on to the moors, where it terminates on the approaches to White Farm. The route is of longstanding, dating back to at least the late 18th Century. Although some development has occurred in recent years in the area between the canal and the M.61 Motorway, the material and legal status of the lane has not altered throughout all this period. It remains an unadopted highway and is poorly surfaced. A public right of way subsists along the surface of the lane, i.e. Bridleway No. 13.
5. Morris Homes Ltd have acquired a large area of land bounded by the Leeds - Liverpool Canal on the west and the M.61 Motorway on the east, and by Froom Street on the north and Crosse Hall Lane on the south. The site is allocated for residential development under the Local Plan and the aforesaid have been granted planning permission for the construction of some 160 houses on the site.

ACCESS TO DEVELOPMENT SITE

6. It is intended that access to and from the above site should be obtained by way of an access road linking the southern end of the site to Crosse Hall Lane. The access road would run from the south-western corner of site in a westerly direction, across a bridge to be constructed spanning the Leeds – Liverpool Canal and thence across a parcel of undeveloped land to connect with the northern side of Crosse Hall Lane. It is further

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intended that Crosse Hall Lane would in turn serve as the main vehicular access between the between the aforesaid access road and its junction with Eaves Lane.

7. Crosse Hall Lane is however, an unadopted highway despite its being a route of long-standing. A public right of way runs along the lane – Bridleway No. 13 – from Eaves Lane down to the Canal, but otherwise the lane has simply the status of a private road. Thus, while horse-riders and pedestrians may exercise a public right of passage along the lane, the right to use the lane as vehicular route is strictly speaking exercisable only by adjoining land-owners or their invitees. Its unadopted nature also, of course, means that the road is only poorly surfaced and lacks any form of highway lighting, drains or footways (pavements). If, therefore, the above length of Crosse Hall Lane is to serve as a conduit for through vehicular traffic between Eaves Lane and the new access road leading to the proposed housing development, then the lane clearly needs to be brought up to a satisfactory standard of construction.

LEGAL ISSUES AND OPTIONS

8. Normally upgrading an unadopted road to adaptable standard would be achieved by way of formal agreement made under Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980 between the developer concerned and the Council. However, Section 38 Agreements are made on the basis that the developer owns the land on which the road is to be built and thus has the ability to dedicate the road so constructed for adoption. The normal presumption in law is that the adjoining landowner/s own the sub-soil on which the highway stands to the halfway point of the highway, their right to exercise any form of meaningful control or ownership being in abeyance because of the presence of the highway. In this instance, the adjoining landowners do not own land on which the highway sits, their ownership in all cases does not go beyond the highway boundary. Crosse Hall Lane is thus in unknown ownership and because of this, it means the road cannot be made up by the developer in pursuance of a section 38 Agreement.
9. Clearly if the new housing development is to proceed, then this issue needs to be resolved. Two options present themselves: (a) to compulsorily purchase the land on which the highway stands or (b) to proceed by way of a private street works scheme. Pursuing a compulsory purchase scheme would inevitably involve a somewhat lengthy process, although if successful, it would resolve the issue. Implementation of a private street works scheme, though like the CPO process subject public objection, offers an arguably speedier solution, albeit while in itself raising a number of issues.
10. The essence of the problem is that the lane is in unknown ownership. Thus, while local authorities have the power under Section 228 of the Highways Act 1980 to execute works in a private street and then have the street adopted as a highway maintainable at public expense thereafter, this usually takes place against a background where the hitherto private road is in known ownership and some form a agreement has been reached with the owner concerned. Furthermore, in this instance it is intended that a body other than the local authority, i.e. Morris Homes Ltd, would carry out the necessary works.
11. The County Council in its capacity as Highway Authority have been consulted as to their views on the acceptability of using the private street works code to effect the making up and adoption of the length of Crosse Hall Lane concerned in the absence of a known owner and by a party other than the Council. The County Council are of the view that pursuant to Section 228(7), the Highways Act 1980, street works may, in some, cases, be carried out by a person or body other than the authority itself. Thus, if the conditions set out in Section 228(1)-(4) of the Act could be met, Crosse Hall Lane, having been brought up to adoptable standard, ought to be able to be adopted without a dedication from an owner. Publication of the proposal in the press and the posting of notice on site would afford an opportunity for persons to come forward and present claim of ownership.

12. However a further difficulty arises as regards the legal status of the lane because of the presence of the bridleway, which is publicly maintainable. Section 203 of the Act defines a private street as a "street that is not a highway maintainable at public expense." Research into the matter by the County Council indicates that as Crosse Hall Lane was an unadopted bridleway-cum-occupation road prior to the passing the National Parks and Countryside Act 1949, which made the bridleway publicly maintainable, then its pre-1949 status as a private street was not affected and thus a private street works scheme could be implemented pursuant to the Private Street Works Code embodied in Sections 205 to 218 of the Act. There is, however, something of a disjunction between the powers embodied in Sections 205-218 and Section 228 of the Act, since the presence of the bridleway though not an obstacle to the exercise of the powers under Sections 205-218, could arguably militate against the exercise of the powers in Section 228. Thus it could be argued the effect of the bridleway is to remove the status of the private street from the lane for the purpose of Section 228 of Act.
13. The County Council on detailed consideration of this issue argue that as Crosse Hall Lane is a private street for the purposes Sections 205-218, then clearly works could be implemented in the street. The reference to a "private street" in Section 228 is to street works having been carried out in a private street, which if they were carried out under Section 205-218, they would have been. Since Section 228 does not thereafter use the words "private street" but only the word "street" it is therefore possible to argue that the pre-eminent factor is the ability to proceed with the works under Sections 205-218 and that because of the pre-1949 status of the lane, there is no clear conflict with the provisions of section 228.
14. If the interpretation above is accepted, then the Council has the option of considering a proposal from Morris Homes Ltd, namely that the latter draw up and submit a schme of private street works for the making up to adoptable standard of a length of Crosse Hall Lane situated between its junction with Eaves Lane and the point where the proposed new access road is to join its north side and lead off to the new development.

PROCEEDING WITH A PRIVATE STREET WORKS SCHEME

15. The commission of private street works schemes involves a two-stage process. Before proceeding to approve a specific scheme of private street works, Councils are required in the first instance to declare themselves satisfied that the road forming the subject of the scheme is in an unsatisfactory condition and that the Council is therefore of the view that a scheme for its making up should be prepared for formal consideration at a future date. In this instance, it is plainly evident that Crosse Hall Lane is in condition that falls far short of any form of adoptable standard, being poorly surfaced and lacking any proper system of drainage or street lighting and that the only way of remedying this by way of a scheme of private street works.

COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES

16. There are no comments from the Head of Human Resources.

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

17. There are no comments from the Director of Finance

RECOMMENDATIONS

18. That whereas that length of Cross Hall Lane, Chorley, situate between its junction with Eaves Lane and the point at which the proposed new access road is to join the north side of Cross Hall Lane (a distance of approximately 135 metres) is not to the satisfaction of the Council (in its capacity as street works authority for the area) sewered, levelled, paved, mettalled, flagged, channelled, made good and lighted, it be resolved that plans

and specifications of works together with an estimate of cost and a provisional apportionment of those costs be accordingly prepared in respect of a scheme for the making up of the above length of highway and be presented to a future meeting of the Executive Cabinet for formal consideration.

19. Crosse Hall Lane, Chorley is an unadopted road, in a poorly surfaced condition and lacking any proper system of highway drainage or street lighting. The prospect of new housing development on a site in close vicinity to the road, means Crosse Hall is set to serve as the sole means of highway access to and from that new development. Clearly Crosse Hall Lane in its current material condition could not in any way satisfactorily serve in such a role and the only way of upgrading the length of road concerned to a satisfactory highway standard is by way of commissioning a scheme of private street works pursuant to the provisions of the Highways Act 1980.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

20. The other alternatives available for facilitating the making up of Crosse Hall Lane, e.g. an agreement pursuant to the provisions of Section 31, Section 38 or Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980, are contingent upon landownership and therefore cannot be applied in this instance.

ROSEMARY A LYON
DIRECTOR OF LEGAL SERVICES

Background Papers			
Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
Letter from Lancashire County Council	23 November 2004	2470	Legal Services, The Coach House, Duxbury
Letters from Morris Homes (North) Ltd	23 November 2004 29 November 2004 7 March 2005 21 March 2005		

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
G Fong	5169	17 June 2005	LEGALREP

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

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