

# Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel

**7 September 2005**

**Present:** Councillor Mrs Walsh (Chair) and Councillors Cullens, Mrs D Dickinson, M Lees, Malpas and Miss Molyneux

**Also in attendance:** Councillors D Gee (Executive Member for Traffic and Transportation)

## **05.CUS.41 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors E Smith, Russell and J Snape.

## **05.CUS.42 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS**

No interests were declared.

## **05.CUS.43 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED – That minutes of the meeting of the Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 6 July 2005 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.**

## **05.CUS.44 STANDARDS FOR BETTER HEALTH - DRAFT DECLARATION - CHORLEY AND SOUTH RIBBLE PRIMARY CARE TRUST**

The Panel welcomed the Director of Clinical Governance, Sally Fletcher and the Head of Clinical Governance, Glenn Mather from Chorley and South Ribble Primary Care Trust.

Sally Fletcher presented a report entitled "Assessment for Improvement/Standards for Better Health Update and Action Plan". This was an annual assessment of healthcare organisations set out by the Healthcare Commission. There were seven domains of Standards for Better Health, divided into 24 core and 13 developmental standards. Comments gathered from partners and a draft declaration would be submitted to the PCT Board meeting in October and that the final declaration would be made in April 2006.

Members considered the report, the Action Plan and the Guidance on the Assessment of Core Standards. In response to a query it was noted that several inspections had already taken place to monitor the implementation and progress made. This included evidence that strategies were being implemented, not just that a strategy was in existence.

The Panel discussed several points raised in the Action Plan, including MRSA and the quality of service versus costs. The benefits of engagement with local partners and Patient and Public Involvement Forums were noted.

### **RESOLVED –**

- 1. To thank the Director of Clinical Governance, Sally Fletcher and the Head of Clinical Governance, Glenn Mather from Chorley and South Ribble Primary Care Trust for their report and attendance,**
- 2. To note and support the "Assessment for Improvement/Standards for Better Health Update and Action Plan",**

3. **To invite the PCT to update the Panel prior to the final declaration in April.**

#### **05.CUS.45 ONE STOP SHOP INQUIRY UPDATE**

The Panel received a report from the Assistant Head of Customer Services reporting the actions taken following the One Stop Shop Inquiry recommendations presented to the Executive Cabinet in June 2004.

In response to a query the Assistant Head of Customer Services advised that a meeting was scheduled for late September with the Development Control Manager to discuss the recommendations made in relation to Planning Services.

Members noted that Human Resources were considering the recommendation with regard to training staff to use sign language on a corporate level. A further update would be brought to the Panel on this recommendation.

The Members supported the introduction of weekly surgeries with the Community Development Officer in partnership with Lancashire County Council.

The Chair congratulated all the Officers and Members on the "Excellent" rating in the recent Customer Access and Focus Best Value Inspection. The Council also received and "Excellent" for prospects for improvement. This was a unique result throughout the country.

**RESOLVED – That the update report be noted.**

#### **05.CUS.46 REVIEW OF RACE EQUALITY SCHEME**

The Panel received the report of the Head of Corporate and Policy Services informing Members of progress made by the Council towards the objectives set out in the Corporate Equalities Plan since the update given in July and to inform Members of the recent review of the relevance of council services to race, gender and disability.

The Panel discussed the report and queried several points. It was noted that training sessions for Members would be planned in September and October. A letter had been sent to all Members as part of the consultation process. Other groups being consulted were the Local Strategic Partnership and community groups.

**RESOLVED –**

1. **That the report be noted,**
2. **That an update on the timescales for the completion of the low priority function/policy be presented to a future meeting of the Panel.**

#### **05.CUS.47 DECRIMINALISATION OF PARKING ENFORCEMENT INQUIRY - COLLECTING EVIDENCE**

The Panel considered the following items as part of the collecting evidence stage of the ongoing Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement Inquiry.

- (a) **To discuss financial matters with the Accountant for DPE from Finance Unit**

This item was deferred to the next meeting with the consent of the Chair.

- (b) **To receive the report of the Sub-Groups held on 9 August 2005 and 17 August 2005**

The Panel considered the minutes of the two Sub-Groups held on 9 August and 17 August 2005.

The issue of Disabled Badge holders incorrectly displaying their badges was considered. This could be a security issue as if the photograph side of the badge was displayed it highlighted the fact that the person was not a home and therefore could be at risk from burglary. It was noted that there were instances of abuse of the Disabled Badges.

The Panel discussed drivers who parked in a selfish way, for example parking across two spaces. The number of these instances had reduced since the introduction of DPE.

Members noted that the number of PCN's/Car Park tickets sold was less than 1% from September 2004 and June 2005. The perception of the public that a larger number of people receiving PCN's than was actually the case needed to be addressed.

**RESOLVED –**

- 1. That the Panel highlight to the Department of Transport the lack of clear guidance on the side of the Disabled Badge that should be displayed,**
- 2. The perception of the public that a larger number of people receiving PCN's than was actually the case needed to be addressed.**

**(c) To consider the report Penalty Charge Notice Processing – An Overview**

The Panel received the report of the Parking Manager outlining the procedure for the processing of PCN's and the representation/adjudication process. A standard letter sent out when an appeal was successful was noted.

In response to a query the Members noted that the rate of successful debt recovery in other Local Authorities was around 70%.

**RESOLVED – That the report be noted.**

**(d) To consider articles summarising the Childs report and report by the University of Birmingham**

The Panel considered the articles "Wake up call for enforcers" and "Time to listen to some advice" regarding the recent Childs report and University of Birmingham research.

The Panel noted that a number of recommendations had been made geared towards changing the negative public perception of DPE. This perception was a national issue.

**RESOLVED – That the articles be noted.**

**(e) To consider Information relating to drivers with disabled badges**

The Panel considered the Blue Booklet given to drivers who received a disabled badge and a letter sent to a driver explaining why a PCN had been issued.

**RESOLVED – That the information be noted.**

**(f) To receive an example of a Penalty Charge Notice**

An example of a PCN was presented. The reason for the ticket to be issued, the penalty to be paid, instructions for payment and contact details for any queries were noted. The PA took a picture of the Pay and Display machine and the PCN placed on the vehicle in each instance.

**RESOLVED – That the example of a PCN be noted.**

**(g) To examine Parking Attendant beat information**

The Panel viewed the beat information for the Parking Attendants and noted that the Flat Iron Car Park appeared on two beats. In response to a query the Members were advised that if there were two PA's completing a beat together the second person would probably be either a supervisor or a PA receiving on the job training.

**RESOLVED – That the report be noted.**

**(h) To arrange dates and location for the proposed site visit**

Members discussed a venue for a site visit and noted that it was difficult to find a comparative authority to Chorley as other authorities with DPE were County or Unitary authorities. The Members expressed a wish to meet with the officers involved and if possible the Executive Member.

The Panel expressed a wish to visit an authority that had been operating DPE for a number of years to gain the benefits of their experience and any lessons learnt.

**RESOLVED – That a site visit be held in October and that the questions to be asked at the site visit be considered at the Panel meeting in October.**

**(i) To arrange dates and times for Councillors to visit the Parking Manager and view the computer system**

This item was deferred to the next meeting with the consent of the Chair.

**(j) To examine publicity information for the public**

Members considered draft leaflets entitled "Pavements are for People" and "Safer parking with your disabled badge". These would be used in certain situations were a driver had parked in an inconsiderate manner. It was noted that a Traffic Regulation Order needed to be in place for the PA to dispense a PCN.

The leaflets would be presented to the Disability Liaison Group and should be printed soon.

**RESOLVED – That the leaflets be noted and supported.**

**(k) To consider questions for the questionnaire to seek the views of the public, Councillors and Parish Councillors**

A questionnaire would be undertaken on behalf of the Panel, the questions to be asked were discussed:

1. The signs indicating parking restrictions are clearly visible and well maintained.
2. The regulations allowing loading and unloading of goods outside commercial premises are generally fair.
3. There is good provision of 'on-street' parking for residents without driveways and for their visitors.
4. The 'off-street' parking bay provision for people with disabilities is good.

5. The Parking Attendants are always around and about providing a visible deterrent against illegal parking.
6. The Parking Attendants provide effective enforcement cover for the outer and residential areas as well as the commercial area of the town.
7. The Parking Attendants are generally fair in their approach to parking enforcement.
8. The presence of the Parking Attendants around the town is generally helpful in providing assistance to people and in deterring crime.
9. The Parking Attendants are trustworthy and honest in their approach to the work of enforcing parking regulations.

**RESOLVED – That the draft questions be sent to the company compiling the questionnaire.**

**05.CUS.48 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

**RESOLVED - That the Work Programme be noted.**

**05.CUS.49 ANY OTHER ITEM(S) THAT THE CHAIR DECIDES IS/ARE URGENT**

With the consent of the Chair a Member of the Public who had attended the meeting discussed an incident of inconsiderate parking with the Panel.

Chair