
Chief Executive's Office

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Date: 5 September 2005

Chorley
Borough Council

Town Hall
Market Street
Chorley
Lancashire
PR7 1DP

Chief Executive:
Jeffrey W Davies MA LLM

Dear Councillor

A meeting of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel is to be held in the Committee Room, Town Hall, Chorley on Tuesday, 13th September, 2005 commencing at 6.30 pm.

AGENDA

1. **Apologies of Absence**
2. **Declarations of Any Interest**

Members of the Panel 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 Council Chamber and not seek to influence a decision on the matter.

3. **Minutes (Pages 1 - 4)**

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 5 July 2005 (enclosed).

4. **Public Participation in the Council's Decision Making Process - Scrutiny Inquiry**

- a) **To receive and consider the enclosed report of the Chief Executive on the background to the Inquiry and the proposals for the pilot Area Forums.** (Pages 5 - 18)

Continued....

b) Area Forums/Committees (Pages 19 - 28)

- To receive and consider the attached schedule compiled from the results of a recent survey of Lancashire Districts, which contains comparative information on the arrangements currently operated in 13 surrounding Districts.
- To receive a presentation from Mr D Cranshaw, Communications Manager with South Ribble Borough Council, on the operating arrangements and effectiveness of the 8 Area Committees operated within the Borough of South Ribble.

c) Public Speaking/Questions at Council/Committee meetings (Pages 29 - 34)

- To receive and consider the attached schedule compiled from the results of a recent survey of Lancashire Districts, which contains comparative information on the arrangements operated in 13 surrounding Districts.
- To receive a presentation from Mr D Cranshaw, Communications Manager with South Ribble Borough Council, on the arrangements operated by the Borough Council to allow the public to speak or ask questions at Council and Committee meetings.

There will be an opportunity for members of the Panel, at the conclusion of the presentations to question Mr Cranshaw on any aspects of the two issues.

d) Appointment of Sub-Groups

To consider the appointment of two Sub-Groups made up from the membership of the Panel to examine in depth the two distinct strands of the inquiry (ie Area Forums/Committees and Public Speaking/Questions at Council/ Committee meetings).

If appointed, the two Sub-Groups will need to meet soon to agree a work programme and timetable for their particular sphere of activity as identified in the inquiry project outline document. The Groups will each need to compile its own project plan, identify potential witnesses, select the Authorities it wishes to visit and agree, as far as possible, a timetable for future interviews and site visits.

5. **Scrutiny Inquiry into Juvenile Nuisance - Update Report** (Pages 35 - 40)

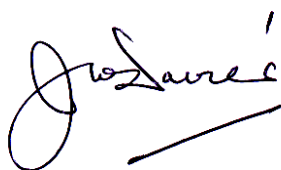
Report of Head of Corporate and Policy Services (enclosed).

6. **Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2005/06** (Pages 41 - 44)

A copy of the 2005/06 Work Programme is enclosed for consideration.

7. **Any other item(s) which the Chairman decides is/are urgent**

Yours sincerely



Chief Executive

Distribution

1. Agenda and reports to all Members of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Councillor Perks (Chair), Councillors Bedford, Birchall, Buckley, Brownlee, Culshaw, Mrs Gray, Morgan, Mrs Smith and Whittaker) for attendance.
2. Agenda and reports to Head of Customer, Democratic and Office Support Services, Head of Corporate and Policy Services, Assistant Head of Democratic Services and Community Safety Co-ordinator for attendance.
3. Agenda and reports to Executive Leader (Councillor J Wilson), Deputy Leader (Councillor Edgerley), Leader of Conservative Group (Councillor P Goldsworthy), Leader of Liberal Democrat Group (Councillor K Ball) and Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Councillor J Walker) for information.
4. Agenda and reports to all remaining Chief Officers for information.
5. Agenda to all remaining Members of the Council for information.

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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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COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL**5 JULY 2005**

Present: Councillor Perks (Chairman) and Councillors Bedford, Birchall, Brownlee, Culshaw, Mrs M Gray, Morgan and Mrs I Smith.

Also in attendance: Councillor Edgerley (Executive Member for Customer, Policy and Performance).

05.CoP.17 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal or prejudicial interests by members in any of the agenda items.

05.CoP.18 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 7 June 2005 were confirmed as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

05.CoP.19 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE COUNCIL'S POLITICAL DECISION-MAKING PROCESS - SCRUTINY INQUIRY

(a) Area Forum Working Group

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Edgerley (Executive Member for Customers, Policy and Performance) who had been invited to attend the meeting to report on the discussions at the meeting of the Area Forum Working Group held the previous day, 4 July 2005.

Councillor Edgerley reminded the Panel that, following the Executive Cabinets' acceptance of the adoption of the principle of some form of area based arrangements for engaging with local communities, the Working Group had been asked to consider and submit recommendations to the Executive Cabinet on the format, structure and geographical areas of the three pilot areas for the Area Forum pilot scheme to be implemented in accordance with the updated Corporate Improvement Plan.

The Working Group had discussed the issue in depth and, after taking account of all relevant factors, had agreed:

- to examine with appropriate partner bodies arrangements for the introduction of three pilot Area Forum schemes (each to be structured on a different basis) within the following three areas, with a view to detailed recommendations being submitted to the 29 September meeting of the Executive Cabinet:
 - (a) the Coppull Parish boundary area;
 - (b) a rural area of the Borough to be determined by Councillor Edgerley, following consideration of Officers' recommendations;
 - (c) Clayton Brook, within boundaries to be defined following consultation with the community groups operating in Clayton Brook;
- to request the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel, as part of its current inquiry, to examine the community engagement arrangements that are currently operated by selected Councils that have established either Area Forums or Committees, together with Councils that have adopted alternative methods of community engagement; and

- to request the Panel to invite the Working Group members on any visits the Panel choose to make to view other Authorities' working arrangements.

The Working Group had been aware that the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel's scrutiny inquiry into public participation in the Council's decision-making processes would take place in tandem with the Area Forum pilot schemes.

(b) Scrutiny Inquiry

The Chairman considered that two of the key objectives of the Panel's scrutiny inquiry should be to examine the differing processes and means of engaging with and encouraging the participation of the public as practiced by other Authorities and to make recommendations on the type of system(s) that would be most appropriate for introduction in Chorley.

The Panel members appreciated the importance of the outreach initiative, emphasising that it was imperative to ensure that all sectors of the community were allowed the opportunity to participate in the process and raise issues of concern to them. A number of Members also considered that the pilot schemes offered an opportunity to introduce innovative and empowering schemes.

The Panel could explore in depth other current models to examine how they had been constituted, how they were operated and how effective the arrangements had been in improving service delivery and access. The outcome of the investigations would, therefore, inform the ultimate recommendations on the systems but were most likely to be effective in Chorley.

(c) Inquiry Project Outline (Scoping Document)

The Panel had been provided with a copy of the Inquiry Project Outline form (Scoping document) that had been agreed at the 9 February, 2005 meeting.

The Panel's views were sought on whether or not it wished to re-examine and revise the scoping document, in the light of the current developments and proposals agreed by the Area Forum Working Group.

One of the terms of reference for the scrutiny inquiry was 'to investigate the provision of (1) Area Forums or Committees and (2) the introduction of public speaking at meetings of the Council on a trial basis and the administrative arrangements involved'. A motion to substitute the word 'and' for 'or' between the words 'Forums' and 'Committees' was defeated (3:4).

The Assistant Head of Democratic Services suggested that it might be useful, particularly for new Members of the Panel for a further discussion paper summarising past reports and recent developments to be presented to the next meeting.

Following a lengthy discussion on the issues surrounding the Panel's scrutiny inquiry, it was **AGREED**:

- (1) That the Inquiry Project Outline (Scoping Document) for the Panel's inquiry into Public Participation in the Council's Political Decision-making Process be re-affirmed, subject to the inclusion of 'Purpose of Forum/Committee' in the Key Issues to be addressed.

(2) That a discussion paper be submitted to the next Panel meeting setting out:

- a brief background note on the developments leading to the instigation of the scrutiny inquiry and a summary of the key issues to be addressed;
- any further developments and actions taken by the Area Forum Working Group on the proposed pilot schemes.
- a timetable for the Panel's projected visits to selected District Councils to view and examine their particular working arrangements for community engagement.

05.CoP.20 PROVISION OF YOUTH ACTIVITIES IN CHORLEY - SCRUTINY INQUIRY

The Panel, at its last meeting, had approved the final report and recommendations of its scrutiny inquiry into the provision of youth activities in the Borough.

The report had subsequently been endorsed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 16 June 2005.

In addition, the Members were informed that the report and recommendations had also been accepted by the Executive Cabinet on 4 July, with the proviso that the recommendation for the Borough Council to continue its budget provision for the support of growth activities be considered along with other competing bids as part of the budget process for 2006/07.

05.CoP.21 TOWN CENTRE AUTUMN FAIR

The Head of Property Services presented a report reviewing the situation in relation to the format and location of the Town Centre Autumn Fair as a consequence of the outcome of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel's inquiry into the 2003 Fair.

Having regard to the volume of complaints that had been received against the use of Friday Street for the 2003 Fair, the Executive Cabinet had, following its consideration of the Panel's inquiry report, determined to restrict the 2004 Fair to Market Street. Subsequently, the Fair's operators had secured the use of the car park at the rear of QS Fashions on Pall Mall for the location of a limited number of adult attractions.

The report stated that, despite a reduction in the number of rides on offer, the arrangements operated in 2004 had proved successful. The number of complaints of noise and disturbance had been less than previous years and the Police had been satisfied with the security and working arrangements. It was, therefore, intended to utilise the same two locations at Market Street and QS Fashions for the October, 2005 Fair.

The Panel noted the report and **AGREED** to delete the item from its work programme.

Chair.

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Report of	Meeting	Date
Chief Executive	Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel	13/09/05

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE COUNCIL'S DECISION MAKING PROCESS - INQUIRY PROJECT

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To provide an update on:
 - (1) the scrutiny inquiry project to be undertaken by the Panel on public participation in the Council's decision making process, and
 - (2) the proposals for the implementation of an Area Forum pilot scheme in three areas of the Borough as part of the Council's new approach to community engagement set out in the Corporate Improvement Plan and the Community Strategy Action Plan 2005/08.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

2. Closer engagement by the Council with the local community will be designed to help the Council to understand and satisfy better the needs of the community as customers of the Council's services.

RISK ISSUES

3. The key risks for the Council from inadequate, ineffective or unreasonably delayed means of engagement with the local community are as follows:

Strategy

Failing to adopt strategies which are sufficiently aligned with the needs of the Borough and its inhabitants.

Information

Failing to have a sufficiently comprehensive knowledge of the practical results of Council policies, of their impact on particular people and areas and occurrences that may call for different approaches on the part of the Council.

Reputation and Regulatory/Legal

Failure to take early action to implement an important action from the Corporate Improvement Plan could damage the Council's standing with the public and risk adverse comment or action from the District Auditor in his Direction of Travel Assessments or the Inspectors in the next Comprehensive Performance Assessment.

Other

Failing to engage sufficiently closely with people outside the normal setting of the Town Hall and formal committees etc. and to advance the process of democratic renewal by allowing people to understand the Council better and contribute their ideas and knowledge to the functioning and development of the Council, its organisation and its services.

BACKGROUND

4. The Council's Corporate Improvement Plan, adopted by the Council in June 2004 following the Comprehensive Performance Assessment includes an Action 6(a), which reads:

"Devise and pilot with partners new approaches to community engagement, drawing on experience from elsewhere"

This action had a date of end-December 2004 on it. We have unfortunately not achieved that target, which may have been ambitious in view of the need for careful consultation and deliberation before launching an initiative of this kind.

5. The Chorley Borough Community Strategy Action Plan 2005/08 includes an Objective 2 – "Getting People involved in their Communities" and one of the identified approaches is the establishment of Area Fora.
6. I submitted a report to the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 7 October 2004 on issues relating to Community Engagement which is set out in **Appendix 1** to this report. As a consequence Members of the Panel, the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Deputy Leader of the Council undertook a visit to the Preston City Council Rural Area Forum meeting held on 9 December 2004. The Chair of the Panel and the Deputy Leader of the Council undertook a further visit to the Preston Central Area Forum meeting held on 27 January 2005 to gain an understanding of how the Area Fora in Preston operate differently within rural and urban areas of the City.
7. The consensus of the Panel members views following the site visit to the Preston Rural Area Forum meeting was that a draft scoping document on an Inquiry into Public Participation in the Council's Decision – Making Process should be submitted to a future meeting of the Panel for consideration and approval.
8. I outlined the proposals for the introduction of an Area Forum Pilot Scheme at the Borough/Parish Councils Liaison meeting held on 20 January 2005 and invited the Parish Council representatives to submit any views on the proposals to me. I also indicated that the representatives would be kept informed of any developments on the introduction of the Pilot Scheme.

VIEWS OF COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

9. In view of the delay in the implementation of the Corporate Improvement Plan Action referred to in paragraph 4 and the need to move forward on the Community Strategy Objective highlighted in paragraph 5, I submitted a further report to Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 9 February 2005 setting out my intention to submit proposals to the Executive Cabinet and the Annual Council meeting for the implementation of Area Fora in three pilot areas during the next Municipal Year. The report indicated that it would not be practicable for the Council to await the completion of an Overview and Scrutiny enquiry before introducing such proposals, but the Panel was invited to express views and recommendations on the Pilot Area Forum proposal.

10. The Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel debated the concept of Area Fora and the following issues and a number of valuable suggestions and comments were made:
 - The size, format, operating practices and remit of the Fora, together with the areas to be covered by the bodies, were paramount factors to be taken into consideration.
 - The role and work of existing agencies and local organisations should not be duplicated or eroded by the proposed Fora.
 - One view expressed opposed a formal agenda format for Forum meetings, advocating an open forum discussion with the public able to question Cabinet Members. Alternatively, the Forum meetings could be structured around an agreed agenda, with an opportunity allowed for an open discussion session.
 - One Member considered that the remit of rural area Fora should be restricted to individual Parish area boundaries.
 - The membership of the respective Fora should include Ward Councillors, County Councillors and Parish Council representatives. It was also considered that at least one Executive Member of the Council and the relevant Police Community Beat Manager(s) should be requested to attend each Area Forum meeting.
 - The participation and involvement of all relevant partner agencies and organisations (eg Police, Primary Care Trust etc) would be essential.
 - The success of the pilot projects was dependent on adequate and effective publicity and promotion. e.g. the practice of “PAICE” in Chorley East of leafletting households prior to meetings.
11. At the conclusion of the debate, the Chair reminded the Panel that the revised Community Safety Strategy for Chorley had identified four priority target areas (ie Chorley East Ward, Chorley South West Ward, Clayton Brook and Coppull) The Panel requested that the Executive Cabinet consider the four identified priority areas when selecting the districts to be covered by the pilot Area Fora and that the Area Fora be structured on the basis of two distinct models (ie an Area Forum structured around a formal agenda and an Area Forum operated on an informal open debate basis).
12. In accordance with paragraph 7, the Panel also agreed that a scrutiny inquiry project into public participation in the Council’s decision-making process be instigated on the basis, and within the terms, of the Inquiry Project Outline set out in **Appendix 2** to this report. This would allow the enquiry to take into account experience with the Area Forum Pilot scheme and contribute to any permanent arrangements that may subsequently adopted.

VIEWS OF EXECUTIVE CABINET

13. I submitted a report on proposals for the implementation of an Area Forum pilot scheme to the Executive Cabinet on 15 March 2005. The report included the views of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel on the proposals.

Members of the Executive Cabinet debated the concept of Area Forums in some detail and the following issues were raised:

- The delay in the implementation of the Corporate Improvement Plan action relating to the piloting with partners of new approaches had resulted in the submission of proposals to the Executive Cabinet prior to the outcome of the forthcoming Overview and Scrutiny Inquiry.
- There was a need for further consultation with all Members of the Council on the selection of three pilot areas.
- The participation and involvement of all relevant partner organisations would be essential and should be discussed at the next Chorley Partnership meeting.
- There was a need to avoid as far as possible any duplication of existing area-based meetings by undertaking an audit with partner organisations.

- The resource implications of the administration of area-based meetings would need to further explored.
- The public attendance at PACT meetings in some areas of the Borough was poor.
- One Member suggested that the geographical areas of the 3 pilot areas should be based on County Council Electoral Divisions.
- There was a danger of the Council raising public expectations and failing to deliver.

14. The Executive Cabinet resolved that:

- (1) The principle of the implementation of an Area Forum pilot scheme in three areas of the Borough be approved.
- (2) That the Council be recommended to appoint an Area Forum Working Group comprising of the Executive Member for Customer, Policy and Performance and six other Councillors (ratio 2:2:1:1) to consider and submit recommendations to the Executive Cabinet on the format, structure and geographical areas of the three pilot areas for the Area Forum Pilot Scheme to be implemented in accordance with the updated Corporate Improvement Plan.

15. The recommendation set out in (2) was approved by the Council on 19 April 2005.

VIEWS OF AREA FORUM WORKING GROUP

16. The Head of Corporate and Policy Services submitted a discussion paper to the Area Forum Working Group on 4 July 2005 which outlined possible structures for area based arrangements and identified pertinent issues that would need to be addressed.
17. The report highlighted that Area Forums and Committees are alternative approaches which can compliment Parish Councils, but they are not seen as a replacement for Parish Councils. Area Forums are vehicles for local consultation, but Area Committees have delegated executive functions. Recent Local Government Association research ("making decisions locally," LGA 2004) had revealed that 54% of local authorities operated some form of Area Forums as vehicles for local consultation and 26% of authorities operated Area Committees with delegated executive functions.
18. The LGA has urged Councils that have area forums with only a consultative role, to consider established area committees with decision-making powers.
19. The Working Group, however, noted that there are 'excellent' authorities who do not have area arrangements, for example Blackburn. Those authorities have obviously found other ways of engaging their communities.
20. The report referred to the resource implications across the whole Authority of embarking on pilot schemes, together with the need to take account of all existing mechanisms for community engagement (eg PAiCE and tenants forums) and avoid duplication of effort.
21. The Working Group was advised to consider the establishment of area based arrangements in Coppull (either exclusively or in conjunction with surrounding areas), which had emerged in both the Chorley Community Strategy and Community Safety Strategy as a new 'target area'.
22. The Working Group discussed the issues in depth, the following views and factors being highlighted in particular:
 - The important role and functions undertaken by existing agencies and bodies (eg PACT) should not be overlooked or superceded. The new arrangements should aim to complement and/or embrace current initiatives. It was also imperative for existing

organisations to be consulted before firm decisions on area based arrangements were finalised.

- The structure and purpose of the Forums/Committees should be clearly defined.
- The revised CPA guidance for 2005 placed emphasis on the Authority's community leadership role and its arrangements for public engagement as a means of ensuring that the Council's services were designed and delivered to reflect the community's needs and aspirations.
- The area based arrangements should be established and operated as a mechanism through which all members of the community could be informed and consulted on the Borough Council's plans and proposals, as an opportunity for the public to comment on and influence the Council's spending plans and priorities before firm decisions were taken.
- Meetings of the Area Forums/Committees should not be too frequent with effective advance publicity of meetings and attendees invited to attend future meetings.

23. Following a comprehensive debate, the Working Group agreed:

- (1) That the introduction of three pilot Area Forum schemes (each to be structured on a different basis) within the following three areas be examined in detail by the officers:
 - (a) the Coppull Parish boundary area;
 - (b) a rural area of the Borough to be determined by the Chair following consideration of Officers' recommendations;
 - (c) Clayton Brook, within boundaries to be defined following consultation with the community groups operating in Clayton Brook.
- (2) That immediate consultations be commenced by the Officers with the Parish Councils, Police, the Chorley Partnership, the Primary Care Trust and community and voluntary groups in each of the above three prospective areas, to seek their views and involvement in the development of the three pilot schemes, with a view to detailed recommendations for the pilots being formulated by this Group for submission to the Executive Cabinet on 29 September 2005.
- (3) That the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel, as part of its current inquiry, be requested to examine the community engagement arrangements that are currently operated by selected Councils that have established Area Forums and Area Committees and Councils that have adopted alternative methods of community engagement.
- (4) That the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel be requested to invite members of the Area Forum Working Group to accompany the Panel Members and Officers on any visits they choose to make to view other Authorities' working arrangements.

NEXT STAGE

24. The Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel agreed at its meeting held on 5 July 2005 to commence its scrutiny inquiry project, in September 2005 as set out in Appendix 2 to their report.
25. The key issues referred to in the Inquiry Project Outline set out in Appendix 2 will need to be examined in detail by the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel during the course of its Inquiry project.

RECOMMENDATION

26. The Panel is requested to note this report and submit their views on the request made by the Area Forum Working Group referred to in paragraph 23(3) and (4) above.

J W DAVIES
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Report Authors	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Jeff Davies Steve Pearce	5100 5196	26 July 2005	ADMINREP/89803LM

Report of	Meeting	Date
Chief Executive	Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel	07/10/04

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT - POSSIBLE AREA FORUMS

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To enable members of the Committee to consider further the possible establishment of some form of area forums as a means whereby the Council may more effectively engage with its local community.

LINKS TO CORPORATE PRIORITIES

2. Clear engagement by the Council with its inhabitants may assist the Council to understand and satisfy better the needs of local inhabitants as customers of the Council's services.

RISK ISSUES

3. The issue raised in this report involve risk considerations in the following categories:

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

4. The key risks for the Council from inadequate or ineffective means of engaging with the local community are as follows:

Strategy: Failing to adopt strategies which are sufficiently aligned with the needs of the Borough and its inhabitants.

Information: Failing to have a sufficiently comprehensive knowledge of the practical results of Council policies, of their impact on particular people and areas and of activities and occurrences that may call for different approaches on the part of the Council.

Other: Failing to engage sufficiently closely with people outside the normal setting of the Town Hall and formal committees etc and to advance the process of democratic renewal by allowing people to understand the Council better and contribute their ideas and knowledge to the functioning and development of the Council, its organisation and its services.

BACKGROUND

5. As part of is package of initiatives for Local Government contained or forshadowed in the Local Government White Paper "Strong Local Leadership - Quality Public Services" published in December 2001, the Government is keen to see a process of "democratic renewal" in local government. That initiative has a number of aspects, one of which is community engagement. Our CPA report recognised that our Community Plan and a

number of service strategies have involved consultation, but states that, historically, the Council has not been strong at consistently engaging communities and other stakeholders in future planning. Our self assessment for the CPA addressed that issue and the CPA report consequently says that “plans are in hand to prepare a new community engagement strategy”.

6. In pursuance of that, our Corporate Improvement Plan, adopted by the Council in June 2004 following the CPA, includes and Action 6(a), which reads:

“Devise and pilot with partners new approaches to community engagement, drawing on experience from elsewhere”.

This action has a date of end-December 2004 on it.

7. In a meeting I held with Overview and Scrutiny members after the CPA report was published earlier this year, the members showed an interest in some form of area-based approach to community. I therefore tentatively outlined some ideas as to how that might possibly be applied in Chorley, starting with pilots in, say, three different areas of the Borough. This report is presented at the request of members of the Community O&S Panel, who I understand are now interested in further examining the possibility.

THE POSSIBLE APPROACH

8. The ideas presented were based upon the concept of Area Forums for localities covering the whole of the Borough. The localities would be based upon Borough Council wards in the unparished areas of the Borough. In the parished areas could be based upon Parishes or Boroughs wards. I was thinking in terms of a total number of 12-15 areas in the Borough as a whole, which could where necessary or appropriate be based upon combinations of Parishes or Borough Wards.
9. The essential principles would be as follows:
- Forums would meet, say, four times a year.
 - The core membership would be Borough Councillors for the area concerned.
 - County Councillors would also be invited to be members.
 - Parish Councillors and Parish Clerks would also be welcome.
 - Other partner and stakeholder representatives would be able to send representatives, eg the police, health service etc.
 - Any employer or business in the area could send a representative.
 - Any resident in the area would be able to attend

All persons present, and particularly local residents would be able to speak, ask questions and put forward ideas and suggestions.

10. The Forums would be consultative and deliberative rather than executive ie, they would not make decisions on behalf of the Council. It would however be possible, if resources permitted and the Council so wished, for there to be a specified budget made available to each Area Forum which officers could, in accordance with the wishes of the Borough Councillor members of the Forums, deploy for particular local improvements and to address particular local needs. Decision-making, including the power to authorise expenditure by the Council directly, could not be delegated to the Forums unless they had the status of Area Committees, which would mean that their membership would need to come mostly from the Council.
11. In addition to being a place where local people and organisations could raise issues of concern and ask questions, the forums could be a means of spreading information about the Council and its services, receiving feedback, and being a standing means whereby the Council could consult the Borough’s inhabitants on specific subjects, eg its annual budgets and the Council Tax. The Area Forums could also be used to facilitate or

support partnership and joint working areas across the two-tier local government divide and with Parish Councils and between the whole range of public, private and voluntary sectors, if the bodies concerned were willing to attend and use the Forums in that way.

12. The Forums could in addition fulfil a useful purpose for the local communities themselves. They would be a means for a community itself to discuss and debate issues and communicate with and express views to other agencies such as the police, local schools and the health service. They would also be a place in which ethnic minorities would be able to engage and work together with others on an equal basis and with a common interest, thereby contributing to community cohesion and mutual understanding.
13. To service and support the Forums, some regular Council officer attendance would be required, perhaps with the need for an additional post or posts in the Democratic Services Section of the CuDOSS Unit. It would also be possible, and desirable, for a nominated officer at a senior level, eg a Unit Head or a Director, to be formally recognised for each Forum as having a corporate role for its area of the Forum, to represent the officer organisation at Forum meetings and be seen as the official face of Council in that area across all Council services and the ability to speak and “watch out for” the area and its needs within the Council. This could be in addition be a useful development facility for professional officers as they advance in their career and are enabled to take a corporate and not just service or professional view.

OTHER OPTIONS

14. Local bodies could take a range of different forms, varying from the Area Forums suggested above. The variations could include a smaller number of Forums across larger areas of the Borough and/or a narrow membership. They could meet at longer or shorter intervals.
15. The system of Area Forums as suggested above is different from one of Area Committees of the Council of the kind South Ribble Borough Council and some other Councils operate. Area committees would be confined to Borough Councillors, except it would be possible to co-opt a number of County Councillors onto them if desired. Such committees could make actual decisions on behalf of the Borough Council in their particular area, whether on executive or development control matters.
16. However, the amount of decision-making at member level which is of a local nature in a District Council like ours is not great and the advantage of decisions in a Borough of our size and type making decisions in a locality does not provide as great a benefit to democratic renewal as would come from real engagement by the Council in the form of listening, consulting and discussing in a Forum which would be open to all comers. Area Committees with decision-making powers are also likely to be more expensive in officer time because of the need for different services to be represented. For these reasons, the Council has in the past not considered it desirable to introduce any structure of Area Committees.
17. Another way in which Councils can engage with their inhabitants is to allow the public a right to speak or ask questions at meetings. Such rights are most commonly given at meetings of the Development Control Committees and/or the full Council and we and other Councils allow it at Overview and Scrutiny meetings, although the facility has been little used so far. Wherever public rights are conferred, it is desirable to lay down and publish certain ground rule, so that the process can work well and particular people and causes do not dominate meetings and time is allowed for the other work of the meeting concerned.

THE WAY FORWARD

18. I had previously thought in terms of trialing an Area Forum system, if that were to commend itself to the Council in three pilot areas. This would enable us to check that the

system will work for us, to assess what level of resources would be required and to do some learning both of the pitfalls and advantages and make necessary adjustments and improvements before we committed ourselves to full scale operation across the whole of the Borough. For the pilots, I thought we could choose an urban ward in Chorley town, an area of mainly social housing in one of the outer areas and a rural area in one or more parishes.

- 19. However, before implementing any such pilot trials, it could be useful for us to look at an Area Forum system in operation in one or more districts in the region. For example I understand Preston has a system of Area Forums, although they involve a smaller number of forums covering larger areas, five in total. At present I have no information about whether they are confined to local government issues and how much participation is allowed to residents and other bodies, so I cannot say they are directly comparable to which is proposed above. But I am confident there would be something to learn from them and there may be other authorities in the region worth visiting too.
- 20. Any recommendation from Overview and Scrutiny to introduce Area Forums would affect both Council and Executive functions and ideally ought to be considered and approved both by the Executive Cabinet and the full Council.

CONCLUSION

- 21. Members of the Panel are asked to consider what local area based structures, bodies or processes they believe would best advance community engagement within Chorley and whether they would wish to obtain information from or visit other authorities to find out about their ideas and experience.
- 22. It would be helpful if any recommendation on this subject from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to the Executive Cabinet and the Council could be produced by mid-November, in view of the December target date in the Corporate Improvement Plan and so that any budgetary implications for 2005-06 could be fed into the budget preparation process for that year.
- 23. The Panel may also wish to discuss further the principle of conferring on the public a right to speak or ask questions at meetings of the Development Control Committee and of the full Council and the conditions or rules under which that could be done. I can submit to a future meeting of the Panel a report on practice elsewhere in the light of discussion on this report, if members of the Panel would find that helpful.

J W DAVIES
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Background Papers			
Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
Comprehensive Performance Assessment Report for Chorley Borough Council	March 2004	-	Town Hall
Corporate Improvement Plan	June 2004		Town Hall

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
J W Davies	5104	4 October 2004	EXECCGENG/0110JW01

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY INQUIRY PROJECT OUTLINE

Review Topic: Public Participation in the Council's Decision – Making Process	Investigation by: Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel
	Type: Inquiry

<p>Objectives:</p> <p>To identify the means by which Area Forums/Committees and public speaking at the various Council meetings could enable effective engagement with the local community in the Council's political decision-making Processes</p>	<p>Desired Outcomes:</p> <p>The identification of procedures and practices to be adopted for the administration of Area Forums/Committee's and Public Speaking at the various Council meetings</p>
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<p>Terms of Reference:</p> <p>To conduct an investigation into the means by which the Council may more effectively engage with the local community on the provision of services provided by the Council and other key partner organisations in the Borough of Chorley.</p> <p>To investigate the provision of (1) Area Forums or Committees and (2) the introduction of public speaking at meetings of the Council on a trial basis and the administrative arrangements involved.</p> <p>To report on the investigation's findings and make recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</p>
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<p>Key Issues:</p> <p>Area Forums/Committees</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Area Forums/Committees. 2. Geographical area of each Forum/Committee. 3. Core Membership. 4. Purpose of Forum/Committee 5. Co-opted members/organisations invited to attend meetings 6. Terms of reference/issues to be included on the agendas 7. Public participation in the meetings/Public Question Time 8. Number of meetings to be held each year 9. Venues for meetings/risk assessments 10. Use of PA/loop system 11. Publicity/promotion of meetings 12. Staffing – Officer support required 13. Budgetary requirements 	<p>Risks:</p> <p>To raise expectations of the public that are beyond the capacity to deliver</p>
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<p>Public Speaking at Council Meetings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Which meetings would the public be allowed to speak at or ask questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council, Executive Cabinet, Development Control or all meetings. 2. Would the public be allowed to speak on all agenda items or only selected items. 3. Length of time allowed for speaking. 4. Feedback of responses to the public. 5. Meeting room accommodation. 6. Publicity. 	
<p>Venue(s): Town Hall</p>	<p>Timescale: 9 months</p> <p>Start: September 2005</p> <p>Finish: April 2006</p>

Information Requirements and Sources:

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

Corporate Improvement Plan – June 2004
 Report by Chief Executive on “Community Engagement – Possible Area Forums” to the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 7 October 2004
 Chorley Borough Community Strategy (2005-2016) and Action Plan (2005/08)
 Details of comparative services provided by district councils in Lancashire
 “Making decisions locally” – Local Government Association Research Report

Witnesses: *(who, why?)*

Area Forum Manager at Preston City Council - presentation
 Officers from other Lancashire district councils
 Representatives of key partner organisations – eg Lancashire Constabulary and Primary Care Trust
 County Councillors for the Chorley Borough
 Parish Council representatives
 Representatives of local resident, tenants and community organisations

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

Area Forum Manager at Preston City Council - presentation
 Officers from other Lancashire district councils
 Representatives of key partner organisations – eg Lancashire Constabulary and Primary Care Trust
 County Councillors for the Chorley Borough
 Parish Council representatives
 Representatives of local resident, tenants and community organisations

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

Area Forum and Area Committees held in other local authority areas
 The Pilot Area Forum meetings to be held in 3 areas of Chorley in September/October 2005

Officer Support:

Lead Officers: Martin O’Loughlin – Head of Customer, Democratic and Office Support Services and Steve Pearce – Assistant Head of Democratic Services

Committee Administrator: Tony Uren – Democratic Services Officer

Corporate Policy Officer: Tim Rignall – Head of Corporate and Policy Services

Likely Budget Requirements:

<u>Purpose</u>	<u>£</u>
-	
-	
- Total	_____

Target Body¹ for Findings/Recommendations

(Eg Executive Cabinet, Council, PCT)

Executive Cabinet

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AREA FORUMS/COMMITTEES	
ISSUE	AUTHORITY
Blackburn with Darwen (Unitary)	Blackburn with Darwen (Unitary)
Blackpool (Unitary)	Blackpool (Unitary)
Burnley	Burnley
Fylde	Fylde
Hyndburn	Hyndburn
Lancaster	Lancaster
<p>Are your bodies known as Area Forums or Area Committees?</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>How many Area Forums/Committees to you operate and what areas, in general, do they cover (eg DC Wards/Parishes; combined Ward or Parish areas; CC Electoral Divs)?</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>What is the core membership of your Area Forum/Committees</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Which other bodies or organisations are normally invited to meetings?</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>How many times does your Area Forums/Committees meet in one year?</p>	<p>N/A</p>

AREA FORUMS/COMMITTEES						
ISSUE	AUTHORITY					
	Blackburn with Darwen (Unitary)	Blackpool (Unitary)	Burnley	Fylde	Hyndburn	Lancaster
Where are your meetings generally held, and does each Forum/Committee meeting venue vary within its own area?	N/A	Meetings in localities, some static, others change	N/A	Meetings taken out into localities	Each meets within the Local Council Areas as the areas are small try to keep to one venue	N/A
How is the agenda for an Area Forum/Committee meeting compiled? Can any community body, organisation or individual request an agenda item?	N/A	Items are agreed by the Working Group	N/A	Member requests, Public requests referrals from Officers/Cabinet	Planning meeting 4 weeks prior, elected members, County Police and Community Co-optees agree Agenda.	N/A
Is the Area Forum/Committee used by the Authority for consultation purposes on specific issues and topics (eg budget plans, proposed/strategies etc.)	N/A	Yes	N/A	Yes	Yes with special budget setting meetings	N/A
How are your Area Forum/Committee meetings advertised or promoted?	N/A	Website Flyers – free newspapers Leaflets Mailing list	N/A	Not very well at present. Press releases/posters. However, even front page coverage on press evokes limited interest	Mailing list, newspaper, posters.	N/A

AREA FORUMS/COMMITTEES	
ISSUE	AUTHORITY
<p>Are members of the public able to speak freely at meetings, ask questions and put forward ideas and suggestions?</p> <p>Do you operate an open 'Question Time' session and, if so, can the members of the public raise issues freely and do you require prior notice of questions asked?</p> <p>Do your area Forums/Committees exercise any delegated powers (eg the allocation of Community Grants, etc)?</p>	<p>Blackburn with Darwen (Unitary)</p> <p>N/A</p>
	<p>Blackpool (Unitary)</p> <p>Yes</p>
	<p>Burnley</p> <p>N/A</p>
	<p>Fylde</p> <p>Yes</p>
	<p>Hyndburn</p> <p>Yes and are encouraged through a dedicated open forum slot.</p>
	<p>Lancaster</p> <p>N/A</p>
	<p>Yes, if asked prior guarantee a response can raise at meeting for response later.</p>
	<p>Council function</p>
	<p>No</p>
	<p>N/A</p>
	<p>Yes – specific grants of £5,000 per ward</p>
	<p>N/A</p>
	<p>Yes, dedicated budgets/street naming, currently have a devolution co-ordinator looking at further powers to devolve.</p>

AREA FORUMS/COMMITTEES													
AUTHORITY													
ISSUE													
<p>Do you have dedicated staff to service the Area Forums/Committees? If so, how many members of staff are employed? If not, who is responsible for administering the bodies?</p> <p>Do you wish to add any other comments?</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Blackburn with Darwen (Unitary)</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Blackpool (Unitary)</td> <td>Democratic Services staff service the meetings. Community Development Unit also assist with arrangements and promotion.</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Burnley</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Fylde</td> <td>Dedicated scrutiny staff 1.5 posts</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Hyndburn</td> <td>1 Team Leader 2½ Full time equiv Co-ordinators ½ Admin Assistant</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Lancaster</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> </table>	Blackburn with Darwen (Unitary)	N/A	Blackpool (Unitary)	Democratic Services staff service the meetings. Community Development Unit also assist with arrangements and promotion.	Burnley	N/A	Fylde	Dedicated scrutiny staff 1.5 posts	Hyndburn	1 Team Leader 2½ Full time equiv Co-ordinators ½ Admin Assistant	Lancaster	N/A
Blackburn with Darwen (Unitary)	N/A												
Blackpool (Unitary)	Democratic Services staff service the meetings. Community Development Unit also assist with arrangements and promotion.												
Burnley	N/A												
Fylde	Dedicated scrutiny staff 1.5 posts												
Hyndburn	1 Team Leader 2½ Full time equiv Co-ordinators ½ Admin Assistant												
Lancaster	N/A												
	<p>Hyndburn Area Councils are one of the most successful. We have big plans for further improvements. I would be happy to discuss this further.</p> <p>Do hold a series of face to face roadshows</p>												
	N/A												
	N/A												

AREA FORUMS/COMMITTEES	
AUTHORITY	
ISSUE	Wyre West Lancashire South Ribble Rossendale Ribble Valley Preston Pendle
Are your bodies known as Area Forums or Area Committees?	N/A N/A Committee N/A N/A Forums N/A
How many Area Forums/Committees to you operate and what areas, in general, do they cover (eg DC Wards/Parishes; combined Ward or Parish areas; CC Electoral Divs)?	None, but currently being considered as part of a review of O&S structures and cabinet responsibilities N/A 8 area Committee covering 3/4 wards and relating to identified communities eg Bamber Bridge Combined Wards (we have 4 area forums). N/A 5 areas covering 4/5 wards 5 Committees covering several wards each
What is the core membership of your Area Forum/Committees	N/A N/A All the Ward Councillors plus co-option of Parish/Town Councillors and others eg Tenant Reps Ward Councillors Reps from local organisations N/A Ward Councillors plus co-option of County Cllrs and reps from parish councils and other organisations Ward Councillors
Which other bodies or organisations are normally invited to meetings?	N/A N/A Police every time - others as appropriate eg Probation Service, Health Service, County Highways Police N/A LCC Parish Councils Preston PCT Police and local Community Group reps Each Committee has co-opted members representing eg Town/parish Councils Customer Panels, Town Centre Forum, CED Partnership

AREA FORUMS/COMMITTEES	
AUTHORITY	
ISSUE	AUTHORITY
Pendle	Pendle
How many times does your Area Forums/Committees meet in one year?	12 each
Where are your meetings generally held, and does each Forum/Committee meeting venue vary within its own area?	4 meet in same venue - Council buildings 1 rotates around 5 venues - mostly church halls.
How is the agenda for an Area Forum/Committee meeting compiled? Can any community body, organisation or individual request an agenda item?	Members and co-optees can request items otherwise Agenda determined by Officers in consultation with Chairman
Preston	Preston
Everyone meets 5 times a year = 25 meetings	In local schools/ community halls/church halls meetings rotate
Ribble Valley	Ribble Valley
N/A	N/A
Rossendale	Rossendale
4 area forums meet every 8 weeks.	Established the forums in 2003, however have not had any meetings in 2004/05. Are considering 'An Executive in the Community Model'. We also have 'Lancashire Local' meetings with the County Council.
South Ribble	South Ribble
Each one meets seven times a year = 56 meetings.	In the community. They have found greater success by sticking to one venue but the two rural Area Committee do move around their area.
West Lancashire	West Lancashire
N/A	N/A
Wyre	Wyre
N/A	N/A

AREA FORUMS/COMMITTEES	
AUTHORITY	
ISSUE	Authority
<p>Is the Area Forum/Committee used by the Authority for consultation purposes on specific issues and topics (eg budget plans, proposed policies/strategies etc</p> <p>How are your Area Forum/Committee meetings advertised or promoted?</p> <p>Are members of the public able to speak freely at meetings, ask questions and put forward ideas and suggestions?</p>	Pendle
	Preston
	Ribble Valley
	Rossendale
	South Ribble
	West Lancashire
	Wyre
<p>Occasionally</p>	<p>Yes - LSP, Corporate Plan Major proposals affecting the city</p>
<p>Public Notice Press "Council Corner" in the local newspaper</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Can speak subject to 5 minute limit - see enc leaflet.</p>	<p>Yes, every forum has a 30 minute "Open Forum" session</p>
<p>Public Notice</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Press releases, posters in Community, Council newspaper etc, web site, agendas sent to database of residents.</p>	<p>Yes on every item on the agenda plus a general public session of 30 minutes.</p>
<p>Local newspaper/ website. Cllrs put posters up in community buildings/shops</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Yes - Have specific meetings eg setting Council Tax, Recycling.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Yes - LSP, Corporate Plan, Budget, Licensing etc.</p>	<p>N/A</p>

AREA FORUMS/COMMITTEES	
ISSUE	AUTHORITY
<p>Do you operate an open 'Question Time' session and, if so, can the members of the public raise issues freely and do you require prior notice of questions asked?</p> <p>Do your Area Forums /Committees exercise any delegated powers (eg the allocation of Community Grants, etc)</p>	<p>Pendle</p> <p>Yes - no prior notice required.</p>
	<p>Preston</p> <p>Yes - no prior notice required. To receive a written response public need to submit the question in writing</p>
	<p>Ribble Valley</p> <p>N/A</p>
	<p>Rossendale</p> <p>Yes - no notice required.</p>
	<p>South Ribble</p> <p>Yes see above. General Questions and if unable to answer at meeting answer printed in next agenda.</p>
	<p>West Lancashire</p> <p>N/A</p>
	<p>Wyre</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>Planning items. Traffic Regulation Orders.</p> <p>Each Area Committee has a budget to be allocated for environmental improvements (grot spots)</p>	<p>No. The Area Forum Chair has delegated authority to approve awards of Area Forum funding and report decision to Area Forum</p>

AREA FORUMS/COMMITTEES	
AUTHORITY	
Wyre	N/A
West Lancashire	N/A
South Ribble	Democratic Services strengthened to meet extra meetings plus Head of Area Committees to develop progress.
Rossendale	No-one dedicated - (1 member of staff administers)
Ribble Valley	N/A
Preston	Yes. 2 full-time staff. Area Forum Manager and Area Forum Officer
Pendle	No. Committee Administrators with co-ordinators at Service Manager Level.
ISSUE	<p>Do you have dedicated staff to service the Area Forums/Committees? If so, how many members of staff are employed? If not, who is responsible for administering the bodies.</p> <p>Do you wish to add any other comments.</p>
	We do have a presentation on our approach to Area Committees which I have given to other Council and would be happy to come over to Chorley for one of your meetings if it would help.

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PUBLIC SPEAKING AT COUNCIL/COMMITTEE MEETINGS						
AUTHORITY						
ISSUE	Blackburn with Darwen (Unitary)	Blackpool (Unitary)	Burnley	Fylde	Hyndburn	Lancaster
At which bodies of the Council are the public allowed to speak or ask questions?	Council, Executive Board (Cabinet meeting) and Planning & Highways Committee	Council Development Control Committee	Executive, Scrutiny Committee and, Development Control Committee	Development Control Committee	Planning Committee	Planning & Highways Regulatory Committee
Is the public able to speak freely at meetings and ask questions or is prior written notice of questions required?	Prior written notice of questions is required.	Prior notice is required. Council – approval by the Scrutiny Management Committee. Dev Control – 12 noon on Friday before meeting (1 day)	(3 days) written notice is required for Dev Control or 1 day if an item is on the Agenda for Exec & Council	Written notice – public allowed to speak for 3 minutes per person	Special protocol in place for Planning Committee, otherwise public not allowed to speak.	Prior notice (3 days) of question at Council. Prior notice (10 days) to address Council. Registration to speak at Planning by 12 noon on Thursday before Mon meeting
Is public allowed to speak on any agenda item or only selected identified items	Executive Board – on any agenda item or selected item. Planning & Highways – just on planning applications	Council – any topic affecting the borough. Dev Control – planning applications only.	On any item in the public domain.	Planning applications	Yes	No, item for public questions - address only include if not received. Yes - Planning any objector can speak to applicant if there is an objection
Time limit allowed for speaking?	Council 5 mins Exec Board 5 mins Plan & Hwys 3 mins	Council – 5 mins Dev Control – 3 mins	5 minutes per person up to a maximum of 30 minutes.	3 minutes	5 minutes	Yes

PUBLIC SPEAKING AT COUNCIL/COMMITTEE MEETINGS						
AUTHORITY						
ISSUE	Blackburn with Darwen (Unitary)	Blackpool (Unitary)	Burnley	Fylde	Hyndburn	Lancaster
Is there an open 'question time' at Council/Committee meetings	An hour is allocated at the start of Full Council meetings for questions that have been received in writing before the advertised deadline. There is no question time at the other Committee meetings.	No	Yes	No	No	No
Are your meeting rooms capable of accommodating members of the public or are other public buildings used?	Yes - Town Hall meeting rooms are capable of accommodating members of the public.	Yes - Council Chamber has a public gallery. Recently refurbished committee rooms allow varied accommodation.	Yes but a maximum of 30 people.	Other buildings on occasion	To a limited degree	Council Chamber at Morecambe is the usual venue. Room is limited when full Council in session but manageable.
How are the meetings advertised/promoted.	Advert in local press and notices in municipal buildings	Website Leaflets We are looking at other ways to promote this.	Website : Notice Boards	Website	Civic Offices	Statutory notice & listed in press weekly. No real promotion. Planning leaflet enc.

PUBLIC SPEAKING AT COUNCIL/COMMITTEE MEETINGS	
AUTHORITY	
ISSUE	
Blackburn with Darwen (Unitary)	Departments can give a written response to any questions unanswered.
Blackpool (Unitary)	Council – the relevant Portfolio Holder replies to the issue raised.
Burnley	Yes
Fylde	No
Hyndburn	N/A
Lancaster	Nothing for planning. Questioners at Council receive the minutes which include the response as an appendix. If question not answered a written response is sent. Addresses are referred to another body for debate - public advised where & when
Do you operate any system of reporting feedback or responses to unanswered questions to attendees?	
Do you wish to add any other comment?	<p>The Council is presently working on a scheme for public participation at Council Meetings.</p> <p>I am in the process of renewing how full Council works and would be interest to receive info on the public participation at Council which you have collected.</p>

PUBLIC SPEAKING AT COUNCIL/COMMITTEE MEETINGS	
AUTHORITY	
ISSUE	AUTHORITY
Wyre	Not normally to exceed 30 minutes
West Lancs	3 minutes
South Ribble	There is 5 mins but in the main this not fully used and Chairman use their discretion
Rossendale	30 minutes allocated in public question time session
Ribble Valley	3 mins per person - max 30 mins overall at Full Council and 15 mins at Committees except at Plan & Dev where there is no overall limit
Preston	Nothing formal but it's a question not a speech, so Mayor tries to keep it brief
Pendle	5 minutes
Time limit allowed for speaking?	
Is there an open 'question time' at Council/Committee meetings	
Are your meeting rooms capable of accommodating members of the public or are other public buildings used?	
	Yes – see above
	No
	Not needed at Scrutiny etc open question time at Area Comm. Council on items on Agenda no general public question time
	Yes all of them
	Yes but currently considering moving the Exec around the Borough to increase public participation
	All meetings held in Council Chamber which has a public gallery.
	Civic Offices can accommodate public
	Usually 0 other buildings used where necessary.
	Yes most of them
	Yes – meetings held in the Council Chamber

PUBLIC SPEAKING AT COUNCIL/COMMITTEE MEETINGS	
AUTHORITY	
Wyre	Agendas, notices and posters at Council venues, libraries etc
West Lancs	Press releases, web site, public notices, outside public buildings No, not really, but if Officers were asked at meetings they would endeavour to answer this and follow it up.
South Ribble	Press releases, web site, public notices, agendas also sent to a data base of requestors Yes - Area Committees - next agenda others may be by way of written response
Rossendale	Website, public notice outside various public buildings - currently considering advertising in local paper. Provide written responses.
Ribble Valley	Only for Plan & Dev Committee - see enclosed booklet Questioners at Full Council receive written response at the meeting - they can then ask a supplementary question System has worked particular well at Plan & Dev Committee - very well used
Preston	Town Hall Notice board, website. Agendas to press/media Press Releases All questions put forward receive a written response Would welcome copy of report to Council on any proposed innovations
Pendle	Public Notice "Council Corner" in local press. Yes
ISSUE	
How are the meetings advertised/promoted.	
Do you operate any system of reporting feedback or responses to unanswered questions to attendees?	
Do you wish to add any other comment?	

Report of	Meeting	Date
Report of Head of Corporate and Policy Services	Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel	13.09.05

REVIEW OF JUVENILE NUISANCE - UPDATE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- The purpose of the report is to provide an update to the Panel regarding the recommendations which arose from the review of juvenile nuisance.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- The report relates to Juvenile Nuisance which has obvious links to the Council’s Greener, Cleaner, Safer priority.

RISK ISSUES

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

Strategy		Information	
Reputation		Regulatory/Legal	
Financial – initiatives undertaken may have financial implications for the Council.	✓	Operational	
People		Other – some of the initiatives rely on partner involvement of which the Council has no influence	✓

The report contains risk as some of the recommendations have financial implications for the Community Safety Partnership and others are dependent on partner involvement.

BACKGROUND

- A review of juvenile nuisance was undertaken by the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel. This was undertaken and a list of recommendations were made to try and reduce levels of juvenile nuisance.

UPDATE

- Since the review was undertaken the new Community Safety Strategy has been prepared and published. The new strategy reflects community concerns about youth issues and anti-social behaviour and contains a number of objectives which seek to address these. This Strategy and the objectives within it will provide a focus for the work of the Community Safety Partnership.



6. Members should also be aware that the Government, through Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets, has attached a far higher priority to youth issues and anti-social behaviour. The result of this is that Lancashire Constabulary, as with other police forces, has had to recognise the issues as a priority and negotiate targets with GONW to reduce crime, the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour over the next three years. These targets have been reflected in the new Community Safety Strategy and will be subject to regular monitoring.
7. We have also recently been successful in recruiting an Assistant Community Safety Co-ordinator who will bring much needed capacity to the Multi-Agency Problem Solving (MAPS) Team. This additional capacity will allow us to pursue additional initiatives and projects as well as allowing us to be more proactive in our work with partners.
8. Below is a list of the original recommendations and an update as to how work has progressed:

- An education/training of Police Communicators should be introduced.

This will enable us to get a better picture of what the problem is in that it will identify what the anti-social behaviour is and where and when it is happening.

This was proposed because of the difficulties being experienced by members of the public trying to report juvenile nuisance to the police.

Since this recommendation was made Lancashire Constabulary has implemented changes in how it records all levels of anti-social behaviour. In view of this and the increased priority attached to anti-social behaviour it is proposed that the situation be monitored before any further suggestions of training are made.

- “On the Streets” – Neighbourhood Wardens and Police challenging nuisance behaviour and offering alternatives.

This recommendation has been implemented through operation Summer Nights. Each night Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) and Neighbourhood Wardens are targeting youths and passing on information regarding activities in the area. Chorley Borough Council Leisure and Cultural Services have provided a range of activities which have been circulated to all agencies and every school in the Borough.

- Off-licences targeted with Proof of Age Scheme.

This has been undertaken. In addition work with Trading Standards, Police and Neighbourhood Wardens has been implemented to target under age sales, identify off licences that are selling to young people and identifying adults who buy alcohol for young people.

- Dispersal notices being used in problem areas.

This has been undertaken with two dispersal notices introduced in Clayton Brook and Astley Village. A further one will shortly be introduced around Tatton community facility.

- Parental Control Agreements used.

Only one such agreement has been used so far. Support services for parents are limited.

- Work with Connexions should be undertaken to improve behaviour through working with schools.

Work with Connexions has been slow because of their capacity issues. They are now involved with the Prevent and Deter Group and are running the Positive Activities for Young People Fund. Hopefully inter-agency working will continue to improve in this area.

- An assessment of local facilities needs to be undertaken.

This has been undertaken by Leisure and Cultural Services as part of a review by this Panel which produced further recommendations.

- Fully utilise GRIP programme.

This scheme is used, but because it relies on external funding its use is limited within Chorley. The scheme deals with as many individuals as possible, but waiting lists reduce the impact of interventions that can be provided. The only solution to the issue would be to provide extra funding for the programme, or it be mainstreamed by LCC. This has been raised as an issue with LCC Youth Offending Team.

- Education programme for local area that raises awareness of the impact and consequences of juvenile nuisance.

This scheme was based on the East Manchester scheme of targeting bus shelters with key messages, either asking parents do they know what their children are doing, or identifying the cost of damage etc. This scheme has not been progressed due to funding. It would cost £100 per week per bus shelter plus costs for artwork to implement. More than one bus shelter would need to be targeted with more than one message. As yet no funding has been identified.

- Youth and Community Services to be approached regarding outreach services to be targeted to ward areas.

Youth and Community Services have undergone much change over the last year. There are now extra staff and hopefully work that is already underway can be expanded on. Work with Youth and Community Services will continue.

- Negotiations between young people and older people through either the Neighbourhood Wardens or mediation service.

The Neighbourhood Warden service have undertaken much work to mediate between residents in the Borough and young people. This has included such instances as receiving complaints regarding youths playing football on a football pitch. Other instances have involved approaching young people and asking what they want. This has resulted in PAiCE reconsidering how it involves young people. Mediation services and the Registered Social Landlords in the area.

- The introduction of positive activities for young people into problem wards.

PAYP was carried out during the financial year 2004/05 and was undertaken by Youth and Community Services. The financial year 2005/06 sees the Connexions Service running the scheme. This has raised some issues, but the Community Safety Partnership are working with Partners to continue and fully utilise the programme.

- Support of the Youth Council.

Youth and Community Services work with the Youth Council, but more work needs to be undertaken.

- Link with “Positive Intervention Group” to identify vulnerable individuals for support through diversionary activities

In September 2004 the government introduced the Prolific and Other Priority Scheme. This included 3 streams in which prolific offenders should be targeted. One of the streams is Prevent and Deter, aimed at identifying potential offenders and diverting their behaviour. It was hoped the Positive Intervention Group would become the prevent and deter strand of the PPO strategy, but it has become apparent that the group had to evolve. This has occurred in June 2005 and is now named Chorley Community Safety Partnerships Prevent and Deter Group. This group will continue to try and deter young people from taking part in nuisance/criminal behaviour.

- Parenting Project introduced

This has not occurred due to lack of funding issues around parenting support. With the issues of ASBOs, Parenting Orders should also be introduced. This has not occurred because of agency capacity. This has been raised as an issue at LCC Youth and Offending Team.

- Consideration be given to designing out problem areas.

This work is undertaken. Work around Lakeland Gardens and the Gillibrand Link Road are just two examples. Further work with the Planning Department is also being carried out to encourage the principles of Secured by Design and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.

- Neighbourhood Wardens to become a ‘Response Service’. A report considering issues arising from this proposal will be considered by Executive Cabinet on 29 September 2005.

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

9. There are no financial implications at the moment.

COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES

10. There are no HR issues arising from the report at present. However, I will wish to comment on the proposals in respect of the Neighbourhood Warden Service when the report is prepared.

CONCLUSION

11. Much work is being undertaken with regards to juvenile nuisance. There is still much to be done, but issues lie around other agency capacity and funding. Reducing levels of juvenile nuisance will continue to be a priority.
12. I forward this report for your consideration.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

13. None.

TIM RIGNALL
 HEAD OF CORPORATE AND POLICY SERVICES

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Audrey Harrison	5335	***	CPSREP/89599JM2

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME – 2005/06

Function/topic	Assigned to	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
1. Holding the Executive to Account	OSC												
Annual Budget/Council House Rents								3					
Annual Budget Consultation						3		3					
Provisional full year Performance Indicator										3			
Business Plan and Performance Indicator Updates	ESP				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Com SP				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Cust SP				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	OSC				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
BVPP (Corporate Plan overall performance)		✓											
Monitoring of Sickness Absence (6 monthly update)							✓						✓
Housing Maintenance Budget							3						
Corporate Building Maintenance & Repair Service (6 monthly update)					3						3		
2. Policy Development and Review													
Other to be identified													
3. External Scrutiny/Community Concern Full Scrutiny Inquiry													
Public Participation/Communication	ComSP												
LCC's arrangement for the Scrutiny of health function - Periodic Review	CustSP												
Accessibility of Cycling as a Leisure Pursuit	ESP												
Parkwise Scheme	CustSP												
4. Monitoring of Inquiries													
Housing Maintenance Appointments System	CustSP			✓						✓			
Flooding, Flood Prevention and Contingency Plan/Proposals	ESP						✓						✓
Chorley Markets - Occupancy of Stalls & Associated Matters	CustSP			✓						✓			
Friday Street for the Chorley Town Centre Fair	ComSP									✓			
Juvenile Nuisance	ComSP			✓									
Grass Cutting	ESP						✓						✓
Provision of Youth Activities in Chorley	ComSP							✓					
One-Stop Shop	CustSP							✓					
5. Other													
O & S Training Programme	OSC			3						✓			

OSC - Overview and Scrutiny Committee Panel

ESP - Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel

ComSP - Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

CustSP - Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Overview and Scrutiny Topics/Issues to be Programmed

Ref	Topic/Issue Title	Date Included	Priority Score	Source	Brief Description
	<p><u>Full Scrutiny Inquiries</u> Priority List IEG Measurement of Council's progress (Cust SP)</p>	26/06/03	4 and 4	Overview and Scrutiny Committee A	Referred to Customer O & S Panel
	<p>Reserve List</p>				
	<p><u>Policy Development/Review</u> Priority List</p>				
	<p>Reserve List</p>				

