

Executive Cabinet

Public Minutes of meeting held on Thursday, 12 January 2006

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

Also in attendance: Councillors E Bell, Mrs P Case, P Malpas, J Walker and Mrs S Walsh

06.EC.01 CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Executive Leader welcomed Ms Donna Hall, the newly appointed Chief Executive, who was attending her first Executive Cabinet meeting.

06.EC.02 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

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

06.EC.03 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest by any of the Executive Members in any of the items on the meeting's agenda.

06.EC.04 MINUTES

The public minutes of the meeting of the Executive Cabinet held on 1 December 2005 were confirmed as a correct record for signature by the Executive Leader.

06.EC.05 REVENUE BUDGET 2005/2006 - MONITORING

The Director of Finance submitted a report that set out the present financial position of the Council in respect of the 2005/06 General Fund and Housing Revenues Account, and their comparison with the identified efficiency savings targets.

The report revealed that the situation with regard to the General Fund continued to improve, with the forecast overspend having been reduced to £125,000 from £164,000 since the previous monitoring report. The Housing Revenues Account was likely to remain close to its anticipated target as a result of the reduction in the 'right to buy' sales.

Decisions made:

1. That the report be noted.
2. That approval be given to a virement of £21,000 from the savings in the staffing budget to cover the cost of the employment of Consultants to guide the development of the Home Improvement Agency.

Reason for decisions:

To ensure that the Council's budgetary targets are achieved.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

None.

06.EC.06 DRAFT GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2006/2007

The Director of Finance presented a report accompanying a draft public consultation statement on proposals for the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2006/07. The report was accompanied by a number of appendices which outlined and explained the several factors and risk issues which would need to be assessed and considered before the final budget was determined.

It was hoped that the increased Revenue Grant settlement and the identification of potential savings would allow some flexibility for additional investment to be targeted towards the Council's community priority areas in 2006/07. The Executive Leader reminded the Members, however, of the Executive Cabinet's expressed wish that any increase in Council Tax would not exceed 5%.

Decision made:

That the draft General Fund Revenue Budget proposals for 2006/07, as now presented, be approved for public consultation purposes.

Reason for decision:

The Council is statutorily required to undertake a public consultation exercise on its draft budget proposals. The responses to the consultation will assist the Council in arriving at informed decisions on its spending plans for 2006/07.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

None.

06.EC.07 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2005/06 - PROGRESS REPORT

The Executive Cabinet considered a report of the Group Director (Service Group A) on the progress of the 2005/06 Capital Programme and seeking approval of a number of recommendations from the Capital Programme Board.

In order to monitor the council's financial position in 2005/06 the Capital programme Board had made a number of recommendations affecting schemes or projects that were either overspending or required additional resources, in addition to a number of new Category C schemes recommended for approval.

While savings and slippage of expenditure would allow the 2005/06 to be financed without recourse to borrowing, the Director of Finance would need to report to the next Executive Cabinet meeting on the impact the slipped expenditure would have on future years' programmes.

Decisions made:

That the Council be recommended:

- (a) to approve the revised Capital Programme for 2005/06 in the sum of £15,749,770 as outlined in the submitted report; and**
- (b) to approve the following recommendations of the Capital Programme Board:**

Exception Reports

- i) that the Head of Housing Services reduce expenditure on other categories of the 2005/06 Housing Revenue Account to cover the reported overspending of £375,000 and to keep within current budget;**

- ii) that Phase 3 of the Chapel Street Enhancement Scheme be placed on the pipeline reserve list (Category C) for future consideration when resources become available;
- iii) that the Head of Public Space Services be requested to complete the Friday Street Car Park Scheme in 2005/06 from the existing approved capital budget;
- iv) that the Head of Public Space Services be requested to bring forward an Outline Business Case for the proposals relating to the Fleet Street Car Park, for consideration at a future meeting of the Capital Programme Board;

New Capital Schemes and Projects

- v) that the following new schemes and projects be placed on the pipeline reserve list (Category C) for future consideration when resources become available:
 1. Warden Patrol Vans and CCTV Digital Recorders
 2. Enhanced Recycling - Phase 3
 3. Kerbside Recycling - Service Capacity and Improvements
 4. Recycling Bring Site expansion
 5. Litter bin replacement programme and On Street litter/dog waste/recycling bins
 6. Legal Case Management ICT Systems

Reasons for recommendations:

1. To revise the 2005/06 Capital Programme in order to bring spending into line with resources without the need for external borrowing.
2. To minimise the impact on the 2005/06 Capital Programme of schemes that are either overspending or require additional resources.
3. To bring forward new schemes which Members may consider for inclusion in the future Capital Programme.

Alternative Options considered and rejected:

None.

06.EC.08 HOUSING TRANSFER - PARTNER SELECTION

The Chief Executive presented a report seeking the Executive Cabinet's endorsement of the selection of Adactus Housing Group as the preferred partner Social Registered Landlord (RSL) for Chorley Community Housing in the eventuality of the realisation of the proposed transfer of the housing stock.

The Joint Selection Panel had recommended the selection of Adactus following a rigorous assessment of shortlisted RSLs and the proposed selection had been supported by the Chorley Community Housing Shadow Board.

The report also summarised the planned promotional activities to be focused around Chorley Community Housing during 2006 in the lead up to the postal ballot of the Council's tenants.

The Cabinet expressed its appreciation of the work and commitment of the Joint Selection Panel during the lengthy selection process over the past months and the Head of Housing Services promised to convey the Cabinet's thanks to the Panel members.

Decisions made:

1. That approval be given to the recommendation of the Joint Selection Panel, and ratified by Chorley Community Housing, that Adactus Housing Group be selected as the preferred partner Registered Social Landlord for Chorley Community Housing in respect of the proposed transfer of the housing stock.
2. That the proposed programme of promotional activities to be undertaken during the period up to the ballot of Council tenants be endorsed.

Reason for decision:

Adactus Group has been selected following a rigorous assessment process. The Group is able to meet all the essential criteria agreed for the selection of a preferred partner and will provide the best opportunity for the future sustainability and growth of Chorley Community Housing.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

Five other potential RSL partners were visited and interviewed, but their submissions were not as strong overall as that from the Adactus Group.

(Councillor Edgerley, as a member of the Joint Selection Panel, did not vote on the recommendation).

06.EC.09 IMPLEMENTING E-GOVERNMENT STATEMENT NO. 5

The Executive Cabinet received a report of the Head of Information and Communication Technology seeking endorsement of the Council's E-Government Statement 2005 for submission to the Government. The statutory return detailed the Council's progress in terms of the Government's defined Priority Outcome programme, the Best Value Performance Indicator for corporate electronic service delivery and efficiency targets.

The statement confirmed that the Council had made significant progress in achieving the identified targets, with 97.95% of services being currently e-enabled, with an expectation that 100% e-delivery would be achieved by 31 December 2005.

The Cabinet appreciated the major improvements that had been effected in the Council's ICT and customer focused services, which had been reflected in the national recognition of the Council being awarded an excellent three stars rating in the Audit Commission's Best Value inspection on Customer Access and Focus. The Cabinet commended the committed efforts of the Council's employees and the Group Director thanked the Members for their role in the Council's achievements.

Decision made:

That the Council's Implementing E-Government Statement for 2005, as now presented, be approved.

Reason for decision:

The Borough Council is statutorily required to produce an annual E-Government Statement for submission to the Government.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

None.

06.EC.10 LANCASHIRE LOCALS

The Executive Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive on a consultation from the Lancashire County Council on its proposals to strengthen local democratic decision making in the County by the establishment of 12 new local Committees to be known as 'Lancashire Locals' with effect from 1 April 2006.

The Committee would have a broad general remit, as well as responsibility for a wider range of services and functions over which local County Council Members could take decisions, exercise influence or monitor the delivery of services and performance.

The Lancashire Locals membership would comprise all the local County Councillors representing the appropriate District Area, together with an equal number of District Councillors (one of whom was required to be an Executive Member).

Decisions made:

1. **That the proposal to set up 12 'Lancashire Locals' be supported in principle, subject to the County Council giving further consideration to the following relevant issues raised at a recent meeting of the District Leaders' Forum:**
 - a mechanism to be found to link the Lancashire Locals with the 12 Local Strategic Partnerships;
 - agreement to the principle that the Chair and Vice-Chair are elected by Members who serve on each Lancashire Local;
 - individual Lancashire Locals to have the discretion to create their own agendas rather than acting as a platform to discuss Lancashire County Council generic matters;
 - mechanisms for public participation to be carefully thought through to avoid undue influence by a vocal minority;
 - thought to be given to the tie in of Lancashire Locals with each District's locality agenda and, in particular, the increasingly important focus on neighbourhoods.
2. **That, provided a satisfactory response is obtained from the Lancashire County Council to the concerns identified on (1) above, the Council be recommended to appoint at its next Annual Meeting on 16 May 2006 seven Borough Councillors (one of which is required to be an Executive Member) to serve on the Chorley Lancashire Local.**

Reason for decision:

The Lancashire Locals will provide an opportunity for District Council's and the Lancashire County Council to work together more effectively to improve local services.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

None.

06.EC.11 CHORLEY STRATEGIC REGIONAL SITE UPDATE

The Deputy Chief Executive advised the Executive Cabinet that, following extensive negotiations over the past three years, part of the strategic regional site at Euxton Lane, Euxton had been remediated and transferred to Lex Automotives. This would now facilitate the relocation of Lex Automotives and the major development of the strategic regional site, as well as the residential redevelopment of Lex's current site at Pilling Lane.

The Lex development was also expected to trigger the opening up of the remainder of the adjoining areas for development and the completion of the new link road to Central

Avenue and Buckshaw Village. It was envisaged that the transaction could result ultimately in developments yielding a potential 2,000 new jobs.

The Cabinet commended the efforts of the Deputy Chief Executive, the Head of Development and Regeneration and the Head of Property Services, and their staff, in the successful completion of the complex and protracted negotiations.

Decision made:

That the report be noted.

06.EC.12 FAIR TRADE TOWNS INITIATIVE

The Executive Cabinet was reminded that, at its meeting on 3 November 2005, the Cabinet had confirmed its support of the Fair Trade Towns Initiative and the provision of Fair Trade products at Council meetings.

Subsequently, the Council had been requested to appoint a representative to serve on the Chorley Fair Trade Steering Group.

Decision made:

That the Council be recommended to nominate a non-Executive Member as this Authority's representative on the Chorley Fair Trade Steering Group.

Reason for recommendation:

In order to respond to a request and ensure that the Council is able to participate in the business of the Steering Group.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

None.

06.EC.13 CHORLEY TOWN CENTRE ACTION AREA AND RETAIL AND LEISURE POLICIES PREFERRED OPTIONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT

The Head of Development and Regeneration presented a report seeking endorsement of the draft Chorley Town Centre Action Area and Retail and Leisure Policies Preferred Options Development Plan Document for consultation purposes.

The document set out the preferred planning policy and development options to enable the Council to undertake its responsibility to promote retail, leisure and other development requirements in relation to four identified priorities for the town centre. The document revised and updated existing policies in order to meet modern challenges to retain the vitality and competitiveness of the town centre and outlined aspirations for future developments.

The document was required to be finalised for public consultation by March 2006, in order to meet the milestones identified for the production of the various documents that would make up the Local Development Framework for the Borough.

The Executive Member for Development and Planning expressed the Cabinet's appreciation of the Head of Development and Regeneration's Planning Policy Section in meeting the identified milestones and production targets.

Decision made:

That the Council be recommended to approve, for consultation and community involvement purposes, the Chorley Town Centre Action Area and Retail and Leisure Policies Preferred Options Development Plan Document, subject to the agreed amendments of Policies R.10 and R.13 and to the Head of Development and Regeneration being granted delegated authority to make any necessary minor textural amendments to the document.

Reason for Recommendation:

Planning Policy Statement 6 (PPS6): Planning for Town Centres states that Council's should be pro-active in their approach to town centres, produce Town Centre Strategies and plan for future development in the town. 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 Development Plan Documents, as part of the Local Development Framework and the Council has already agreed, following earlier consultation on planning issues for the Borough, that one of these documents will be on Chorley Town Centre, Retail and Leisure matters.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

None.

06.EC.14 DELIVERING THE CORPORATE PROCUREMENT STRATEGY

The Director of Legal Services and the Head of Customer, Democratic and Office Support Services presented a joint report on the progress to date in respect of the measures taken to meet the appropriate milestones identified in the National Local Government Procurement Strategy and the targets set out in the Corporate Procurement Strategy approved in May 2004.

The report confirmed that, as at November 2005, 22 of the 24 national milestones had been achieved and that the total savings over the 5 year life of the strategy had been calculated at £1,078,044, which was far in excess of the savings target of £500,000. In addition, a number of additional areas where there was potential opportunity to achieve savings as a result of the procurement exercise had also been identified.

Decisions made:

- 1. That the report and progress achieved on implementing the Corporate Procurement Strategy and meeting the milestones contained in the National Local Government Procurement Strategy be noted.**
- 2. That the Corporate Procurement Strategy be revised and updated to incorporate:**
 - the Options Appraisal Results Indicator, set out in Appendix B to the submitted report, as a scoring template for the evaluation of all future options for the commissioning of services;**
 - the recommended approach to partnership and collaboration, set out in Appendix C to the submitted report;**
 - a more detailed procurement strategy, set out in Appendix D to the submitted report.**

Reason for decisions:

The recommendations will ensure that the Corporate Procurement Strategy complies with the National Local Government Procurement Strategy and recommendations

from the Audit Commission, particularly in respect of the strategic approach taken by the Council to partnership and collaboration.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

None.

06.EC.15 REVISION OF RACE EQUALITY SCHEME

The Head of Corporate and Policy Services submitted a report seeking the Executive Cabinet's endorsement of the revised and updated Race Equality Scheme.

The amendments to the original scheme had taken account of the responses to the review consultation with Service Heads, the Corporate Diversity Group, the Chorley Partnership, the Disability Forum, the Asian Women's Forum, the Muslim Welfare and the Ethnic Minorities Consultative Committee.

Decision made:

That the updated Race Equality Scheme, as now presented, be approved for publication.

Reason for decision:

The production and regular review of a Race Equality Scheme is a statutory obligation imposed on local authorities by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act, 2000.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

None.

06.EC.16 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED - That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 7 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972.

06.EC.17 MINUTES

The non-public minutes of the meeting of the Executive Cabinet held on 1 December 2005 were confirmed as a correct record for signature by the Executive Leader.

06.EC.18 HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Approval to (i) the immediate implementation of Disciplinary and Sickness Absence Policies and Procedures; and (ii) the implementation of a Redundancy Policy, subject to further consultation with UNISON on one issue.

06.EC.19 DUXBURY PARK GOLF COURSE - DRAFT HEAD OF TERMS

Approval to the negotiated draft Head of Terms forming the basis of a 25 year contract with Glendale Golf for the management and operation of Duxbury Park Golf Course.

Executive Leader