

Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - Highways issues

Agenda and Reports

For consideration on

Tuesday, 20th October 2009

In Committee Room 2, Town Hall, Chorley

At 6.30 pm



PROCEDURE FOR PUBLIC QUESTIONS/SPEAKING AT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MEETINGS

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

14 October 2009

Dear Councillor

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TASK GROUP - HIGHWAYS ISSUES -
TUESDAY, 20TH OCTOBER 2009**

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - Highways issues to be held in Committee Room 2, Town Hall, Chorley on Tuesday, 20th October 2009 commencing at 6.30 pm.

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for absence**

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

To confirm as a correct the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - Highways issues of meeting held on 17 September 2009 (enclosed).

3. **Declarations of any interests**

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

If the personal interest is a prejudicial interest, you must withdraw from the meeting. Normally you should leave the room before the business starts to be discussed. You do, however, have the same right to speak as a member of the public and may remain in the room to enable you to exercise that right and then leave immediately. In either case you must not seek to improperly influence a decision on the matter.

4. **Collecting and Considering Evidence (Pages 5 - 22)**

To consider a Public Realm Integration Project report considered by the Lancashire County Council Executive Cabinet on 8 October 2009 (enclosed).

Please could Members also bring their agendas for the previous meeting as this encloses:

- Extracts of other Scrutiny inquiries undertaken by Lancashire Authorities.
- Extract from Lancashire County Council Sustainable Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 15 July 2009.
- Customer Contact information from Lancashire County Council and Chorley Council.

5. **Draft Final Report (Pages 23 - 28)**

To consider the draft final report of the Task and Finish Group.

A flip chart will be used to capture discussions around findings and recommendations for each objective.

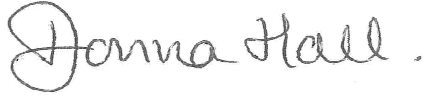
6. **Project Plan (Pages 29 - 30)**

To consider and determine:

- the enclosed project plan,
- dates to interview outstanding witnesses and draft questions for the interview sessions,
- information to be presented to future meetings,
- dates for future meetings – the proposed date for the next meeting is 18 November.

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

Yours sincerely



Donna Hall
Chief Executive

Ruth Rimmington
Democratic and Member Services Officer
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Distribution

1. Agenda and reports to all Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - Highways issues (Councillor Mike Devaney (Chair), Councillor Alan Cullens (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Ken Ball, Nora Ball, Doreen Dickinson, Roy Lees, Adrian Lowe, Marion Lowe and June Molyneaux for attendance.
2. Agenda and reports to Martin Walls (Service Manager - Streetscene Services) and Ruth Rimmington (Democratic and Member Services Officer) for attendance.
3. Agenda and reports to Sarah Palmer (District Partnership Officer) for attendance.

This information can be made available to you in larger print or on audio tape, or translated into your own language.

Please telephone 01257 515118 to access this service.

આ માહિતીનો અનુવાદ આપની પોતાની ભાષામાં કરી શકાય છે. આ સેવા સરળતાથી મેળવવા માટે કૃપા કરી, આ નંબર પર ફોન કરો: 01257 515822 01257 515823

ان معلومات کا ترجمہ آپ کی اپنی زبان میں بھی کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ یہ خدمت استعمال کرنے کیلئے براہ مہربانی اس نمبر پر ٹیلیفون

کیجئے:

Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - Highways issues

Thursday, 17 September 2009

Present: Councillor Mike Devaney (Chair) and Ken Ball, Nora Ball, Doreen Dickinson, Adrian Lowe, Marion Lowe and June Molyneaux

Chorley Council officers: Ishbel Murray (Corporate Director (Neighbourhoods)), Martin Walls (Service Manager - Streetscene Services) and Ruth Rimmington (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

Also in attendance: Jo Turton (Executive Director for the Environment), Rick Hayton (Traffic and Safety Network Manager), Sarah Palmer (District Partnership Officer) and Keith Iddon (Chair of LCC Sustainable Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

09.HTG.15 WELCOME

The Chair welcomed Jo Turton, (Executive Director for the Environment), Rick Hayton (Traffic and Safety Network Manager) from Lancashire County Council and Councillor Keith Iddon to the meeting.

09.HTG.16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Roy Lees and County Councillor Keith Young (Executive Member for Highways and Transport).

09.HTG.17 MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - Highways issues held on 3 August 2009 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

09.HTG.18 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

No Members declared an interest in respect of items on the agenda.

09.HTG.19 DRAFT SCOPING DOCUMENT

Members considered the scoping document, which had been updated to reflect the amendments made at the last meeting.

RESOLVED – The document be approved for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

09.HTG.20 COLLECTING AND CONSIDERING EVIDENCE

At the suggestions of the Chair it was AGREED to consider this information at the next meeting of the Task and Finish Group to enable the focus of this meeting to be the following item.

09.HTG.21 DISCUSSIONS WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Jo outlined that the services provided in this area were being named “public realm”, although it was difficult to find a name for this “green and black” area that was so important to customers and had reputational issues for the County Council.

The customer doesn't care how as long as the service is delivered – the challenge was how to deliver the best services and between LCC and Chorley Council. Clear accountability on service delivery and the provision of good services were needed.

Relationships were not as good as they should be following the termination of the Highways Partnership. A pilot had recently been undertaken with South Ribble, funded by Team Lancashire; to see how alternative arrangements could work. The two authorities considered the services to be delivered, the budget available and between them worked out how best to deliver them.

South Ribble now do all the grass cutting and maintenance of shrubs and trees. LCC previously delivered five cuts per year whilst South Ribble could deliver ten cuts per year and tailor the service to different parts of the district. There was better co-ordination, for example, litter was picked before the grass was cut. LCC still maintain the roads and pavements, and co-ordinate road closures with other agencies.

The customer satisfaction figures had not yet been received but positive anecdotal evidence had been received. The challenge now was how to roll this out with other Districts. A report would be presented to the LCC Cabinet on 8 October 2009 setting out project plan for this with the aim being to have agreements with all twelve districts by October 2010.

The Locality Plan was discussed as the potential monitoring mechanism for this, to enable monitoring from LCC, the District and the Lancashire Local. Members were keen to progress this project with a drive to work closely with districts. The Environment Directorate would need to look forward on how to be organised and deliver on a district footprint going forward.

The aim was to roll out with Districts, then have the option in the second year to involve parishes. In response to a query Jo agreed to take parish views on planning applications and highways comments through the public realm strategy negotiations.

Members suggested a pilot for Chorley, although the key would be in the detailed arrangements. There were particular areas where the Council would like to be proactive during a pilot, such as highway or footpath obstruction, parking on footpaths, shops in town centre encroaching, advertising boards etc.

Internal communication between offices would be an area of improvement in the coming months. The Directorate could work more efficiently with the contact centre and done some work had been undertaken relating to street lighting which had improved service efficiency. The contact centre would be relocated from the Hub to Preston City centre. The LCC website had been used by several Councillors to report issues.

Jo distributed a document containing key contacts for use by Chorley Councillors and undertook to forward the Highways Plan and map with grits bins to officers. The Public Enquiry Manager system received 1,000 calls a week, feedback was not offered out right but this would be developed in the future. 80% of enquiries were dealt with promptly – this needed to be communicated to the public more. Currently Councillors and officers were treated the same as members of the public. It was suggested that for County or Borough Councillors automatically receive feedback – this would be looked into.

A highways bulletin was in development which could be rolled out to Districts. Going forward there would be regularly meetings with District officers. Keeping people informed of progress would reduce the need for repeat contacts from customers and Councillors.

The issue of enforcement, for example, encroaching trees was considered. If trees were privately owned the owner would be given fourteen days to cut it down or LCC

could cut it down and claim the cost back. "A" boards were a sensitive issue, purges were occasional could be resource intensive. Communication was an important factor with this issue.

Chorley officers outlined their aspiration to undertake some enforcement activities, for example, fly tipping. Chorley would like to provide a wrap around service in conjunction with neighbourhood working the proactive and preventative activities this entailed. A well worded letter could be very effective. It was agreed this would be a positive way forward.

Members raised the provision of highways comments on planning applications as Chorley had recently had an appeal overturned, the traffic surveys were out of date and not done at right time. Jo advised she was looking at how to take this forward with the Corporate Director (Business) at Chorley and an officer would be based one day a week in Chorley as a pilot to pick up local intelligence.

Members considered the Streetscene Services Agreement and that Chorley have not yet signed this three year agreement. Rick advised the agreement represented a historical approach, the issue was the need to build in lessons learned from the pilot in South Ribble and put these into future agreements. The intention was to be flexible and to review the agreements in twelve months.

This issue of information being cascaded with Police, in particular between meetings was considered, between PACT, road safety and other meetings. Jo advised there was liaison with the Police, with regular road safety liaison meetings, although feedback could be improved. A further discussion would be needed on how PACT and Lancashire Locals could work together, for example, a regular bulletin could be produced.

The relationships with Utility companies were discussed, United Utilities had attended and Overview and Scrutiny Committee at LCC and there were quarterly coordination meetings. The outcomes were produced into a spreadsheet distributed to the Police, LCC, United Utilities and Chorley Council. This meeting was evolving and Chorley officers would be invited to future meetings.

Sarah advised that the Lancashire Local Chorley had a number of delegated powers relating to LCC highways functions, as well as a wider shaping and influencing role. Sarah had previously provided Ruth with a copy of the Lancashire Local Constitution as background information to the Task Group. In response to a question about the future of Lancashire Local's under the new administration, Sarah outlined that while it was likely that the new administration may want to review the Lancashire Local initiative, she was not aware of any plans to abolish the Lancashire Locals.

Sarah explained that the Lancashire Local would be responsible for performance monitoring the Chorley Locality Plan which contained a number of joint LCC / Chorley Council commitments around highways and street scene services.

It was agreed to send a copy of the final report of this inquiry to Lancashire Locals for their information.

The Neighbourhood Working action plan sign off meetings had recently been held, where the some projects have been the subject of traffic management and safety. These could be used to identify funding going forward.

Jo noted the duplication of meetings needed to be streamlined and the team structure at LCC supported this. There were some successes to report with recent changes, for example, the Police now will monitor speeding traffic without a set criteria of accidents.

The Chair thanked Jo and Rick for their attendance and expressed his hope that some of the initiatives discussed would go forward from this point.

Councillors Adrian and Marion Lowe left the meeting at 7.45pm.

09.HTG.22 PROJECT PLAN

Members noted that communication between all partners would be vital going forward and that the proof would be in the delivery. There would be a need to be clear on performance measures, costs and accountability. Officers advised that Chorley have been assured consultation on LCC spending plans.

It was AGREED to review the information considered so far to enable Members to review the inquiry objectives at next the meeting. This would ensure any points that have been missed to be picked up, this would include budget implications in time for next budget round.

Chair

Cabinet – 8 October 2009

Report of the Executive Director of Environment

Part I - Item No. 6 (a)

Electoral Division affected:
All

Public Realm Integration Project

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:

Jo Turton, 01772 534450, Environment Directorate, jo.turton@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

The detailed report attached of Appendix A sets out proposals to roll-out countywide, the good practice developed from pilot work with South Ribble and Burnley Borough Councils. Covering highway and streetscene issues that are delivered by both Lancashire County Council and the District Councils, this project focuses on better, joined up working across the two-tiers of local government to ensure that the people of Lancashire receive high quality, value for money services.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Cabinet,

- i. notes the content of this report,
- ii. approves that the Public Realm Integration Project commences from October 2009 to develop the arrangements with each District and authorises the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport and the Executive Director for the Environment to undertake the work required, and
- iii. requests a report back in 12 months time on the progress of this project.

Background and Advice

The "public realm" is best described as "a fence to fence" service, covering e.g. highways, grass verges, trees and shrubs, street lights, signs, street furniture and litter. These are issues that matter to local people and that are important in defining a positive sense of place.

In the current two-tier structure these services are delivered by both Lancashire County Council and the District Councils. Whilst this has the potential for disjointed delivery and a lack of accountability the reality is that the public don't care who delivers the services, only that they are to a good standard and provide value for money.

In recognition of this challenge, Team Lancashire sponsored a pilot project to improve integration between Lancashire County Council and Burnley and South Ribble Borough Councils. Whilst the pilot work with Burnley Borough Council focussed on strategic planning issues, the South Ribble Borough Council pilot focussed on streetscene/public realm services. This pilot has been evaluated and is widely seen as being a success and the attached report details proposals to develop this work further and roll this out to all 12 District Councils in the next 12 months as the Public Realm Integration Project.

The pilot work at South Ribble Borough Council focussed on the 'clean and green agenda' and this is seen as phase one of the public realm project. Learning from the pilot made it clear though that this does not capture all the areas of interest/concerns from the District Councils and therefore the project is defined into the following phases:

- Phase 1 clean and green (as above).
- Phase 2 public realm management, including signage, street furniture, street clutter and removal of obstructions.
- Phase 3 safe and sustainable communities with a focus on better integration of enforcement and inspection regimes.
- Phase 4 strategic planning.

The report, attached at Appendix 'A', focuses on the delivery of phase one over the course of the next year. Clearly, as detailed in a later report on this agenda, the County Council's Environment Directorate will also be undergoing considerable change over the next 12 months. Whilst phase one work can be readily incorporated into any new arrangements it is recommended that a progress report be prepared at the end of phase one which would also give Cabinet an opportunity to consider phase two to follow.

The report at Appendix 'A' sets out a recommended timeline for roll out with the District Councils as follows: first work stream = Wyre, Chorley, Ribble Valley and Rossendale. This workstream will begin work in October 2009 and will include a continuation of the pilot work with South Ribble Borough Council. Second work stream: Lancaster, Preston, Pendle and Hyndburn. This work stream will begin work in June 2010 and will include continuation of the pilot work with Burnley Borough Council.

It is suggested that the Lancashire Local Committees are, in the first instance, the best vehicle for governance of this project in terms of developing the agenda and determining the possible content of the Public Realm Agreements with each of the District Councils. A further option could be to use the Multi Area Agreement governance structures as they develop. A review of the governance arrangements will be included in the progress report due in October 2010.

Consultations

All 12 District Councils.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

No significant risks have been identified in relation to the proposals contained within this report.

Financial

The intention of this project is to utilise available resources in a more cost effective way. To that extent any proposals arising should be contained within existing budget provision.

Legal

Legal issues which will need to be addressed during the project may include delegation of powers and the enabling of statutory functions to be carried out by the appropriate Council under agreements under S101 Local Government Act 1972 and other agreed arrangements

Any representations made to the Cabinet prior to the issue being considered in accordance with the Public Notice of Forward Plans

Name:	Organisation:	Comments:
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N/A.

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers**

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Tel
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N/A.

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A.

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Public Realm Integration Project

1. Public realm - Background to Current arrangements

- 1.1. Lancashire County Council has been responsible for the delivery of all highway related functions since Local Government Reorganisation in 1974.
- 1.2. At that time, District and Borough Councils within the county were offered an Agency Agreement whereby the district Council carried out various functions as highway authority including the maintenance of defined roads in their area. - described as 'core areas'. Certain District Councils declined to take on any highways maintenance responsibilities but did carry out other highway functions, whilst others were happy to agree to the more comprehensive Agency agreement. This resulted in different levels of responsibility for service delivery across each district.
- 1.3. In 2003, the original Agency Agreements were terminated and replaced with a Lancashire Highways Partnership Agreement. This was, in turn, superseded by a Residual Highways Partnership in 2006. In both cases, the agency to carry out some highway functions were passed to the District Councils but delivery of most highway services reverted to the County Council; District Councils being responsible for street cleansing and some associated services.
- 1.4. In 2009, following further consultation, a street services agreement was proposed to the District and Borough Councils that outlined the division of services between Lancashire County Council and the District under a new agency agreement. At the time of writing, not all districts have signed their particular Street Services Agreement.
- 1.5. Highways and Environmental Management currently manage service Delivery for public realm works through three area offices as follows:

Area	North	South	East
Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fylde • Lancaster • Wyre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chorley • Preston • South Ribble • West Lancashire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burnley • Hyndburn • Pendle • Ribble Valley • Rossendale
• Population	• 312747	• 442331	• 379898
• Road length (kms)	• 2063	• 2343	• 2173
• Street lights and lit signs	• 42712	• 71256	• 50392
• Gullies	• 82095	• 102034	• 97656
• Structures	• 1782	• 1062	• 1693

The term Road above refers to publicly maintainable vehicular highways

2. Public Realm - Differing Perspectives and Focus

- 2.1. One of the main duties of Lancashire County Council, as highway authority, is to maintain the adopted highway network in a safe condition meeting both statutory

requirements and the needs of highway users. The highway authority also has power to improve the highway network.

- 2.2. The focus on safety, network maintenance and network enhancement is based on the statutory duty placed on the County as the Highway Authority and the professional practice of the highway engineers employed by the County. Consequently, the highways teams within the County Council see the main purpose of a highway as a means of providing a safe passage for the public traffic entitled to use it.
- 2.3. The priorities for members and officers within the District councils are different and their view of the importance of the highway is seen in terms of defining their sense of place and of giving them an identity. For the District Council, vehicular roads and streets:
 - are the places on which their residents live, work and meet
 - give a sense of identity to the towns, villages and locality
 - become enablers to economic development
 - attract visitors and tourists
 - are places on which retail outlets are developed
- 2.4. This fundamental difference in perspective on the purpose of the highway leads to differing priorities and nowhere is this more pronounced than in the area of the public realm. The County Council takes the view that the surface of publicly maintainable highways vest in the Council, and it is responsible for, the infrastructure; the district council's take the view that they own the streets and the sense of place created by the public realm.
- 2.5. An example of the differing perspectives lies in the cutting of grass verges. The County Council takes the view that grass at the side of the road should be cut to safe levels – on average 5 times per year. District Council's take the view that there should be an increase in the number of annual cuts to enhance the image of the district. As a result, they may be looking to cut the verges up to 14 times per year.
- 2.6. A further example can be seen in relation to planned public realm improvement schemes. The County Council's design team will give primary consideration to the safety and functionality of the highway; aesthetics, the choice of paving materials and street furniture will take a lesser priority in the design phase. These elements, however, are key to the district council in creating an improved sense of place.
- 2.7. These differing viewpoints lead to budgetary and decision making tensions between County and District. Evidence of this can be observed in the agenda items of the Lancashire Locals groups, the exchange of views between elected members and correspondence and discussions between officers at both County and District levels.
- 2.8. The pilot programme in South Ribble looked at a more integrated approach to working on the public realm and was successful in integrating both service delivery, a one team approach and improved customer focus.

3. Issues with the existing arrangements

- 3.1. As a result of differences in agreements over many years (i.e. Agency, Highways partnership, and residual partnership) service delivery in the public realm is fragmented and inconsistent. There is frequently confusion about service delivery and responsibility for services and geographic areas of land. This leads to tensions between the County Council and the District Councils at both member and officer level.
- 3.2. The organisational structure within the Environment Directorate and Highway Environmental Management in particular, is confusing. For instance, the roles between the commissioning and service delivery functions are unclear and this leads to confusion in both County Council and District colleagues over roles and responsibilities. The proposed restructure of the Directorate will go some way to alleviate these issues.
- 3.3. There is a disjoint between the strategy for Highways developed within the Highway and Environmental team; the Area Management; the operational delivery supplied by Lancashire County Engineering Services; and the needs of the District and Borough councils. This is primarily caused by the current structure, the lack of role clarity and accountability and inadequate performance management mechanisms.
- 3.4. There are few formal meetings, forums, or mechanisms between County Council and District officers for the exchange of views or ideas on highway or public realm matters and this leads to frustration, inertia and wasted time. In preparing this plan, District council officer gave clear views that they wanted more integration with the County on public realm matters.
- 3.5. The recent Place Survey results indicate that the customer places a high score on the repair and maintenance of the highway, clean streets and a reduction in traffic congestion. There is dissatisfaction with roads and pavements with over 35% of respondents believing that this area needed the most improvement. This view was spread across the County which indicates wide dissatisfaction, in varying degree, with the current arrangements
- 3.6. There is frustration and confusion over customer contact arrangements with customers having different numbers to ring for District and County council services and this needs to be addressed. Customer contact arrangements between the County and District Councils will need to be more integrated as customers seek a one team approach.
- 3.7. The public realm is important in the economic life of the County, particularly in the area of tourism. Local authorities, the County included, are major providers of visitor services but the lack of joined up processes, in relation to the public realm, impairs the effectiveness of the overall strategy. Tourism, as a discretionary activity, is at a real risk of being squeezed in harsher financial climates by the need to deliver statutory services with reduced budgets. This can be reduced, or even avoided, in Lancashire by making savings and efficiencies in the current operation and the way that services are delivered.

4. Drivers for change

- 4.1. Strong evidence exists from surveys, comments and complaints that the public, elected Members and officers at both County and District level want a more integrated approach to public realm works. In preparing this plan, officers talked openly about their being a need for “a one team approach’, more “joined up and integrated services’ and ‘joint service provision with retained local democracy”.
- 4.2. There are over 180 parish and town councils in Lancashire covering both rural and urban areas. Parish councils are playing an increasing role in the development of their localities and issues relating to the public realm are high on their list of priorities. The public realm project will engage with the Parish councils through existing channels to ensure that their representations and views are incorporated.
- 4.3. More joined-up, efficient service delivery in two-tier authorities was clearly outlined by Central Government in “Strong and Prosperous Communities - the Local Government White Paper” of 2006. This paper is clear that councils working under two tier arrangements should aim to achieve unified service delivery models with service users having no need to understand whether the county, district or other service provider is responsible. Central arguments of the White paper centre on a stronger leadership for place-shaping at both county and district level and more flexibility to respond to local needs and local priorities so that local people have a say in the way services are delivered.

5. Public Realm Integration Project

- 5.1. For the reasons outlined in the previous sections we recommend a Public Realm Integration Project that builds on the success of the South Ribble Pilot and will identify the arrangements of working appropriate with each District Council to prepare to deliver a more integrated service based upon a district council footprint.

6. Public Realm Strategy

- 6.1. The Project will be defined by a Public Realm Strategy which will provide clear direction on:
 - The scope of Integration and delivery of public realm services
 - Determine what will be achieved and how
 - Project objectives and priorities
 - Timescales and achievability
- 6.2. The strategy will be developed during Phase 1 of the Project and will adopt a “One Team” approach encompassing service delivery by County, Districts, Parishes and external providers.
- 6.3. The Public Realm Strategy will be a dynamic document and as phases 2, 3 and 4 of the Public Realm Project commence the Public Realm Strategy will be developed and updated.

7. Public Realm Agreements

- 7.1. The outcome of the project will result in a separate District Public Realm Agreement with each District Council. The Public Realm Agreements will supersede the Residual Services Agreement or the Street Services Agreement, which ever is in place.

8. Potential Benefits of the Public Realm Integration Project

- 8.1. The pilot project in South Ribble showed that improved co-ordination across a range of Highway, transport and environmental activities resulted in more efficient and customer focused service. In addition, working relationships and understanding between officers at County and District level were improved as traditional cultural barriers were removed.
- 8.2. Whilst customer satisfaction was not measured specifically during the South Ribble pilot, it is likely that a more integrated approach will positively impact on customer perception. Particularly in areas that currently score low on satisfaction levels.
- 8.3. There is potential for reducing the amount of non added value activities through the consolidation and integration of some of the services. Estimates are difficult to quantify at this stage until more detailed analysis of processes are available and directorate restructuring is finalised.
- 8.4. A more collaborative approach to procurement with the District Councils would realise significant savings. At the moment, the benefits of combined procurement and the economies of scale are not being achieved by either the County or the Districts.
- 8.5. Organising inspection regimes around clearer defined local areas, with multi-disciplinary teams working towards common outcomes would focus on local needs and enhance community engagement.
- 8.6. Moving to a more locally based service will reduce the travel distance for vehicles and machinery and will have a positive impact on carbon emissions and fuel costs.
- 8.7. Delivering the project through the area offices will increase the dialogue, understanding and integration of the County and District councils on Public Realm matters.

9. Member, Officer and Customer Engagement

- 9.1. The project will have regular engagement, communication and dialogue with elected members at County, District and Parish level. This will be done through a mixture of formal reporting, one to one and collective meetings and defined links to the Lancashire Locals, MAA clusters and other local committees.
- 9.2. The Public Realm Integration Project will act as a catalyst for public opinion on public realm issues and will map customer perception and satisfaction levels in each locality prior to the start of the project. Results will be baseline mapped

prior to the start of the project and periodically tested against this base. This will give counties and districts early indication of customer perception and satisfaction levels and mechanisms for early intervention.

- 9.3. County and District officers will be engaged in the project through workshops and one to one meetings. The Public Realm Integration project will act as a vehicle for debate at officer level and for improved integration between the County Council officers and the District and Parish Councils and the Highways Area offices. The Project team is identified below

10. The Project - Phases and Tasks

- 10.1. The project sets out the services and functions which require consideration to achieve an integrated approach to the development of Public Realm strategies.
- 10.2. The project is divided into 4 Phases;
- Phase 1 - Service delivery – Clean and Green activities
 - Phase 2 - Service delivery - Wider aspects of public realm integration
 - Phase 3 - Operational Management - Integrated working with Communities
 - Phase 4 - Strategic Management and Policy Decisions
- 10.3. Each Phase will be rolled out across all 12 Districts in three work streams working concurrently. To further integrate the working of the Environmental Area Offices with the District and Parish councils, the work streams will be organised around the area office structure.

For Phase one this would be

- Workstream 1 - **South Ribble, Wyre, Chorley, Ribble Valley, Rossendale**
- Workstream 2 - **Lancaster, Preston, Pendle, Hyndburn**
- Workstream 3 - **Fylde, West Lancashire, Burnley**

- 10.4. The district order for phases two, three and four will be determined on completion of Phase 1 and will rotate the order of approach for area implementation.
- 10.5. As part of each phase reviews will be carried out to identify the most efficient and effective method of service integration. This will include reviews, analysis and potential redesign of:
- Decision making and agreements
 - Budgets and funding
 - Risks and Liabilities
 - Service Specification
 - Customer Contact Arrangements
 - Processes
 - Communication
 - Service Specifications
 - Priorities
 - Roles and responsibilities
 - Technical capability
 - Logistics

- 10.6. A complete suite of data for the purpose of benefit analysis will be baselined at the start of the project and progress will be measured against this data. These data sets will include comprehensive data on:
- Operational performance
 - Resources
 - Budgets
 - Customer Satisfaction

11. Phase 1 - Service delivery – Clean and Green activities

- 11.1. Progress has already been made in joining up mainly “green” services as part the Public Realm Pilot scheme in South Ribble Borough Council. To build on this success the Public Realm Project will initially focus on integrating the “Green” services and will look to build similar agreements with the remaining districts.
- 11.2. The model developed in the South Ribble pilot will be used as a blueprint for the roll out of “Clean & Green” activities in Phase One and the services and functions to be considered will be:
- Grass verge maintenance
 - Weed control
 - Tree & shrub maintenance
 - Leaf sweeping
 - Clearing wind blown sand
 - Enforcement of overhanging vegetation
- 11.3. The reviews will primarily focus on the potential transfer of services, budgets and resources between the County and District councils whilst also giving consideration to ensuring value for money is enhanced or at least retained.
- 11.4. Service standards will be reviewed and agreed acceptable standards will be a key feature of the way forward.
- 11.5. The Project team will look at risks, liabilities, contractual and HR issues as part of their remit and a complete range of options will be discussed with the District Councils.
- 11.6. A framework approach will be developed by the Project team in which District Councils can “opt in” on an area basis and will remain equally equitable to the County Council.

12. Phase 2 - Service delivery. Wider aspects of public realm integration

- 12.1. This phase will include the review of a wider range of services that are relevant to effective public realm management and are compatible with services delivered by all three council tiers – County, District and Parish. e.g. a consistent approach to the maintenance and management of signage and “street clutter”, especially in town centres.
- 12.2. The focus will be on areas of streetscene and public realm services that may benefit from more local knowledge, intervention or service delivery.
- 12.3. Services and functions for consideration in Phase 2 are:

- Removal of obstructions from the Highway
- Drainage repairs
- Gully cleansing
- Lengthsman scheme
- Signage (non-illuminated)
- Street furniture
- Public Conveniences

12.4. Reviews of each service activity will focus on:

- Current and future processes for service delivery
- Cost benefits of status quo and any recommended changes
- The benefits (or not) to the resident, business, visitor and local authorities of the County and District of delivering the services in a different manner.
- The feasibility or possibility of the transfer of services
- Impact on budgets and resources at county, district and parish levels
- Proposed service standards and outcomes

13. Phase 3 – Operational Management – More integrated working with Communities.

13.1. The focus for Phase 3 will be improving the way that the District and County engage with the communities and provide a safe and sustainable environment. This will include both District and County inspection regimes and enforcement activities.

13.2. Phase 3 will also consider how a co-ordinated approach to enforcement throughout each district for enforcement powers in relation to street cleansing, refuse, street trading, footway parking, builder's materials, abandoned vehicles, highway obstructions, fly posting and other associated legislation will improve the public realm.

13.3. The services and functions to be reviewed in this phase are;

- Inspection regimes
 - More District & community focused
 - Consideration of multi-function and multi skilled
 - Links to neighbourhood engagement teams
 - Inspection priorities & maintenance specifications
 - Streetscene audits
- Enforcement, Permits and Licences
 - Obstructions
 - Overhanging vegetation
 - Planning
 - Disabled access
 - On street activities
 - Permits and licences
 - Special events
 - TRO
- Highway Routine/Planned Maintenance
 - Specification
 - Co-ordination
 - Materials Palette

- 13.4. As in the previous phase, the Reviews will focus on feasibility, business case, impacts, service standards and service delivery.

14. Phase 4 – Strategic Services and Policy Decisions

- 14.1. Phase 4 will consider the whole street approach to Public Realm by improving the collaborations and communication on planning and development and providing the districts with the ability to make decisions on design, influence local schemes and have a say in where funding is spent.

- 14.2. By Phase 4 the project will have gained momentum and integration and we propose reviewing services with wider ranging implications for the county and communities e.g. parking and winter maintenance.

- 14.3. Service for review in this phase will include:

- **Planning & design**

- Improving local input into decisions
- Improved decision making (fast tracking)
- Design codes and materials pallets
- Mechanisms for early integration of planning and design in local schemes
- Improved communication between strategic functions, technical officers and the District
- More defined links and support of locality and master plans
- Visibility of forward planning, budgetary planning and future proofing public realm service across the county

- **Local funding – Options Appraisals**

- Section 106 & Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980
- Sponsorship and Advertising in the Public Realm

- **Parking**

- On street/Off street
- Residents Parking

- **Winter maintenance and related streetscene activities**

- **Lighting**

- Street Lighting
- Amenity lighting
- Public Building lighting
- Attachments
- Advertising

- **Public Rights of Way/Countryside services**

- Maintenance
- Improvements
- Shared information and asset management

- 14.4. Reviews will adopt the approach of reviews in previous phases but there will be more emphasis on feasibility studies, options appraisals and recommendations that may need to be considered by wider colleagues in the County Council.

15. Interface with other County Council Projects

- 15.1. A number of other initiatives and projects are currently ongoing in the County Council and the deliverables of some of these projects may have an impact on the scope and direction of the Public Realm Integration. Therefore, all outcomes from other related projects will be considered for inclusion in the recommendations that will be identified throughout the Public Realm Project lifecycle.

16. Project Governance

- 16.1. Project governance plays a vital role in the successful delivery of public sector change projects and is key to maintaining the links between elected members and officers, and between County and District Councils. Effective project governance provides strategic direction and ensures that the project is moving at the correct pace and with the right balance of control.

17. Lancashire Local Committees

- 17.1. The County Council has, in partnership with District Councils, established Lancashire Local Committees to strengthen policy making to reflect local needs and bring decision making on county functions closer to communities. Lancashire Local Committees also enhance engagement with parish and town councils.
- 17.2. The majority of discussions held at Lancashire Local Committees relates to public realm and highway issues and frequently include discussions on Traffic Regulation Orders, Traffic Calming Measures, 20 mph schemes and road safety issues.
- 17.3. It is imperative that the views of locally elected members are obtained on an integrated approach to service delivery. The Lancashire Local Committees and other locally elected groups will be kept informed on the direction and progress of the project and will have input into project direction.
- 17.4. An alternative option would be to include debate with meetings held by the MAA Clusters.

18. Project Roles and Responsibilities

18.1. Project Manager

- 18.2. The Project Manager will;
- Have overall management and co-ordination of the project.
 - Contribute to strategy, policy and procedure.
 - Manage senior relationships including those between Officers and Members.
 - Have budgetary control of the Project.
 - Monitor, and respond to, issues at the Project level

- Ensure that the benefits identified at the outset have been identified and realised

19. The Project team

- 19.1. Other project team members will be co-opted into the project as and when required by the Project Manager.
- 19.2. Some of the project activities will require full time project commitment for a defined period; others will require less input and management and can be achieved through agreed and defined project time.
- 19.3. Team member roles will vary depending on the specific focus of the project. Typically they might be to:
 - Work with users to ensure the project meets business needs
 - Documentation and analysis of current and future processes/systems
 - Identification and mapping of information needs
 - Defining requirements for reporting and interfacing
 - Work with both County and District on identifying solutions and initiatives
 - Provide functional expertise in an administrative process

20. Risk and Issue Management

- 20.1. Risks and issues will be a major factor for consideration during the management of the Project. The risks and issues will fall into two categories:
 - Service Delivery/Operational Risks and Issues
 - Project Risks and issues
- 20.2. Service Delivery and operational issues, including liabilities, and legal issues will be identified as part of each phase of the project.
- 20.3. Project risks will be dealt with as and when they arise by the project manager. Strategic risks or risks to the project direction will be escalated to the Project Board for decision and advice.

21. Project Approach

- 21.1. The project approach will be based on and will use techniques from accepted and recognised process and project methodologies that will be familiar to County Council and District council staff.

This will include;

- Development of clear objectives and scope
- Determine the feasibility and option appraisals
- Analyse data and processes
- Analyse budgets, resources, costs
- Consider liabilities and risk
- Develop business cases and cost benefit
- Discussions with all relevant stakeholders
- Benefits analysis and realisation

- 21.2. This approach will be used for each phase to ensure consistency and thoroughness. This approach will also act as a catalyst for an improved dialogue with the districts and will allow them to input into an integrated strategy for Public realm that will become an exemplar of effective two tier working.
- 21.3. There will be a closing stage at the end of every project milestone. This stage will focus on embedding continuous improvement through performance management, benefits realisation and lessons learned.

22. Performance Management

- 22.1. Performance management information is not currently used effectively to drive forward service improvements and business change. There is limited evidence of how information is being fed back through the organisation to improve future delivery and improve customer service.
- 22.2. The Public Ream Integration project will also look to focus performance management within the public realm across both the Districts and the County organisations resulting in shared objectives and targets.
- 22.3. Baseline information will be collect at the outset of the Public Realm Integration Project, against which a comparison can be made of how the changes and benefits have developed by the end of the Project.

23. Project Communication

- 23.1. A project communication plan will define all interested parties and Stakeholders in the projects and will describe the means and the frequency of communication between them. This will ensure that the all stakeholders and interested parties are kept informed of key decisions and progress during the project lifecycle.
- 23.2. Communication will take place in a variety of media and format from internal memorandum and briefings, internal and public presentations to press releases where appropriate.

24. Project Plans and Timescales

- 24.1. A high level Phase 1 plan is provided below. Detailed planning will commence at project start –up and plans for Phase 2, 3 and 4 will be developed upon completion of Phase 1.

26. Project Plan – Phase 1 to 4

Project Phase	2009			2010												2011												2012					2013	
	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb					
PHASE 1	Environmental Area & District																																	
	Environmental Area South - South Ribbles																																	
	Environmental Area North - Wyre																																	
	Environmental Area East - Ribbles Valley																																	
	Environmental Area East - Rossendale																																	
	Environmental Area South - Chorley																																	
	Environmental Area North - Lancaster																																	
	Environmental Area East - Burnley																																	
	Environmental Area East - Hyndburn																																	
	Environmental Area South - Preston																																	
Environmental Area North - Fylde																																		
Environmental Area East - Penrile																																		
Environmental Area South - West Lancs.																																		
PHASE 2	Environmental Area North - To Be Decided																																	
	Environmental Area East - To Be Decided																																	
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2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

In March 2009 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee undertook a “review of the year event”, part of which was suggestions for topics to scrutinise the following municipal year. The topic of Highways was selected as one of the top two issues and the Task and Finish Group was set up in June 2009.

The desired outcomes of the inquiry were to improve the delivery of the highways service delivered by Lancashire County Council and Chorley Council for the residents of Chorley. This could be achieved through delivering the service more efficiently and the enhancement of communication and performance monitoring between Lancashire County Council, Chorley Council, Lancashire Locals and utility companies.

Objectives

Confirm following meeting on Oct 20

Group Membership

Councillor Michael Devaney (Chair)	Councillor Alan Cullens (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Ken Ball	Councillor Nora Ball
Councillor Doreen Dickinson	Councillor Roy Lees
Councillor Adrian Lowe	Councillor Marion Lowe
Councillor June Molyneaux	

Officer Support

Martin Walls (Service Manager - Streetscene Services)
Ishbel Murray (Corporate Director (Neighbourhoods))
Sarah Palmer (District Partnership Officer)

Meetings

The meeting papers of the Group can be found on the Council's website:
www.chorley.gov.uk/scrutiny

Contribution of Evidence

The Group would like to thank all those who have provided evidence and contributed to the Inquiry.

Financial Implications

The financial implications of the recommendations are

3. METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

Evidence

The Group received and considered several reports and documents, these included:

Witnesses

Jo Turton (Executive Director for the Environment, Lancashire County Council)

Rick Hayton (Traffic and Safety Network Manager, Lancashire County Council)

4. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Objective 1: Provision of information

Public perception and communication to the public was also a key issue for consideration South Ribble

The lack of performance indicators in respect of most of the functions within the Agreement makes an assessment of performance difficult. Pendle

Performance in commenting on planning applications has been a longstanding area of concern by a number of districts in Lancashire. Pendle

The aim of the Lancashire Locals (joint Committees, comprising all the County Councillors having electoral divisions in the particular District and an equal number of Borough/District/City Councillors appointed by the District Council) is to strengthen local democratic accountability through empowering locally elected councillors to take certain decisions and shape/influence the delivery of local government services within the District. Pendle

Recommendations:

Objective 2: Communication cycles

Street lights that are not working will be mended within 5 working days if the problem is a replacement bulb or a fuse. If the problem relates to the electrical supply the matter may take longer especially if the failure is underground and has to be located, or if the matter has to be referred to United Utilities. Problems arise when the member of the public who has reported the fault notices that the street light has still not been repaired some weeks later. Usually, this problem arises due to the fault being referred to United Utilities; however, the customer will only discover this if they make a second call to the Hub. In the meantime the customer is likely to believe their call has not been dealt with. South Ribble

All Councillors and members of the public should be encouraged to use the Hub to register Highways faults in order to allow statistics to be gathered which will ultimately highlight problem areas and provide an indication of funding required. South Ribble

That the level of feedback provided to the customer after an initial query has been raised is improved by ascertaining whether the customer would like a follow up call updating them on progress. South Ribble

Recommendations:

Objective 3: Consulting and influencing

There are some districts that disagree in principle with the current arrangements. They would prefer to see urban grass cutting standards set locally, LCC & Pendle & SR.

a pilot project with South Ribble Borough council is underway to enhance public service delivery of streetscene related functions, LCC

There is scope for more cooperation between the county and district councils in making responsible decisions about highways trees. LCC

The introduction of quarterly meetings between the county and district portfolio holders should also enhance two tier working South Ribble

Removal of unauthorised signs etc Pendle undertake this

That the County Council introduces a system of consulting with Borough Council Ward Members as well as County Councillors on proposed schemes to be undertaken and whether the work has been completed satisfactorily in order to obtain feedback on the visual quality of repair to further enhance partnership working. Rossendale

Recommendations:

Objective 4: Anomalies

Recommendations:

Scrutiny Investigation – Project Plan: Highways issues

Stage and Task	Jun-22	Jul-16	Aug-03	Sep-17	Oct-20	Nov-18	Dec-10
1. Topic selected						provisional dates	
2. Scope inquiry							
• complete project outline							
• complete project plan							
3. Collect evidence							
• source information							
4. Consider evidence							
5. Report							
6. Feedback and action							
7. Monitor							

Evidence	Received
Streetscene Services agreement	y
Lancashire County Council and Chorley Council current responsibilities (outlined in minute 09.HTG.03)	y
Other scrutiny inquiries relating to highways in Lancashire:	y
Lancashire County Council, South Ribble, Hyndburn, Pendle, Rossendale,	y
Lancashire Local Chorley Committee Constitution.	y
Extract from LCC Sustainable Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee - July 2009	y
Customer Contact information from Lancashire County Council and Chorley Council	y
Public Realm Integration Project report	y
Highways maintenance plan	

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