

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 14 February 2011

Present: Councillor Adrian Lowe (Chair), Councillor Alan Cullens (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Julia Berry, Marie Gray, Alison Hansford, Pat Haughton, Mark Perks, Rosie Russell, Joyce Snape and Peter Wilson

Officers in attendance: Gary Hall (Director of Transformation), Jamie Carson (Director of People and Places) and Dianne Scambler (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

10.OS.65 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Harold Heaton and Edward Smith.

10.OS.66 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

In accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, the Councils Constitution and the Members Code of Conduct the following interest was declared:

- Councillor Mark Perks declared a personal interest in Item 7: Scrutiny of Community Safety Partnership.

10.OS.67 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Chair reported that no requests had been received by any member of the public.

10.OS.68 MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 6 December 2010 be held as a correct record for signing by the Chair.

10.OS.69 EXECUTIVE CABINET - 9 DECEMBER 2010

10.EC.236 – Coppull Leisure Centre

Issue raised:

Members asked what consultation had been carried out before it had been agreed to sell the Leisure Centre to Big Air Limited.

The Director of People and Places explained that consultation had been carried out by Coppull Parish Council who owned the centre and that they had held a public meeting that representatives of Big Air Limited had attended. The centre would still remain as a leisure facility and the newly created play area was still in the ownership of the Parish Council.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

10.EC.237 – Core Funding, 2011/12 – Review of process

Issue raised:

Members of the Committee asked what processes were in place to ensure that there was no duplication of funding for projects by the various partner organisations. There were concerns that there could be overlapping of funding on larger projects and that some smaller projects could miss out all together. Information was sought as to how

this was monitored to ensure that each project or commissioning only received the required amount of funds when applicant can seek funding from a variety of different partners, instead of one central funding source.

It was explained that processes were in place to mitigate this risk and that a number of attempts had been made to facilitate the merging of the funding sources of the various partners.

However Members felt that these processes demanded further scrutiny and that more should be done to consolidate all available funding sources in the current financial climate to ensure that the reduced funding that would be available was allocated effectively.

Concerns were also made that the minutes of the Local Strategic Partnership's Board, Executive and its Thematic Groups were not published on the website. This form of communication was the only way that many of the members were informed about the decision made by these bodies.

The Chair also requested that a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee on the changes that were currently being implemented to the Local Strategic Partnership.

RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommend the Executive Cabinet :

- 1. Make immediate changes to the application process of allocating Core Funding grants in 2011/12 to allow for more transparency and scrutiny of the applicants to ensure that funding is allocated effectively and not duplicated by other funding sources.**
- 2. Review the process in 2012/13 for the allocation of partnership funding and a monitoring procedure that ensures that there is no overlapping of funds by the various organisations.**
- 3. Review the publication of the Local Strategic Partnership Board, Executive and its Thematic Groups minutes on the Chorley Partnership website.**
- 4. That the Head of Policy and Communications submit a report to the next meeting of the Committee on the restructure of the Local Strategic Partnership.**

10.EC.238 – General Budget Principles for 2011/12 and 10.EC.241 – Restructures

Issue raised:

Members commented that other authorities had explored shared services that had resulted in considerable savings and more innovative ways of partnership working and asked what Chorley Council was doing to continue driving efficiencies forward.

The Director of Transformation explained that with the present sharing arrangements with South Ribble Borough Council in the financial and revenue and benefits services and the current joint Chief Executive arrangement with Wyre, the Council were achieving financial savings of around £486,000. Further savings were anticipated from phase 2 of the shared arrangements with South Ribble.

Lancashire County Council had entered into a strategic partnership with BT and had invited all of the district council to participate in a procurement exercise of the available services. The Council had met to discuss the options and had decided not to participate at this stage as the offer was not considered developed enough.

Chorley had not discounted taking up the offer in the future and discussions had already taken place between the two authorities to discuss a way forward on a shared agenda for frontline services.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

10.OS.70 EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY INQUIRY INTO ALLOTMENT ISSUES.

The Committee considered the response of the Executive Cabinet to the findings and recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Inquiry into Allotments.

Apart from a minor change to the wording of one of the Executive's responses, the Committee were pleased that the vast majority of the recommendations had been accepted and had the capacity to increase revenue and minimise running costs with no major budget implications to the Council.

However, some Members did express their disappointment that the Executive Cabinet would not consider the scrutiny task group report at their 6 December meeting. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had worked towards that date and would have signed off the reports three days before the Cabinet meeting. It was members views that as a consequence the Cabinet was only now considering the report and was submitting a response at the same time - resulting in a disjointed approach to scrutiny.

RESOLVED

- 1. That the report be noted.**
- 2. That the Chair convey the Committee's concerns on the disjointed approach to this scrutiny inquiry, at the next meeting of the Executive Cabinet.**

10.OS.71 SCRUTINY OF COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

The Committee received a report of the Director of Transformation on the proposed arrangements for the scrutiny of the work of the Community Safety Partnership to fulfil the statutory requirement on crime and disorder scrutiny.

It was proposed that the Committee concentrated on the scrutiny of one particular aspect of the work of the Community Safety Partnership. Anti social behaviour had been identified as a suitable area as it impacted on everybody and had strong links to the Neighbourhood Working agenda.

The arrangements had been tailored to make the meeting more interactive and would enable Members to gain an overview of the work currently being carried out by the Partnership across the Borough.

Members would be invited to Chorley Police Station to visit the Council's CCTV suite ahead of the next Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting where the Joint Crime and Disorder Manager would provide a report containing additional information about anti social behaviour in general.

In addition there would be an opportunity for two members of the Committee to experience first hand, two of the initiatives currently taking place within the Borough to combat anti social behaviour and to report back at the next meeting.

RESOLVED

- 1. That the arrangements for the crime and disorder scrutiny be approved.**
- 2. That Councillor Rosemary Russell join the neighbourhood policing team one evening on Operation Cherub.**
- 3. That Councillor Julia Berry accompany the Young Addaction team one evening on Smart Response.**

10.OS.72 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

(a) Forward Plan

The Committee received the Forward Plan for the period 1 February to 31 May 2011.

RESOLVED – That the Forward Plan be noted.

(b) Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

The Committee received a copy of the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2010/11.

The Chair drew Members attention to a change to the arrangements for the Scrutiny Review of the year. All Members would be invited to propose future scrutiny topics through the next edition of the Members e.bulletin intheknow.

RESOLVED – That the Work Programme and proposed arrangements for the Scrutiny Review be noted.

10.OS.73 REPORTS FROM THE TASK AND FINISH GROUPS

The Committee received a verbal update from the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group – Lancastrian Suite.

Councillor Alan Cullens reported that the group had held its first meeting and had requested information on past users of the Lancastrian and how South Ribble Borough Council manages its hospitality suite. It was intended to bring the draft scoping document to the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

Chair