



# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Agenda and Reports

For consideration on

**Monday, 16th April 2012**

In Committee Room 1, 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.

05 April 2012

Dear Councillor

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - MONDAY, 16TH APRIL 2012**

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held in Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Chorley on Monday, 16th April 2012 commencing at 6.30 pm.

### **AGENDA**

1. **Apologies for absence**

2. **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.

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

To confirm the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 12 March 2012 (enclosed)

4. **Public Questions**

Members of the public who have requested the opportunity to ask a question(s) on an item on the agenda will be asked to put their question(s) to the Committee. Each member of the public will be allowed to ask one supplementary question within his/her allocated 3 minutes.

5. **Executive Cabinet Minutes (Pages 5 - 12)**

To consider the enclosed minutes of the Executive Cabinet meeting held on 29 March 2012.

6. **Annual Scrutiny Reporting Back 2011-12 Report (Pages 13 - 18)**

To consider the enclosed Annual Report of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

7. **Final Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - Tourism and Promoting Chorley (Pages 19 - 38)**

To receive and consider the enclosed Final Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group – Tourism and Promoting Chorley

8. **IDVA Funding Update (Pages 39 - 42)**

Report of the Director of People and Places (enclosed)

9. **Future agenda items**

a) **Forward Plan** (Pages 43 - 46)

To consider the Council's Forward Plan for the four month period 1 April to 31 July 2012 (documents enclosed).

b) **Work Programme** (Pages 47 - 48)

To consider the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme (enclosed)

10. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

To consider the exclusion of the press and public for the following items of business on the ground that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

11. **Key Partnerships Mid Year Report (Pages 49 - 64)**

Report of the Chief Executive (enclosed)

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

Yours sincerely



Gary Hall  
Chief Executive

Dianne Scambler  
Democratic and Member Services Officer  
E-mail: [dianne.scambler@chorley.gov.uk](mailto:dianne.scambler@chorley.gov.uk)  
Tel: (01257) 515034  
Fax: (01257) 515150

## **Distribution**

1. Agenda and reports to all Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Councillor Adrian Lowe (Chair), Councillor Debra Platt (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Julia Berry, Magda Cullens, Doreen Dickinson, Alison Hansford, Harold Heaton, Steve Holgate, Keith Iddon, Beverley Murray, Rosie Russell, Joyce Snape, Paul Walmsley and Peter Wilson for attendance.
2. Agenda and reports to Gary Hall (Director of Transformation), Lesley-Ann Fenton (Director of Partnerships, Planning and Policy), Jamie Carson (Director of People and Places), Chris Moister (Head of Governance), Carol Russell (Democratic Services Manager) and Dianne Scambler (Democratic and Member Services 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

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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## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Monday, 12 March 2012**

**Present:** Councillor Adrian Lowe (Chair), Councillor Debra Platt (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Julia Berry, Magda Cullens, Doreen Dickinson, Alison Hansford, Steve Holgate, Rosie Russell, Paul Walmsley and Peter Wilson

**Officers in attendance:** Gary Hall (Chief Executive), Rebecca Huddleston (Performance Improvement Manager), Carol Russell (Democratic Services Manager) and Dianne Scambler (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

### **12.OS.88 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Harold Heaton, Keith Iddon, Beverley Murray and Joyce Snape.

### **12.OS.89 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 3 January 2012 be held as a correct record for signing by the Chair.**

### **12.OS.90 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS**

No declarations of any interest were received.

### **12.OS.91 PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

No questions from any member of the public were received.

### **12.OS.92 EXECUTIVE CABINET MINUTES**

There were no issues raised by any Member of the Committee for the Executive Cabinet meeting held on 23 February 2012.

### **12.OS.93 MONITORING REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TASK GROUP INQUIRY INTO HIGHWAYS ISSUES**

The Committee received a report of the Director of People and Places providing an update on the implementation of actions agreed following the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group's Inquiry into Highways Issues.

The Head of Streetscene and Leisure Contracts outlined the report and highlighted the following:

- As of February 2012, the initial stages for the enforcement of overhanging vegetation onto the highway are now undertaken by this Council.
- From 2012/13 the Council will undertake the highway verge cutting, that was previously done by Lancashire County Council, in the outer Chorley area.
- A Severe Winter Weather Action Plan (SWAAP) had been produced to outline the operational arrangements during a severe winter period.

- Lancashire County Council's Public Realm Manager now provides regular bulletins and monthly neighbourhood reports are now in place. In addition, there have been various other related articles published in 'Intheknow' covering roadworks and transport issues as and when required.

A Member asked if there was now more information available about which roads were adopted or unadopted in the Borough. It was explained that action would be taken to produce a definitive list and that this would be published via 'intheknow' in the immediate future.

Members were also informed that other definitive lists relating to the ownership of the grass verges and land were also available through the Contact Centre.

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

#### **12.OS.94 THIRD QUARTER PERFORMANCE REPORT 2011/12**

The Chief Executive submitted a monitoring report setting out the performance against the delivery of the Corporate Strategy and key performance indicators during the third quarter of 2011/12, 1 October to 31 December 2011.

Overall performance of the key projects remained good, with the vast majority of the projects either completed, or on track. Only one project, the website refresh, had been rated as amber due to on-going delays. However actions were now in place to improve on this and Members were informed that the Council expected it to go live towards the end of May.

Members asked if the new website would contain more links to other associated websites that would benefit different communities. The Chief Executive reported that a lot of work had been to improve the content of the website, in response to consultation. His team planned to roll out the site to all members of staff, in advance of its launch date, so that they could view the changes and practise navigating around the site, before the system went live. This invitation would now be extended to Members and would be accessible via 'intheknow'.

Performance on the key measures in the Corporate Strategy and key performance indicators was strong with 92% of the Corporate Strategy measures performing above target.

Only one indicator, the number of families in temporary accommodation was currently performing worse than target and Members were provided with details of the action plan that had been developed to improve performance.

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

#### **12.OS.95 THIRD QUARTER CHORLEY PARTNERSHIP PERFORMANCE REPORT 2011/12**

The Chief Executive submitted a report that provided an update on the performance of the Chorley Partnership during the third quarter of 2011/12, from 1 October to 31 December 2011.

The performance of the Chorley Partnership in achieving the key performance targets remained good and the following targets were highlighted to Members:

- Alcohol related hospital admission had shown a reduction of 8%.
- Accidental Dwelling Fires were lower than anticipated.



- Although crime overall had increased by 5.9% in quarter three compared to the same period last year, the year to date figure showed a reduction of 1.8%.

Overall performance on the key projects/priorities in the Chorley Partnership delivery plan was excellent, with 94% rated green.

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

## **12.OS.96 REPORTS FROM THE TASK AND FINISH GROUPS**

### **Rented Private Housing Inspection Task Group**

The Committee received a verbal update report from the Democratic Services Manager who informed the Committee that the Group had now held two meetings and had submitted the scoping document of the review for approval.

The review's main objective would be around identifying and tackling poor housing standards in some private rented properties with its desired outcome to improve housing conditions for tenants of private rented property in the borough.

### **Tourism and Promoting Chorley Task Group**

The Committee received a verbal update report from the Chair of the Group, Councillor Peter Wilson who informed the Committee that the Group had now undertaken five meetings and Members are satisfied that they have asked questions of all the relevant witnesses that have a key interest or responsibility in tourism in the Borough of Chorley.

The Group was hoping to present it's Final Report and recommendations to the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 16 April 2012 for approval.

**RESOLVED – That the information from the task groups be noted and the scoping document for the Rented Private Housing Inspection Review be approved.**

## **12.OS.97 FORWARD PLAN AND WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee received a copy of the Forward Plan for the period 1 March to 30 June 2012 and the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2011/12.

**RESOLVED – That the Forward Plan and Work Programme be noted.**

## **12.OS.98 EXCLUSION ON PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED - That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the ground that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.**

## **12.OS.99 CALL IN OF AN EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION**

The Committee received a report of the Chief Executive informing them of a recent request to call in an Executive Member decision, the process that had been followed and the outcome.

The call in had been received on the 6 February 2012 and had been accepted by the chair. As the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was not until 12 March and this delay would hold up the implementation of a major organisational

review, the Chair had felt it appropriate to make arrangements to consider the call in with three other members of the Committee, in line with the call in procedure.

The Members considered both the call in request and the report which had formed the basis of the Executive Member decision. The decision of the group was not to call in the decision and Members were unanimously in agreement in not accepting the objections that had been put forward.

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

Chair

## Executive Cabinet

### Minutes of meeting held on Thursday, 29 March 2012

**Present:** Councillor Peter Goldsworthy (Executive Leader in the Chair), Councillor Ken Ball (Deputy Leader of the Council) and Councillors Eric Bell, Alan Cullens, Greg Morgan and John Walker

**Also in attendance:**

**Lead Members:** Councillor Stella Walsh

**Other Members:** Councillors Alison Hansford, Keith Iddon, Paul Leadbetter, June Molyneaux, Geoffrey Russell and Peter Wilson

**Members of the public:** One.

#### 12.EC.91 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Kevin Joyce (Executive Member for Resources), Harold Heaton (Lead Member for Development Control), Rosemary Russell (Lead Member for Licensing), Henry Counce and Mick Muncaster.

#### 12.EC.92 MINUTES

**RESOLVED - The minutes of the meeting of the Executive Cabinet held on 23 February 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Executive Leader.**

#### 12.EC.93 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

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

#### 12.EC.94 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Executive Leader reported that there had been no requests from members of the public to speak on any of the meeting's agenda items.

#### 12.EC.95 REVIEW OF COMMITTEES AND NEW STANDARDS REQUIREMENTS

The Executive Leader presented a report outlining a review Committees and the impact of the new Standards Regime proposed under the Localism Act 2011.

The proposals had been discussed in full at All Party Leaders Liaison and had cross Party support. The Monitoring Officer would submit a report to the next meeting of the Executive Cabinet on 21 June to propose a new Code of Conduct and supporting standards regime in order for there to be a scheme in place for 1 July 2012. Further Government guidance was expected shortly.

#### Decision made

- 1. To recommend Council not to pursue the Independent Remuneration Panel's request that a merger of the Overview and Scrutiny and Audit Committees be considered, in order to maintain compliance with CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) best practice recommendations that scrutiny and audit should remain independent of each other.**
- 2. To recommend Council merge the Audit and Standards Committees to form a Governance Committee overseeing the Council's ethical framework. Under the new standards requirements the Council could operate both functions**

through one decision making body with Sub Committees established to deal with any standards cases.

3. That in view of the fact that the Council is awaiting further Government guidance on the introduction of a new standards regime, the Council agree that the Monitoring Officer should submit a report to the Executive Cabinet meeting on 21 June which proposes a new Code of Conduct and supporting standards regime in order for there to be a scheme in place for 1 July 2012 as required under the Localism Act 2011. This would require endorsement by Council on 17 July 2012.

#### **Reasons for recommendation(s)**

The recommendations ensure the continued independence of the Audit and Overview and Scrutiny Committees and seek to deal with changes to decision making structures under the new standards regime.

#### **Alternative option(s) considered and rejected**

An alternative option would be to ignore CIPFA best practice advice on the merger of committees proposed by the IRP. In relation to standards changes there is no provision for Standards Committees in future and it is essential that the Council addresses the changes to the standards regime.

### **12.EC.96 UPLIFT TIME CREDITS PROGRAMME**

The Executive Member for People presented a report in relation to the Uplift time credits programme.

Lancashire County Council (LCC) had successfully bid to the Department for Health to become a 'showcase' area for a time credits system. The time credit system was a development of time banking schemes that aimed to encourage volunteering and the development of relationships between communities.

In the Uplift time credit programme, an individual would be given a credit for time that they gave to support the community. One credit would be received for each hour of time, and these could be exchanged for access to events, training and leisure services, or to "trade" time with neighbours. The model had been developed in response to the consequences of high unemployment and, amongst other things, had been shown to have improved community cohesion and reduced anti social behaviour.

To support the development and launch of the programme, Spice would appoint a local facilitator who would engage with local organisations to develop the time in and time out menus and oversee the launch of the scheme. Support would also be provided by Lancashire County Council and other employees of Spice as required. The SPICE scheme was a pilot and Chorley were the only Authority in Lancashire taking part. At present this was not a mainstream scheme.

Members noted the potential of this scheme.

#### **Decision made**

1. **Approval to Chorley Council's involvement in the Uplift time credits programme. This would include providing office accommodation to a local facilitator, who would be employed and paid for by other partners in the programme.**
2. **Approval to the development of a 'time out' menu which included activities offered by Chorley Council, and delegation for approval of the 'time out' menu to the Executive Member for People.**

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

The time credits programme supported the council's long term outcomes of 'support the ageing population to be healthy and independent'; 'communities that residents actively take care of and improve'; 'cohesive communities where people get on well together' and 'an excellent community leader'.

In addition, involvement in the programme would ensure the borough would benefit from over £100,000 of funding from the Department of Health and Lancashire County Council. It also provided Chorley with an opportunity to be involved in innovative and groundbreaking work.

**Alternative option(s) considered and rejected**

To not be involved in the programme.

**12.EC.97 CHANGES TO DEBTORS RECOVERY**

The Head of Shared Financial Services presented a report which set out proposals to make changes to the way miscellaneous invoices (sundry debtors) were processed and collected by the Council.

Changes had been made over the last twelve months to enhance and improve the service which now included the use of barcodes to streamline receipting, simplified stationery and use of a new web desktop for users. Further changes were now being considered to enhance the service that would help improve productivity and cash flow in the medium to longer term.

**Decision made**

- 1. Removal of the due date from the invoice to state payment was due immediately although no recovery action would commence until 14 days had lapsed from the date of the invoice. This was a significant and important change as currently the implied suggestion was that customers had almost a month to pay for services which in the main had already been delivered by the Council. Removal of the due date was intended to encourage behavioural change so that action was taken to settle the bill immediately rather than prolong payment. These changes excluded Market invoices and garage rentals which were covered by the pay monthly scheme.**
- 2. Movement to a paperless direct debit scheme to align with the Revenues Service.**
- 3. To take advantage of the late payment legislation for commercial invoices although again in reality this would in the main act only to encourage prompt payment of invoices.**
- 4. Implementation of changes to improve the delivery of documents to customers through email by December 2012.**
- 5. The Corporate Debt Recovery Policy to be updated to reflect these changes.**

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

The changes put forward would improve cash flow, productivity and use of resources in the collection of miscellaneous invoices by the Council and improve the flow of information to customers.

**Alternative option(s) considered and rejected**

None.

**12.EC.98 PREVENTION OF HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY**

The Executive Member for Partnerships and Planning presented a report which set out the legal responsibility placed on the Council to produce a Prevention of Homelessness Strategy and Review, provided an overview of the draft strategy and sought approval for consultation with partners and customers.

The review included detailed statistics on homelessness and a summary of the trends in each borough. These were translated into key priorities for the strategy and linked into the strategy action plan. Chorley and South Ribble Councils regularly work collaboratively on housing initiatives and shared best practice on housing matters. There were similarities in the issues in each respective housing market faces and in particular, relating to homelessness. It had been agreed that, in order to make best use of resources and to pool expertise in producing this strategy, colleagues at both Councils would work collaboratively to produce a shared document.

The strategy would be circulated to all partners engaged in housing or housing related functions, including internal and external, as well as customers. There would be a full integrated equality impact assessment undertaken and following this, feedback would be considered and any necessary changes made prior to the strategy being formally adopted and implemented.

**Decision made**

**Approval to the draft Chorley and South Ribble Prevention of Homelessness Strategy and Review 2012-2016 for consultation purposes.**

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

The publication of a Prevention of Homelessness Strategy and Review was a statutory requirement and the previous strategy was in need of a refresh, alongside a renewed programme of prevention measures and interventions to improve performance and meet the Councils corporate objectives.

**Alternative option(s) considered and rejected**

Developing a Chorley only Prevention Strategy and Review was considered however given the opportunity for collaborative working, it was decided this was not the best approach.

**12.EC.99 SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS**

The Executive Member for Partnerships and Planning presented a report updating Members of the progress in preparing a Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

The Design SPD focused on the way in which Central Lancashire authorities would encourage good design by setting out the key design principles that would be used in dealing with planning applications. It was one of five SPDs currently being finalised for public consultation. Officers clarified that the document supported the published Development Plan documents.

**Decision made**

- 1. Endorsement of the Design SPD for public consultation as detailed in Appendix 2, after which they would be reviewed and reported back to Cabinet in order to be approved and adopted for use.**
- 2. Delegation be granted to the Executive Member in liaison with the Director of Partnerships, Planning and Policy for approval of minor amendments to the documents, if needed, prior to formal consultation.**

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

To approve the draft document for statutory public consultation.

**Alternative option(s) considered and rejected**

None.

**12.EC.100 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 ground that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

**12.EC.101 CONTRACT FOR PROVISION OF GENERALIST DEBT ADVICE AND SUPPORT SERVICES IN CHORLEY**

The Executive Member for People presented a confidential report outlining the quote from Chorley, South Ribble and District Citizens Advice Bureaux for provision of generalist debt advice and support services in Chorley, to commence on 1 April 2012, in line with specified performance monitoring requirements.

**Decision made**

**That the contract for provision of generalist debt advice and support services be awarded to Chorley, South Ribble and District Citizens Advice Bureaux.**

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

Awarding the contract for generalist debt advice and support services to the CAB would ensure that this service was maintained for the residents of Chorley and delivered by an organisation with evidence of providing good value for money. Last year the CAB demonstrated excellent performance in Core Funding monitoring and to date have delivered 270 advice appointments, well exceeding their YTD target of 120.

**Alternative option(s) considered and rejected**

The alternative option would be not to allocate this contract to the CAB however this would mean a lengthy tendering process to identify a suitable alternative provider. This would be counter-productive given that Chorley Council have developed a good working relationship with the CAB who have been delivering this crucial service successfully Chorley for a number of years and shown to be providing good value for money.

**12.EC.102 CORE FUNDING 2012/13**

The Executive Member for People presented a confidential report which outlined the Core Funding allocation for 2012/13.

**Decision made**

**Approval to the recommendations in Appendix A, subject to agreeing and signing contracts and or grants with the organisations.**

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

To provide local voluntary, community and faith sector organisations with Core Funding for 2012/13, to enable them to deliver services in the borough which contribute towards the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

**Alternative option(s) considered and rejected**

Not to award Core Funding Grants in 2012/13.

**12.EC.103 CATERING OPPORTUNITIES AT YARROW VALLEY COUNTRY PARK AND CORONATION RECREATION GROUND, CHORLEY**

The Executive Member for People presented a confidential report updating Members on progress with investigations into opportunities for revenue generation at Yarrow Valley Country Park and Coronation Recreation Ground Chorley.

**Decision made**

1. Approval to declare Yarrow Valley Visitors Centre surplus to the Council's operational requirements to enable a commercial letting.
2. Authorisation for the Director of People and Places, in consultation with the Executive Member for People and Places, to identify the most appropriate tenant in line with the criteria identified within this report for the Yarrow Valley Visitors Centre and award a lease to them on terms to be agreed.
3. Authorisation for Liberata Property Services to negotiate terms with a view to the grant of a 10 year lease at Yarrow Valley Country Park, terms agreed to protect public access and to oblige the incoming tenant to work in partnership with the Council to maintain the level of customer service, education facilities, information and exhibition space and access to the public conveniences for all members of the public.
4. To report agreed terms and conditions to the Executive Member for People and Places for approval in due course.

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

To declare the Yarrow Valley Country Park Visitors' Centre surplus to Council requirements in order to agree terms for the granting of a lease for the operation of catering facilities in Yarrow Valley Country Park. It was anticipated that the successful applicant would be responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the premises, the costs for which would otherwise remain with the Council.

**Alternative options considered and rejected**

1. To offer the opportunity to run a catering service at both Yarrow Valley Country Park and Coronation Recreation Ground. This was originally advertised in the summer of 2011 when only one submission was received which made an offer to run a Yarrow Valley Country Park cafe only. Feed back from interested parties suggested that the investment required to fit out Coronation Recreation Ground would be too great for the anticipated returns.
2. For the Council to retain the day to day control of the Yarrow Valley Country Park Visitor Centre which would contain a kiosk type catering facility. There had been no proposals received for this following the advertising and as due to the lack of interest it was not felt this was a commercially viable option. In addition the Council would have continuing maintenance and cleaning responsibilities which would be avoided by a lease.
3. Not to have a catering facility in either location. This would not satisfy the needs identified by consultation with the public.

**12.EC.104 REVIEW OF CLEANING SERVICES**

The Executive Member for People presented a confidential report advising of a review current cleaning services within the Council.

**Decision made**

**To approve the recommendations within the report.**

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

The recommendations should improve the quality of services and frequency of cleaning being delivered in some locations; they bring all staff back in house giving greater flexibility and value for money.

**Alternative option(s) considered and rejected**

The Superclean toilet cleaning contract could be reviewed, expanded and retendered but the additional service requirements will mean a significant increase in contract costs.



**12.EC.105 DISPOSAL OF GARDEN EXTENSIONS AT LAND REAR OF FAIRVIEW DRIVE, ADLINGTON**

The Monitoring Officer presented a confidential report the disposal of an area of land to individual occupiers as garden extensions.

**Decision made**

**To approve the recommendations within the report.**

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

1. The sale of the garden extensions would alleviate the problems associated with the public using the land as a walk-through and dogs fouling on the site. The residents would benefit from enhanced garden areas. The creation of garden extensions should assist with controlling security issues.
2. There could potentially be receipts from the sale of the proposed garden extensions (subject to payment of consideration for release or modification of the open space covenant payable to Westbury Homes). In addition the Council might seek to recoup fees and any costs to be recharged including planning application fees and advertising of open space.
3. Chorley Borough Council would no longer be required to maintain this land. This would result in a saving for the Council's maintenance budget.
4. The above was subject to all the occupiers taking a piece of garden land and that there would be no irregular strips of land left over to maintain.

**Alternative option(s) considered and rejected**

1. A decision not to allow the parcel to be used for separate garden extensions would result in the land remaining open to the public for a walk-through with its associated safety issues with dog fouling which the residents have complained about.
2. Providing a tree wooded area had been considered as not viable pending proposals for the surface water sewer which would run along the rear of properties 52 – 72 Fairview Drive.
3. A Gating Order under the Highways Act was not available as the land was open space rather than a public highway. Such orders were only possible in relation to public highway. An alternative "alleygating" scheme to be funded by adjacent residents would involve enclosing the open space with keys provided to residents, the emergency services and United Utilities. This process was not completed by the resident carrying out the canvassing of all the other residents.

**12.EC.106 SHARED FINANCIAL SERVICES BUDGET REVIEW**

The Head of Shared Financial Services presented a confidential report which sought approval following a recommendation made at the Joint Management Committee for Shared Services with South Ribble Council on Monday 26 March 2012.

**Decision made**

**To approve the recommendations within the report for consultation.**

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

The recommendations are aimed at achieving the following:-

- Succession planning and staff development.
- Review resources to match the service's future work programme.
- Responding to changing customer needs linked to achieving continued value for money through efficiencies.
- Review into two tier grading structure for Accountant's posts in the accountancy functions.

**Alternative option(s) considered and rejected**

The review process undertaken and the restructuring proposals put forward were considered to be the optimum solution to achieve the objectives of the review.

Executive Leader

# Scrutiny Reporting Back

Chorley Council's Annual Report on Overview and Scrutiny in 2011 / 12



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**1. FOREWORD BY THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2011/12**



**Vice Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2011/12**

Overview and Scrutiny Committee now meets around two weeks after the Executive Cabinet meetings to enable the scrutiny of Executive Cabinet decisions and to enable the relevant Executive Member to be invited to attend.

The Committee still continues to receive six monthly monitoring reports following the Executive's response on the implementation of outcomes from scrutiny reviews. These take place, for a period of up to two years following the implementation of decisions and this year we have received reports for the following past reviews:

- Town Centre Vitality
- Allotments
- Asset Management
- Highways

In 2011/12 we have undertaken three reviews, one that was continued from the previous year on the Lancastrian Suite and two reviews at the request of Council Members on Private Rented Housing Conditions and Tourism and Promoting Chorley. The Committee also scrutinised the funding of the Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy service under its requirement to scrutinise crime and disorder. To date, all the recommendations put forward to the Executive Cabinet in relation to the Lancastrian and IDVA reviews have been accepted and implemented.

The Committee also continues to monitor departmental performance, along with the Council and Local Strategic Partnership's key projects. We again scrutinised the Executive Cabinets budget principles and this year supported the other scrutiny committee's in Lancashire regarding Lancashire County Council's decision to remove the Bus Information Displays at Chorley Interchange.

## **2. THE YEAR AHEAD**

Although the Committee has not yet formally decided the Task Group topics for 2012/13, Members had previously requested a review around Play Area provision. This was delayed pending the outcome of the Open Spaces Study and Playing Pitch and Open Spaces Assessment, two pieces of work that are now both nearing completion.. The Committee will also once again scrutinise an area relating to crime and disorder to fulfil our legal requirement. All Members of the Council will also be invited to put forward any suggestions for the Committee to consider at its first meeting of the new municipal year when the Committee will draw up its Work Programme for 2012/13.

## **3. KEY MESSAGES FROM SCRUTINY REVIEWS IN 2011/12**

### **3.1 Lancastrian Suite**

The need for a scrutiny review of the future use of the Lancastrian Suite was a recommendation of the Asset Management Scrutiny Review undertaken in 2010. The issues which arose were felt to be significant enough to require a separate scrutiny review. The Task Group was established earlier in 2011 and was chaired by Councillor Debra Platt.

The Task Group was asked to undertake a review of how the Lancastrian Room could be better utilised to contribute to maximising the use of the Council's assets, with more effective and economic use of the facility.

The Task Group considered both external and internal management of the Lancastrian Suite, undertook soft marketing testing with local event management companies and surveyed regular users. They also attended a site visit to South Ribblesdale's Hospitality Suite and met with their catering team.

The key recommendation of the review was that the resource provided by the Lancastrian Suite is highly valued for its internal needs. There is also however the need to maximise its use by commercial and community organisations. The Group put forward recommendations that would try to achieve its overall objective of increasing the use of the facility for all sections of the community and in doing so, increase income. These focused on a revised pricing structure and the return of private party bookings on a trial basis and complying with specific conditions.

### **3.2 Private Rented Housing Conditions**

Suggested by a Member of the Council and Chaired by Councillor Beverley Murray, the Group aimed to identify and tackle poor housing standards in some private rented properties in the Borough, to improve housing conditions for those tenants.

The Group received information with regards to the compilation of a register of private rented accommodation in the Borough, options for the introduction of a private rented housing inspection regime, consideration of a housing conditions policy and options around a landlord accreditation scheme.

A final report is currently being drawn up but the Group are looking to recommend that the Executive Cabinet consider the introduction of a partially proactive scheme of inspection which would use current intelligence and data sources - ie councillor and officer knowledge; estate agents; housing register etc. The scheme would be reactive to tenant complaints and would provide a base service from which a full inspection programme could be developed. The scheme would not capture all poor housing standards but would target bedsit and multi occupied property and poor housing hotspots.

### **3.3 Tourism and Promoting Chorley**

Chaired by Councillor Peter Wilson, the main objective of the review was to further develop Chorley as a tourist destination by promoting the Borough's key assets and events and identifying other opportunities for making the Borough more attractive to outside visitors.

We collected evidence from a number of different sources including interviewing internal officers about Chorley Council's assets and events which contribute to the promotion of tourism within Chorley. We also spoke to representatives from external organisations to find out what they do in this area, to compare areas of best practice and find out how we could best work together in the future.



The 21 recommendations made, have the capacity to increase visitors to Chorley and improve partnership working within the industry and are around the following headings:

- Town Centre/Markets
- Astley Hall
- Promotional
- Partnership Working

By improving the content and providing better links, it is anticipated that the current redevelopment of the Council's website will help to improve our relationships with external providers and organisations that have a key stake in tourism within the Borough and help us to build on and create new partnerships to better work together to promote Chorley.

#### **4. CRIME AND DISORDER**

The Committee is required to scrutinise the work of the Community Safety Partnership through at least one meeting a year. This year we chose to scrutinise the Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy (IDVA) service, to understand the value of the service to the residents of Chorley and South Ribble and to look at future delivery of the service.

The cost of providing the IDVA service in its current form across Chorley and South Ribble, was a total of £47,000 per annum. The Committee received a detailed presentation about the service and heard from a number of partners from the Community Safety Partnership, around three key themes:

- What value did they put on the IDVA service in the context of their organisation?
- How would they plug the gap if the IDVA service ceased when the area based grant ended?
- Would their organisation be prepared to contribute to funding if other partners did?

Having listened to the comments of each of the partners, the Committee agreed that the IDVA service was highly valued, not only in supporting victims of domestic abuse but also in preventing repeat cases. In doing so it was of benefit to all partners and, would in the long term, mean savings within each organisation.

There had been no clear commitment on funding from partners but Members felt that one organisation should take the lead by making a financial commitment and then work with the other partners through the Community Safety Partnership to urge them to contribute and ensure the continuation of the IDVA service.

The Committee felt that Chorley Council should take the lead and requested that the Executive Cabinet considered making a provision for funding for the Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy Service for Chorley and South Ribble in the 2012/13 budget and for Chorley to lead the way in seeking funding from the other key partners who benefited from the service, namely the Police, South Ribble Borough Council, Lancashire County Council, the PCT and CCH and other social landlords.

Lancashire County Council have since determined the service needs in the Chorley and South Ribble Community Safety Partnership area in relation to the IDVA service as

amounting to £89,600 for 2012/13. This level of service effectively doubles our current service provision and will be funded by a 50% contribution from the Safer Lancashire Board with the remaining funding coming from both local authorities and county wide partner organisations. These contributions have been determined on a percentage benefit basis that the contributing organisations are deemed to be receiving from the provision of the service.

Both Chorley Council and South Ribble Borough Council have made budget provision for their contributions and LCC are currently discussing with the countywide organisation their contributions which will make up the difference.

## **5. CHALLENGING THE EXECUTIVE**

The following areas are Executive Cabinet items that we have considered at scrutiny and made recommendations in 2010/11

- Community Safety and Crime and Disorder
- Update Report on Section 106 monies
- Key Partnerships Mid Year progress
- Budget Principles

## **6. CHALLENGING PERFORMANCE**

Scrutiny continues to challenge directorate and service performance, through the reporting of monitoring information on a six monthly basis. Members receive:

- Business plan monitoring and performance information for each of the three directorates:
  - Partnerships, Planning and Policy
  - People and Places
  - Transformation
- Project updates under the Corporate Strategy; and
- Monitoring information from Chorley Partnership, including projects being run by the Partnership.

## **7. FINANCIAL SCRUTINY**

The Executive Member for Resources has attended Committee to answer Members questions about the Executives budget principles for 2012/13.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

2011/12 has been an interesting and productive year for scrutiny, resulting in some key recommendations on topics which fully engaged Councillors. Challenges ahead are to continue to scrutinise areas of interest and concern to Councillors and their constituents; to follow up on the implementation of scrutiny recommendations; to work more effectively with our partners on scrutiny and to continue to challenge our Executive Members in a constructive way with recommendations that result in positive outcomes for the residents in Chorley.



# Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group – Tourism and Promoting Chorley

**March 2012**



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## 1. PREFACE

The Scrutiny inquiry into Tourism and Promoting Chorley was requested by Members of Chorley Council.

We collected evidence from a number of different sources including interviewing internal officers about Chorley Council's assets and events which contribute to the promotion of tourism within Chorley. We also spoke to representatives from external organisations to find out what they do in this area, to compare areas of best practice and find out how we could best work together in the future.

We also revisited the findings and recommendations of the Town Centre Vitality Scrutiny Review, particularly in relation to attracting more visitors to the town centre and its markets, to evaluate the progress made and to ascertain if there was anything that could be further improved on

The Group set out to identify Chorley's main assets for tourism around the Borough and the key events in the calendar that might attract people to visit Chorley. We sought to look at the opportunities, including partnership working that may exist to maximise the promotion of Chorley and encourage more visitors to its town centre and surrounding villages in the best possible way.

I would like to thank the Task Group Members for their deliberations, the Officers and external representatives who made a contribution to this report.



Councillor Peter Wilson  
(Chair)

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee asked the Task Group to undertake a scrutiny inquiry to look at Tourism and Promoting Chorley.

### Objectives

To further develop Chorley as a tourist destination by promoting the Borough's key assets and events and identifying other opportunities for making the Borough more attractive to outside visitors.

### Desired Outcomes

A corporate directive for promoting Tourism in Chorley.

### Task Group Membership

Councillor Peter Wilson (Chair)  
Councillor Matthew Crow  
Councillor Marie Gray  
Councillor Steve Holgate  
Councillor Paul Leadbetter  
Councillor Marion Lowe  
Councillor June Molyneaux  
Councillor Mark Perks  
Councillor Geoffrey Russell

### Officer Support:

#### Lead Officer

Chris Sinnott            Head of Policy and Communications

### Democratic Services

Dianne Scambler    Democratic and Member Services Officer

### Meetings

The meeting papers of the Group can be found on the Council's website:

[www.chorley.gov.uk/scrutiny](http://www.chorley.gov.uk/scrutiny). This includes the inquiry project outline and other relevant information on policy and procedures.

### Contribution of Evidence

The Task Group would like to thank all those who have provided evidence and contributed to the Inquiry, including:

Sandra Demsey – Camelot Theme Park  
Andy Brown – Parks and Open Spaces Manager, Chorley Council  
Chris Bryan – Astley Hall and Arts Officer, Chorley Council  
Louise Finch – Events and Marketing Manager, Chorley Council  
Conrad Heald – Town Centre and Markets Manager, Chorley Council  
Ian Robinson – Chorley Little Theatre  
Marianne Howell - Cultural Services, Lancashire County Council  
Diane Scarborough, Cultural Services, Lancashire County Council  
Ian Watson – Head of Cultural Services, Lancashire County Council  
Jeanette Marshall – Park Hall  
Hazel Gregory – Co-ordinating Ranger, United Utilities  
Neville Kidd – Rivington Manager, United Utilities

Recommendations

The Executive Cabinet is asked to consider the following recommendations:

**Town Centre/Markets:**

- That the Council look into the feasibility of advertising at the local train stations.
- That the Markets page on the Chorley website be linked to various other pages, where shoppers are seeking information about different types of markets.
- The Council looks into ensuring that Chorley comes up as a top hit in the Lancashire area as a market destination on the various search engines on the web.

**Astley Hall:**

- That the Council be asked to examine the potential to improve car parking facilities for the park to encourage larger events, this to include working in partnership with Lancashire College/Woodlands regarding the use of their car parks as an overflow facility for Astley Park, on major events. In addition, to developing a traffic management plan for major events in the park.
- That the Council develop and monitor visitor demographics to Astley Hall and Park.
- That a development plan be devised for the Hall, complex and park to encourage the use of the park and increase visitor numbers.
- That the opening hours of Astley Hall be more flexible to be able to respond to seasonal changes in the weather.
- To improve the presence on the councils website with a distinct feel to promote the Hall, park and other attractions.
- Develop marketing materials for the Hall and complex to promote weddings, conferences and other events.
- To exchange our promotional leaflets with other authorities, to better advertise our key attractions in like for like venues.

**Promotional:**

- Examine options for better marketing attractions in the borough on the internet, for example through the Councils website.
- Review existing literature that promotes the borough and ensures that local attractions and accommodation have easy access to it so they can encourage visitors to stay in the area.
- To consider the provision of additional signage relating specifically to tourism across the borough.

- To exchange our promotional leaflets with other authorities, to better advertise our key attractions in like for like venues.
- That Chorley Council does more to promote itself at Rivington Barn and surrounding amenities, eg, distribution of the Chorley Smile magazine.
- That Chorley Council consider becoming a member of the Tourist Board under the new arrangements, in line with other district Councils.

**Partnership Working:**

- That the Council investigate the possibility of providing Council support to United Utilities following Good Friday to tidy around the Rivington Pike area.
- Work with partners to improve public transport links to the Rivington area to ease traffic problems.
- That the traders be encouraged to remain open for business during the Christmas Light Switch on event.
- That the schools across the Borough be contacted before the summer break to allow them to be more involved in the Christmas Lights Switch on event.
- That Chorley Council consider working with partners like United Utilities to encourage the use of the locality for one off events.

### 3. METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

#### Evidence

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

1. The Final Report of the Town Centre Vitality Review.
2. The Executive Cabinet's response to the suggested recommendations of the Town Centre Vitality Task Group.
3. The latest monitoring report providing an update on the implementation of agreed actions by the Executive Cabinet to the recommendations of the Town Centre Vitality Task Group.
4. List of key tourism assets and events in Chorley.
5. Comparative statistics between Chorley and other districts in Lancashire available on the Visit England website.

#### Received presentations on

1. Astley Hall, Park and Coach House Complex and Yarrow Valley Park
2. Chorley Town Centre and its markets
3. Chorley's major calendar events.

#### Witnesses

The Task Group interviewed:

Sandra Dempsey - Camelot  
Andy Brown - Chorley Council.  
Chris Bryan - Chorley Council.  
Conrad Heald - Chorley Council  
Ian Robinson - Chorley Little Theatre  
Marianne Howell - Lancashire County Council  
Diane Scarborough - Lancashire County Council  
Ian Watson - Lancashire County Council  
Jeannette Marshall - Park Hall  
Neville Kidd - United Utilities  
Hazel Gregory - United Utilities



## 4. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 4a) INTERNAL ASSETS AND EVENTS



#### Chorley Markets

Our thriving markets are a key part of the town's heritage, serving the people for more than 500 years and today the markets still continue to add a lot to the appeal of the town. There are two main areas which make up Chorley Markets:

- The famous Flat Iron (sometimes known locally as the cattle market) held on Tuesdays; and
- Chorley Covered Market, with static lock up stalls as well as casual availability.

On the Flat Iron, the old fashioned stalls have been replaced with brand new gazebo's that have red and white striped tops with pelmets saying 'Welcome to Chorley Markets'. The Gazebo's had been a recommendation of the Town Centre Vitality Inquiry and the take up by stall holders has been excellent, providing a much improved display and feel for shoppers.



Chorley also holds a monthly Farmers Market to bolster business for existing traders and hosts a wide variety of specialised markets, from continental to Christmas markets. All the markets are advertised regularly in a number of publications and the Tuesday Market attracts coach tours to the Town.

Anecdotal feedback from traders gives an idea of where customers are visiting from and it would seem that the residents of St Anne's' consider Chorley as a destination to visit. Events like the Christmas Light Switch on also attract people to the town and this year had been advertised on the roundabout near the Botany Bay complex. The town centre and its markets are also placed in good proximity to Astley Park.

The Group looked into whether more could be done to advertise the markets by using the web and social networking sites like facebook and twitter. The markets does have its own page on the Chorley website but Members thought that more could be done around linking this page to pages on other sites that shoppers may view and exploring the possibilities of Chorley coming up as a top hit when people are searching for markets information on web search engines such as google.

Advertising at the local train stations was also considered to be an effective way of attracting visitors and although this had proved to be costly on the past, the Group felt, it was worth revisiting this option to see if this could be achieved at a more competitive price.

#### **Recommendations:**

- **That the Council look into the feasibility of advertising at the local train stations.**
- **That the Markets page on the Chorley website be linked to various other pages, where shoppers are seeking information about different markets.**
- **The Council looks into ensuring that Chorley comes up as a top hit in the Lancashire area as a market destination on the various search engines on the web.**

#### **Chorley Council Events**

Chorley has two major events in the calendar:

- Chorley Smile Picnic in the Park.
- Christmas Lights Switch on

The Chorley Smile picnic in the park is an annual free summer event that attracts between, 1,500 to 4,000 people depending on the weather. The event delivers a mixture of entertainment including street theatre, sports activities, cartoon characters and local performers.

The event gets positive feedback from the attendee's who are mostly from within the Borough with some travelling from other parts of Lancashire or Wigan and results in an increase in visitors to Astley Hall.

The Christmas Light Switch on, is the annual town centre winter event that usually takes place at the end of November. It attracts between 1,000 – 2,000 people and is well received by the town traders, who also help to plan the event. The traders also arrange activities on the Saturdays in the run up to Christmas.

A survey conducted at the 2010 Christmas Lights Switch on event showed that attendee's:

- Mostly came from communities surrounding the town centre.
- Don't spend large amounts in the town centre during the event.
- Mostly found out about the event through the local paper.
- Travelled in the car or walked to the event.
- Liked all aspects of the event.

The Group felt that these results were disappointing, particularly in view of the fact that people were attending the event but not spending any money in the shops. The main reason for this was due to the shops not remaining open, during the event. So, although there was support from the traders for the event they are not helping to boost the economy of the town on this particular evening.

This year the range of Christmas lights had been extended and through an exchange scheme with Fylde Borough Council, lights had been erected around the town that had last year been displayed around the town of St Anne's. A night market was also held, to attract some shoppers to the event.

The Council continued to encourage the schools and voluntary groups across the Borough to participate in the event and a greater emphasis had been given to those projects. The Group commented that for schools to get involved more effectively they needed more time to plan and asked if they could be approached as early as the start of the new school year in September.

**Recommendations:**

- **That the traders be encouraged to remain open for business during the Christmas Light Switch-on event.**
- **That the schools across the Borough be contacted before the summer break to allow them to be more involved in the Christmas Lights Switch on event.**

Astley Hall and Park

***The ‘Jewel in Chorley’s Crown’, Astley Hall is one of the most historical buildings in the North West of England. The magnificent 400 year old stately home is notable for its astonishing mid-17<sup>th</sup> century interior. Astley Hall provides a fascinating history of the families who lived there and is consistently rumoured to be haunted. It is also believed that Oliver Cromwell stayed at the Hall during the Battle of Preston in the 1600s. Astley Hall is located just minutes away from the town centre and is set in the beautiful grounds of Astley Park.***

Since the re-opening of the refurbished Coach House and Walled Garden this area of Astley Park has become a popular visitor attraction for local people. Astley Hall and Coach House also acts as a tourist attraction and is well visited by people outside the area. The Hall and Coach House Gallery is generally open two days per week. April to December and typically welcomes around 13,000 visitors a year.

Café Ambio is the onsite café operating 7 days a week all year round, serving a wide range of hot and cold food the majority made using local produce (many seasoned by herbs from the walled garden).

Since the refurbishment there has been an increase in the number of visitors who reside in the outlying areas of Chorley. Although they may not be tourists in the traditional sense, they are people who previously were not regularly visiting or being involved in central Chorley activities.

The main draw for the more traditional tourist, ie. somebody who resides outside the Borough, is largely Astley Hall and some cultural events. The Hall itself gets visitors from across the North West, some from other parts of the County and around 200 people a year from overseas. Largely our overseas visitors are people with family or past connections in the area. The same can also be generally said from those visiting from other counties in the country; largely they are visiting friends and family in the area and are brought to the Hall for a day trip.

The Hall does attract a number of visitors from other areas of the North West who come to the area to specifically visit the Hall. It is largely people who have an interest in historic houses, who will research first and then plan their visit. The Hall is featured with in Simon Jenkins' 'England's 1000 Best Homes', where he opens with "Astley Hall is the most exhilarating in Lancashire". It is also great publicity for the Council amongst this particular group of people. Simon Jenkins is the current Chairman of the National Trust, so his recommendation carries particular credibility.

There is a need to increase the quality of the visitor experience, the profile of the Hall and to increase its publicity surrounding it and the Council has the potential to develop links with Lancashire Life and to improve the content on the Council's website.

The Tourist Board looked at heritage across Lancashire on the basis that if people are interested in one historic house they are interested in others. The Group felt that there was an opportunity here to exchange our promotional literature with other authorities. Research found that visitors tend to stay longer if there is a coffee shop, although most attractions in Lancashire do not retain the visitor for the whole day.

Lancashire County Council have also considered the production of one publicity booklet to advertise all the various attractions across Lancashire, or a number of theme booklets, for example, walking, and historic houses.

There have been some recent successes in jointly marketing the coach trips to visit both the Markets and the Hall as part of a combined day trip. The team are also in the early stages of collating an email list from visitors to the Hall in order to promote things better in the future. Although there is a forward plan, there is currently no business plan for the Hall.



Now that the coach house and walled garden have been refurbished, there is now the potential to cater more for weddings as the whole event can be held within the Park. There is also the potential for customers to hold their reception in the Lancastrian Room at the Town Hall. The Council's wedding package is currently being redesigned to better promote the facilities that are now available.

The majority of the 25 private guided tours that are run each year when the Hall is closed to the public are to groups from outside the Borough. The Hall also welcomes around 30 schools per year, which come from across the Chorley Borough and Lancashire.

Events such as the Big Drum Day, Nutcrack Night and Derian House's Winter Sparkle also attract a significant number of visitors from outside the area. The Council is also looking to develop its events programme to increase the number of quality events that are staged or hosted.

The art exhibition programme is a fine balance between providing a space for local artists to exhibit and also producing a programme of quality and interest that attracts people to want to visit. The Council stages around 10 exhibitions each year, aiming to concentrate on the best artistic talent in Chorley and the surrounding areas. The addition of the Coach House Gallery has enabled us to double our capacity in this area and the perfect setting of the gallery has made it a well sought after space for artists from around the North West.

Apart from coverage in some books and guides such as the one already mentioned and promotional activities associated with certain events at the site, the Council does very little in way of marketing to outside visitors from outside the Borough.

Car parking for events within the Astley complex is an on-going issue which needs further investment but there is scope to develop this side of the facilities of the park.

#### **Recommendations:**

- **That the Council be asked to examine the potential to improve car parking facilities for the park to encourage larger events, this to include working in partnership with Lancashire College/Woodlands regarding the use of their car parks as an overflow facility for Astley Park, on major events. In addition, to developing a traffic management plan for major events in the park.**
- **That the Council develop and monitor visitor demographics to Astley Hall and Park.**
- **That a development plan be devised for the Hall, complex and park to encourage the use of the park and increase visitor numbers.**
- **That the opening hours of Astley Hall be more flexible to be able to respond to seasonal changes in the weather.**

- **To improve the presence on the councils website with a distinct feel to promote the Hall, park and other attractions.**
- **Develop marketing materials for the Hall and complex to promote weddings, conferences and other events.**
- **To exchange our promotional leaflets with other authorities, to better advertise our key attractions in like for like venues.**

### Yarrow Valley Park

Yarrow Valley has significant ecological value and interest. It's most important feature is the presence of large areas of mature ancient woodland which makes up more than a third of the park (130ha) and Biological Heritage sites make up 60% of the park (180ha). The park is also home to a number of rare/nationally scarce plants and animals.

2011/12 has seen a significant increase in visitor numbers which coincided with the opening of the new natural play facility, Yarrow Rocks. This facility was brought together by contributions from several partners and is widely regarded to be the finest example of natural play in the region.

The last visitor survey in 2009 revealed that 26% of visitors came from outside the Borough of Chorley, generally in our neighbouring boroughs of South Ribble, Bolton and Wigan. These figures are based on the car park counts for the Birkacre Car Park, so therefore excludes visitors on foot and via public transport, or users of alternative car parks at Euxton, Dob Brow and Duxbury.

Yarrow Valley has held the Green Flag award for the past 7 years and always receives outstanding feedback from the judges and has accredited "Country Parks status" from Natural England which is valid for 3 years.

### **4b) EXTERNAL ASSETS AND EVENTS**

#### Camelot Theme Park/ Park Hall Hotel

Camelot Theme Park is located on a 140-acre site near the village of Charnock Richard, 3 miles west of Chorley and set within the grounds of the Park Hall Hotel complex. The hotel offers visitors to the park the chance to stay overnight to make the most of their experience. The park is home to medieval shows, birds of prey and many rides, taking a target audience of families and younger children; the park also boasts numerous thrill rides and a rollercoaster.

Visitor numbers for 2011 were around 225,000, which had been down on the previous year, this was mainly down to a poor summer and there had been a trend for a decline in visitor numbers over the years.

Camelot have no plans to change the offer, as such to their target market as it has spent many years establishing itself as a 'family attraction'. They do not presently

promote any other places of interest within the borough, although they do work closely with Park Hall Hotel to offer the overall stay package, including the attraction Battlefield Live who are based at the same site.

Camelot had detailed records of where visitors come from by postcode, with their prime catchment area being an hour to an hour and half drive time away.

In previous years when Chorley Council had a designated Tourism Department, they had worked closely together to promote Camelot and Chorley whether this was in guides, at exhibitions or joint promotions. Camelot also felt that a more prominent presence on the Chorley website would be helpful as they had struggled recently to get any presence.

Along with Camelot Theme Park, the Hotel does promote other attractions available in the North West areas, although admittedly not many are Chorley based. The company felt that a better working relationship could be maintained between the local hoteliers and Chorley Council if better links were provided on their website.

### Chorley Little Theatre



Originally opened as Chorley' first electric cinema in 1910, Chorley Little Theatre has become a thriving arts venue in the centre of the town. Since 1960 it has been owned and operated by the amateur dramatics group CADOS, who have been putting on high-quality productions for over 75 years.

The theatre has recently undergone major restoration work that has seen a £150,000 face lift.

The majority of people that attend the performances at the theatre are largely from across the Lancashire area, although they do have visitors from as far as Wales.

The theatre has been recently successful in attracting a number of well known touring comedians, this has helped to put the theatre on the map and people are now coming from further afield for these shows. The theatre sends out information about up and coming shows and events to previous customers via email.

Another success has been the showing of 'An Inspector Calls'. This has been on the school GCSE syllabus and the show has generated a large number of school based coach trips. It is not always possible to run this type of show, due to a number of different factors, but the theatre are considering showing Romeo and Juliet next season.

The theatre have tried to negotiate a deal with the local restaurants, whereby they will offer a nominated discount if the theatre recommended them. People often ask for this kind of information when attending one of the theatres performances, however after many efforts on behalf of the theatre, the take-up from the restaurants has been poor.

They also commented that they thought that the Councils website tourism content was poor and that more could be done to promote the town assets around the town, particularly around the use of the community noticeboards.

### Botany Bay

Botany Bay is a unique mix of retail and heritage, just off junction 8 of the M61. Botany Bay is the sister mill to Bygone Times: a renovated and restored cotton mill, harking back to the Crimean War. Today, it offers five floors of independent retail outlets, complete with a garden centre, various restaurants and a coffee bar. For the kids who don't find shopping as entertaining as their parents, there's Puddletown Pirates, a large indoor play centre. If you're in the mood for a party, you can hire a barge from Boatel Party Cruises and take a trip down the canal.

### The Waterways

The Leeds-Liverpool Canal runs through the heart of the borough and once upon a time was the lifeblood of the industrial revolution — carrying supplies to and from the mills. Today it is transformed. Rich in wildlife, the canal has some lovely tow paths to explore. A popular destination during the summer months is the Johnson's Hillock Locks. It is a series of seven consecutive locks and watching the narrow boats negotiating them all is an impressive event. The Leeds-Liverpool is the longest canal in the country and is linked to 2,000 miles of inland waterways. The recently opened Ribble Link joins the Leeds-Liverpool to the Lancaster Canal.

### Rivington County Park

Rivington Country Park is easily accessible for all residents and visitors to the North West region and is approximately 4 miles from junction 6 of the M61. Rivington is steeped in history and has many areas of interest including Rivington Terraced Gardens,



Liverpool Castle and Rivington Pike. There are many footpaths and bridleways enabling a variety of recreational pursuits from easy family walks, gentle bike rides through to rambling on the moors and the recently established Go Ape course. The Park also has toilets, café and parking facilities.

As Rivington is extremely popular with visitors, the area cannot cope with the vehicular traffic that already visits. As a result, United Utilities who are responsible for the Park do not actively promote the area to attract additional visitors. Information is available on their website on all of their sites, including Rivington and they are in the process of updating the information available at Rivington, both in terms of onsite interpretation and on the website.

Public transport is poor and it was felt that the provision of a regular bus service to the area would vastly improve access for those without their own transport and help reduce the number of cars in the area.

United Utilities works closely with all the Local Authorities within the West Pennine Moors Partnership, including Chorley. They provide reports and attend the various Local Advisory Group meetings. United Utilities reported that they worked extremely close with the Council's Conservation Officer at Chorley and the Neighbourhoods Team, to deal with any lost dogs, dog fouling and fly tipping issues.

The Public Rights of Way in the area are the responsibility of the Council to maintain and more work on these would improve the visitor experience and make it safer for visitors. Rivington Pike is also owned by Chorley Council and this is visited by thousands of people on Good Friday every year, yet it was noted that there are no staff from the Council present on the day to assist with the clean up that is involved on the Saturday.

### **Recommendations:**

- **Examine options for better marketing attractions in the borough on the internet, for example through the Councils website.**
- **Review existing literature that promotes the borough and ensures that local attractions and accommodation have easy access to it so they can encourage visitors to stay in the area.**
- **That the Council investigate the possibility of providing Council support to United Utilities following Good Friday to tidy around the Rivington Pike area.**
- **Work with partners to improve public transport links to the Rivington area to ease traffic problems.**
- **That Chorley Council does more to promote itself at Rivington Barn and surrounding amenities, eg, distribution of the Chorley Smile magazine.**
- **That Chorley Council consider working with partners like United Utilities to encourage the use of the locality for one off events.**

#### **4c) LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

The Tourism Boards hold a lot of data that can be provided upon request to Lancashire County Council. Although the various Boards have now been dissolved the focus will be on marketing Lancashire as a whole. This fits in with the Lancashire Enterprise Board and its aim of raising the profile and visibility of Lancashire.

Chorley is fortunate to be situated just south of the M6 motorway with the use of the brown signposts, of which Chorley has a good provision. There are lots of potential visitors to be won and it was recognised that extra signage could benefit visitors upon their arrival at their destination and needed to be more widely targeted to include pedestrians and cyclists.

There are three tiers of information given at a Tourism Information Centre (TIC), information, advice and guidance. Lancashire County Council is planning to move Chorley's Tourism Information Centre into the local town library. The staff would need to receive training as the role of the library assistant differs from that of the tourist information assistant, but as the visitor economy is becoming more important this is necessary to ensure good service provision.

#### **Recommendations:**

- **To consider the provision of additional signage relating specifically to tourism across the borough.**
- **That Chorley Council consider becoming a member of the Tourist Board under the new arrangements, in line with other district Councils.**

## **5. CONCLUSION**

Chorley has a good range of attractions that provides the variety needed to attract tourists. However, there is a need to be sensible about targeting these visitors, to realise our strengths and capitalise on them effectively. Chorley is more likely to be a secondary location for a day trip or a weekend away.

Chorley has the potential to lend itself to niche activities, like cycling or adrenaline sports and this is something that the Council may wish to consider exploring.

By improving on the content and providing better links, It is anticipated that the current redevelopment of the Councils website will help to improve our relationships with external providers and organisations that have a key stake in tourism within the Borough and help us to build on and create new partnerships to better work together to promote Chorley.

# Chorley Council



**2008-2009**  
*Transforming Services:  
Citizen Engagement  
and Empowerment*



**2009-2010**  
*Cohesive and resilient communities*



**2009-2010**  
*Better outcomes for people and places*

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Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of People and Places	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	16 April 2012

**INDEPENDENT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ADVOCATE SERVICE (IDVA) FUNDING**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To update Members of the funding arrangements being sought for the Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) service in 2012/13 and beyond

**RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2. Members are requested to note the report

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT**

3. Members will recall undertaking a review of the IDVA service and its funding arrangements as part of the overview and scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership of which the Council is a Responsible Authority Group member.
4. The Councils Executive Cabinet accepted the recommendations of a report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 24 November 2011.
5. The main recommendations focussed on the provision of budgetary support for IDVA and seeking to ensure partners made appropriate contributions in order for the service to continue.
6. In the intervening period the Council has been seeking support of partners through the Community Safety Partnership and Lancashire County Council have undertaken a piece of work which seeks to identify the level of benefit received by partners and agencies through the work of the IDVA service.
7. This has culminated in the proposed funding arrangements for 2012/12 and beyond that are outlined in this report.
8. Members should note that these arrangements are subject to final agreement by all agencies and partners by June 2012.

<b>Confidential report</b> Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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**CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

9. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Strong Family Support	X	Education and Jobs	
Being Healthy		Pride in Quality Homes and Clean Neighbourhoods	
Safe Respectful Communities	X	Quality Community Services and Spaces	
Vibrant Local Economy		Thriving Town Centre, Local Attractions and Villages	

A Council that is a consistently Top Performing Organisation and Delivers Excellent Value for Money	X
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## BACKGROUND

10. The following funding arrangements have been proposed for the IDVA service in 2012/13 and beyond

## SERVICE LEVEL IN CHORLEY AND SOUTH RIBBLE

11. A recent study commissioned by Lancashire County Council has identified that, based on the number of domestic violence referrals into the multi agency risk assessment conference (MARAC), the level of IDVA service necessary to meet demand across the Chorley and South Ribble footprint in 2012/13 would cost in the region of £89,000. This is twice the current level of funding provided by partners.

## PROPOSED FUNDING MODEL 2012/13

12. It is proposed that for 2012/13 the level of IDVA service be increased to meet the demand identified above and that 50% of the funding will come from the Safer Lancashire Board, with the remaining funding being provided by partner agencies on a scale that identifies the percentile benefit they receive through the operation of the service.
13. Partner agencies are now being consulted on the level of funding apportioned to them on this basis and it is anticipated that budgetary provision amongst partner agencies will be made for 2012/13.
14. Chorley Councils contribution for 2012/13 amounts to about £1700.

## PROPOSED FUNDING MODEL BEYOND 2012/13

15. In 2013/14 and beyond the funding provision from the Safer Lancashire Board will no longer be available and the Chorley and South Ribble IDVA service will have to source the £89,000 from its constituent partner agencies.
16. However as a number of these agencies cover the wider Lancashire footprint, consultation and discussion at a county level is underway to ensure those agencies make budgetary provision on a countywide scale to include the portion necessary for the local Chorley and South Ribble service to continue.
17. In the event that partner agencies commit to the proposed apportionment then Chorley's contribution for 2013/14 and beyond will be in the region of £3400 pa (subject to cost increases in line with inflation and any service level increases required based on service demand).

## FURTHER ACTION

18. The chair of the Chorley and South Ribble Community Safety Partnership has written to all Responsible Authority Group agencies outlining these funding models and seeking their support in making the appropriate budgetary provision as apportioned to them.
19. It is anticipated that the final funding arrangements will be agreed by June 2012 and Members will be updated accordingly.
20. Members will be aware that the IDVA service is only part of the numerous activities, services and initiatives undertaken by agencies to tackle domestic violence. Additional work is underway to identify how agencies might better target resources at an early stage to prevent domestic violence situations escalating to a point where the IDVA service is triggered.

**IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT**

21. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance		Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal		Integrated Impact Assessment required?	
No significant implications in this area	X	Policy and Communications	

**COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER**

22. A budget of £14,000 (recurrent) for IDVA funding was included as part of the 2012/13 budget growth package that was agreed at Full Council on 28th February 2012.

**COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER**

23. None

JAMIE CARSON  
DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE AND PLACES

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Simon Clark	5732	27 March 2012	IDVAfundupdate

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# CHORLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN FOR THE FOUR MONTH PERIOD 1 APRIL 2012 TO 31 JULY 2012

1. This Forward Plan sets out the details of the 'key' and other major decisions which the Council expects to take during the next four month period. The Plan is rolled forward every month and is available to the public 14 days before the beginning of each month.
2. A 'Key' Decision is defined as:
  - 2.1 Any executive decision which is likely to result in the Council incurring significant expenditure or the making of savings where there is:
    - a change in service provision that impacts upon the service revenue budget by £100,000 or more; or
    - a contract worth £100,000 or more; or
    - a new or unprogrammed capital scheme of £100,000 or more.
  - 2.2 Any executive decision which will have a significant impact in environmental, physical, social or economic terms on communities living or working in two or more electoral wards. This includes any plans or strategies which are not within the meaning of the Council's Policy Framework set out in Article 4 of the Council's Constitution.
  - 2.3 Under the Access to Information Procedure Rules set out in the Council's Constitution, a 'Key' Decision may not be taken, unless:
    - it is published in the Forward Plan;
    - five clear days have lapsed since the publication of the Forward Plan; and
    - if the decision is to be taken at a meeting of the Executive Cabinet, five clear days notice of the meeting has been given.
  - 2.4 The law and the Council's Constitution provide for urgent key decisions to be made, even though they have not been included in the Forward Plan in accordance with Rule 18 (General Exception) and Rule 19 (Special Urgency) of the Access to Information Procedure Rules.
3. The Forward Plan has been extended to now include details of any significant issues to be considered by the Executive Cabinet, full Council and Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It is hoped that this will better meet the needs of both elected Members, Officers and the public.
4. Anyone wishing to make representations about any of the matters in the schedule below may do so by contacting the officer listed. Copies of the Council's Constitution and agenda and minutes for all meetings of the Council may be accessed on the Council's website: [www.chorley.gov.uk](http://www.chorley.gov.uk). Most meetings of the Council are open to the public and meeting dates are also on the Council's website.

**Gary Hall**  
**Chief Executive**

**Publication Date: 16 March 2012**

<b>Details of the Decision to be taken</b>	<b>Decision to be taken by</b>	<b>Relevant Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Earliest Date decision can be taken</b>	<b>Proposed Consultees</b>	<b>Method(s) of Consultation</b>	<b>Documents to be considered by Decision taker</b>	<b>Representations may be made to the following officer by the date stated</b>
April							
Approval of the contract award procedure and evaluation criteria, banking tender 1/4/2013 to 31/3/2018 for Chorley and South Ribble Borough Councils	Executive Member (Resources)	Executive Member (Resources)	2 Apr 2012	Executive members (Resources) Chorley and Relevant member of the Senior Management Team at South Ribble	Report to be supplied to the consultees	Report of the Chief Executive	Chief Executive (Gary Hall)  1 March 2012
Review of Committees and new Standards requirements	Council	Executive Leader	3 Apr 2012	Strategy Group, All Party Leaders Liaison	Report to be supplied to consultees	Report of the Chief Executive	Chief Executive (Gary Hall)  Tuesday 13 March 2012
May							
Annual Appointments to the Mayoralty, Committees and Outside Bodies	Council		15 May 2012	N/A	N/A	Report of the	N/A

<b>Details of the Decision to be taken</b>	<b>Decision to be taken by</b>	<b>Relevant Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Earliest Date decision can be taken</b>	<b>Proposed Consultees</b>	<b>Method(s) of Consultation</b>	<b>Documents to be considered by Decision taker</b>	<b>Representations may be made to the following officer by the date stated</b>
June							
Tenancy Strategy	Executive Cabinet	Executive Member (Partnership and Planning)	21 Jun 2012	Key partners	Draft strategy to be supplied to consultees	Report of the Director of Partnerships and Planning	Director of Partnerships and Planning (Lesley-Ann Fenton)  Thursday, 31 May 2012
Consultation on Parks and Open Spaces Memorial Policy	Executive Cabinet	Executive Member (Places)	21 Jun 2012	Relevant stakeholders, Members	Report to be supplied to consultees	Report of the Director of People and Places	Director of People and Places (Jamie Carson)  Thursday, 31 May 2012

<b>Details of the Decision to be taken</b>	<b>Decision to be taken by</b>	<b>Relevant Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Earliest Date decision can be taken</b>	<b>Proposed Consultees</b>	<b>Method(s) of Consultation</b>	<b>Documents to be considered by Decision taker</b>	<b>Representations may be made to the following officer by the date stated</b>
Disabled Facilities Grant report	Executive Cabinet	Executive Member (Partnership and Planning)	21 Jun 2012	Strategy Group, relevant Executive Member, Registered Social Landlords	Report to be supplied to consultees	Report of the Director of Partnerships and Planning	Director of Partnerships and Planning (Lesley-Ann Fenton)  Thursday, 24 May 2012

	11 July	5 Sept	3 Oct	7 Nov	12 Dec	3 Jan	12 Mar	16 April
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**Holding the Executive to account**

Partnerships, Planning and Policy	MS PR CP		PR CP		MS	PR CP	PR CP	
People and Places	MS				MS			
Transformation	MS				MS			
Update Report on Section 106 monies		*						
Potential Crime and Disorder topics report		*						
Forward Plan	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Executive Cabinet minutes	*	*		*	*	*	*	*
Budget Scrutiny						*		

**Policy Development and Review of Council Services (Task and Finish Groups)**

Allotments			1 M					
Asset Management						1 M		
Highways		F					1 M	
Lancastrian		V			R			
Private Rented Housing Inspection							S	
Tourism and Promoting Chorley		V		S				R
Town Centre Vitality			2 M					

**Reserve topics for future reviews**

Play Area provision								
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**External Scrutiny**

Crime and Disorder – IDVA services		R	*	*	*			
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**Other**

Work Programme	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Annual Report	*							
Annual Review and Potential topics	*							
Review of the Year								*

**Key:**

**Holding the Executive to account**

- MS Business plan monitoring statements
- PR Performance report and
- CP Chorley Partnership performance report
- BS Budget scrutiny

**Reported Annually**

- Update report on Section 106 monies
- Annual Report

**Policy Development and Review of Council Services and External Scrutiny**

- S Scoping
- C Collecting and considering evidence
- R Report
- F Feedback and action from EC
- M Monitoring 1 2 and 3
- V Verbal Update
- ML Member Learning Session

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# Agenda Item 11      Agenda Page 63

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