

Executive Cabinet

Public Minutes of meeting held on 29 September 2005

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

Also in attendance: Councillors Walker

05.EC.113 OFF - ROAD MOTORCYCLING IN THE BOROUGH

The Head of Property Services submitted a report seeking the views of the Executive Cabinet on the establishment of an off road motorcycling facility in the Borough. The report incorporated a briefing paper provided by an officer working group which had been established to see how the problems experienced in the country parks and other areas of open space owned by the Council could be addressed.

Decisions made:

That no further action be taken by officers to identify a dedicated off road motorcycling facility in the Borough.

Reasons for Decisions

It has not been possible to identify a suitable site for an off road motorcycling facility in the Borough.

Alternative Options considered and rejected:

The provision of a dedicated off road motorcycling facility on a suitable site within the Borough.

05.EC.114 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

Councillors Edgerley and Lennox declared a personal interest in the item considered under minute 05.EC.121.

05.EC.115 MINUTES

The public minutes of the meeting of the Executive Cabinet held on 8 September 2005 were confirmed as a correct record for signature by the Executive Leader.

05.EC.116 REVENUE BUDGET 2005/06 - MONITORING

The Director of Finance submitted a report that set out the current financial position of the Council as compared against the budgets and efficiency savings targets it had set itself for 2005/06 for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account.

Decision made:

- 1. That the report be noted**
- 2. That approval be given to maintain the current position of freezing expenditure financed from the remaining Contingency Fund except by approval by the Executive Cabinet;**
- 3. That approval be given to the sum of £20,000 being financed from**

- the Contingency Fund to cover the cost of the Property Services Unit outsourcing work on legal agreements.
4. That vacant positions be only filled by agency staff with the express permission of a Group Director until such time as the budget position improves.
 5. That Finance staff implement a line by line review of budgets with Service Heads prior to the production of next months monitoring statement.
 6. That the Management Team be requested to consider in detail the current position relating to procurement related efficiency savings.

Reasons for the Decisions:

To address the currently forecasted budget deficit.

Alternative Options considered and rejected:

None

05.EC.117 CAPITAL BUDGET 2005/06 - MONITORING

The Director of Finance submitted a report on proposals for the additional of schemes to the 2005/06 Capital Programme, and to split the programme into categories based on the stage of approval of the schemes.

Decisions made:

1. That the Council be requested to give approval to the addition of the Category A schemes totalling £2,771,580 to the 2005/06 Capital Programme.
2. That the categorisation of the Capital Programme be approved, as set out in the report.

Reasons for Decisions:

The addition of further schemes to the programme is necessary to help achieve corporate priorities.

Separating the fully approved and budgeted schemes from those still in the pipeline means that the revenue consequences of the Capital Programme can be monitored more accurately.

Alternative Options considered and rejected:

None

05.EC.118 VALUE FOR MONEY SELF ASSESSMENT SUBMISSION TO THE AUDIT COMMISSION

The Director of Finance submitted a report on the content of the Value for Money Self Assessment required as part of the 2004/2005 Annual Audit completed by the Audit Commission.

Decisions made:

1. That the contents of the Value for Money Self Assessment for submission to the Audit Commission be noted.

2. **That the Director of Finance be given delegated authority to make minor amendments to the assessment document following the final drafting and quality check that has yet to be undertaken.**

Reasons for Decisions:

The Government has imposed efficiency requirements on local authorities emanating from the Gershon review. The Council's progress and achievements in this area will need to be reported via an annual efficiency statement.

Alternative Options considered and rejected:

None

05.EC.119 DRAFT REGIONAL ECONOMIC STRATEGY

The Head of Economic Regeneration submitted a report on the content of the Draft Regional Economic Strategy document and sought approval to the submission of the Council's response to the North West Development Agency on the basis of the comments set out in the report.

The Executive Cabinet was also asked to approve that the same comments be incorporated into the joint response to the draft document from Chorley, Preston and South Ribble, a response being formulated by the Head of Economic Regeneration in consultation with adjoining authorities.

Decisions made:

That the comments set out in the report be approved as the Council's response to the Draft Regional Economic Strategy and be sent directly to the North West Development Agency and, in view of the joint working relationship outlined in the report, the comments be used to contribute to the joint response to the draft document from Chorley, Preston and South Ribble.

Reasons for the Decisions:

The Regional Economic Strategy seeks to shape the economic direction of the North West and to deliver sustainable growth. It has a significant influence on investment decisions and can thus affect the lives of individuals, businesses and communities within Chorley and the surrounding area. As a stakeholder in the region, the Council has sought to influence the direction of regional policy by responding to the consultative process in respect of the draft strategy..

Alternative Options considered and rejected:

None

05.EC.120 MILLENNIUM TOWNS AND CITIES CAMPAIGN

The Executive Cabinet considered a letter from the Local Government Association which requested that the Council give consideration to the endorsement of the United Cities and Local Governments "Millennium Towns and Cities Campaign". The campaign supports United Nations Millennium Development Goals and aims to ensure the fundamental progress in achieving goals throughout the world is made by 2015.

Decisions made:

That approval be given to the endorsement of the United Cities and Local Governments“ Millennium Towns and Cities Campaign” and that the remaining actions in the campaign literature be noted.

Reasons for the Decisions:

To endorse the objectives of the Millennium Towns and Cities Campaign.

Alternative Options considered and rejected:

None

(Councillors Edgerley and Lennox as Members of the Housing Shadow Management Group declared a personal interest in the following item).

05.EC.121 HOUSING STOCK TRANSFER - UPDATE

The Head of Housing Services submitted a report which gave details of the progress on the proposed housing stock transfer, and sought approval to a series of constitutional and procedural issues relevant to the stock transfer process.

He also circulated a the revised version of the statement of visions, values and aspirations for consideration at the meeting.

Decisions made:

- 1. That the report be noted**
- 2. That the name for the new Registered Social Landlord (RSL) be “Chorley Community Housing Limited” (CHC).**
- 3. That the new RSL be an Industrial and Providential Society with charitable status;**
- 4. That the revised statement of visions, values and aspirations be approved;**
- 5. That the list of essential requirements for partner selection, as set out in revised Statement of visions, values and aspirations be approved;**
- 6. That the housing transfer employment protocol be approved.**
- 7. That the Stock Transfer be effected at no net additional cost to the General Fund.**

Reasons for Decisions:

The name of the new Registered Social Landlord reflects the aspiration for a strong local identity. By establishing Chorley Community Homes as a Industrial and Providential Society with charitable status, it will be able to take advantage of the tax and other financial benefits available to charities. The statement of visions, values and aspirations, and the Council’s essential requirements have been developed to assist the selection of the RSL partner for CCH, to ensure a partner with whom the Council can work with in the long term post transfer, and that is able to deliver both the Council’s and tenants aspirations. The employment protocol sets out the principles under which transfer of staff to the new RSL will take place. The final decision reflects the desire to achieve a cost neutral effect on the General Fund.

Alternative Options considered and rejected:

The principle area for considering alternatives was with regard to the new constitution of the RSL. Non-charitable status was rejected. Whilst it provided the potential for

CCH to undertake a more diverse range of activities, these did not out-weigh the loss of financial benefits available to charity.

The alternative to establish CCH as a Company Limited by Guarantee was rejected as it did not provide any material benefits to setting up as an Industrial and Providential Society, and would add another layer of regulation through registration with the Charity Commissioners.

05.EC.122 STRATEGIC HOUSING FUNCTION

The Head of Housing Services submitted a report on proposals for a new strategic Housing Services Staffing Structure, which incorporated a copy of a report on a review of the proposed staffing arrangements produced by the Tribal HCH.

The Executive Cabinet at its meeting on 7 April 2005 had approved a report detailing proposals for consultation on a new Strategic Housing Services Structure and received a further report on 26 May 2005 summarising the consultative responses which contained some general concerns over the proposals.

Decisions made:

- 1. That the Tribal HCH report be noted.**
- 2. That approval is given to establish a stand-alone Strategic Housing Service within the new Development and Regeneration Unit and that the changes be implemented at the earliest opportunity.**
- 3. That the staffing structure set out in Addendum 1 to the report be approved, with a review in Autumn 2007 (or twelve months after transfer).**
- 4. That further consideration be given to the posts of Home Energy Efficiency Officer and Housing Standards Technician when the respective business cases for each can be judged against the Council's new corporate priorities and other budget requirements.**

Reasons for Decisions:

To ensure the future staffing arrangements to effect the separation of the strategic housing and management functions are appropriate and fit for purpose.

Alternative Options considered and rejected:

1. Accept the structure proposed in the Tribal HCH Report.
2. Accept an amended structure including an additional post of Home Energy Efficiency Officer.
3. Retain or delete the post of Technical Assistant as detailed in Paragraph 11 of the report.

05.EC.123 SHARED SERVICES CONTACT CENTRE PARTNERSHIP - UPDATE

The Head of Customer, Democratic and Office Support Services submitted a report that provided a general progress update in respect of the Contact Centre, which went live on 30 June 2005.

The Council has signed up to the Lancashire Shared Services Contact Centre Partnership which will deliver a fully operational Contact Centre with underlying technology and hardware.

Decisions made:

That the report be noted.

Reasons for Decisions:

The report only provided a general summary of the progress so far on the development of the Contact Centre.

Alternative Options considered and rejected:

None

05.EC.124 PROGRESS ASSESSMENT REPORT

The Chief Executive submitted a report incorporating a copy of the "Progress Assessment Report" from the Audit Commission received in July.2005 which gave details of the progress made on issues identified in the Council's Comprehensive Performance Assessment 2004.

Decisions made:

That the report be noted.

Reasons for Decisions:

The Progress Assessment Report provided an assessment of the progress made in the implementation of the Corporate Improvement Plan.

Alternative Options considered and rejected:

None

05.EC.125 CUSTOMER FOCUSED ACCESS AND SERVICE DESIGN STRATEGY

The Head of Information Communication Technology and the Head of Customer, Democratic and Office Support Services submitted a report seeking approval of the proposed Customer Focused Access and Service Design Strategy.following the recent consultation exercise.

Decisions made:

- 1. That the Customer Focused Access and Service Design Strategy be approved.**
- 2. That the Executive Member for Customers, Policy and Performance be given authority to approve any minor amendments to the strategy if this proves necessary to do so.**

Reasons for Decisions:

Approval will allow the programme of work necessary to be planned and delivered.

Alternative Options considered and rejected.

None

05.EC.126 AREA FORUM WORKING GROUP

The Executive Cabinet considered the proceedings of the Area Forum Working Group meeting held on 22 September 2005 and the draft arrangements for the introduction of three Area Forum Pilot Schemes within the areas of the Clayton-Le-Wood's North Ward, the Coppull Parish boundary and the Lostock Ward, following consultation meetings held in the three areas involving representatives of the public, community and voluntary organisations within those areas.

Decisions made:

- 1. That approval be given to the boundary of the Area Forum pilot for Clayton being defined as the Clayton-Le-Woods North Ward, which comprises the area of Clayton Brook, in line with the consensus view expressed at the consultation meeting on 13 September 2005.**
- 2. That approval be given to the draft arrangements for the introduction of the three Area Forum pilot schemes within the areas of Clayton-le-Woods North Ward, Coppull Parish, and Lostock Ward .**
- 3. That the officers progress the initiative in liaison with respective partners and submit a report to the next meeting of the Area Forum Working Group on proposals for the dates and venues for the initial Forum meetings, procedure rules and promotional arrangements.**

Reasons for Decisions:

To determine the arrangements for the Area Forum Pilot Scheme to be operated within three areas of the Borough.

Alternative Options considered and rejected:

None

05.EC.127 LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT

The Head of Corporate and Policy Services submitted a report which provided an update on progress against the targets contained within the Lancashire Local Public Service Agreement .

The Agreement was signed in July 2003 and covers the period April 2003 to March 2006. It sets out to deliver 12 'stretch' targets around the themes of improving life chances of young and older people and is a partnership between Lancashire County Council, District Councils, other key partners and Central Government.

Decisions made:

That the report be noted.

Reasons for Decisions:

The report is presented for information.

Alternative Options considered and rejected:

None

05.EC.128 LANCASHIRE LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT

The Head of Corporate and Policy Services submitted a report which provided an update on progress in respect of the Local Area Agreement for Lancashire and details of the emerging priority outcomes and process for its preparation.

Local Area Agreements (LAA's) represent a new approach to improve co-ordination between central government and local authorities and their partners, working through Local Strategic Partnerships. The introduction of LAA's is the first step in the implementation of the Government's 10-year vision for the future of local government.

Decisions made:

- 1. That the approach to resourcing the Lancashire Area Agreement as outlined in paragraph 30 of the report be endorsed.**
- 2. That the intention of officers to submit further reports as the Agreement develops be noted.**

Reasons for Decisions:

The LAA will focus attention on outcomes that will improve the quality of life of the County's residents. It is important that Members have the opportunity to comment on the process for the agreements development. It is equally important that the Council has arrangements in place to play a full and active part in the agreements development.

Alternative Options considered and rejected:

None

05.EC.129 LANCASHIRE HIGHWAYS PARTNERSHIP

The Head of Public Space Services submitted a report to update Members on the consultation process subsequent to the County Council Cabinet's decision to consider determination of the Lancashire Highways Partnership. The report also incorporated a copy of the proposed response to the County Council and a note produced by the District Engineers on this issue.

Decisions made:

That Minute 05.EC.112 approved by the Executive Cabinet on 8 September 2005 be confirmed and that the proposed response to Lancashire County Council be approved.

Reasons for Decision:

The content of the response is consistent with the previous decision of the Executive Cabinet and the advice of the Officers on the implications of the termination of the Partnership.

The Lancashire Highways Partnership was established through an agreement between the districts involved and the County Council, effectively as a more modern agency agreement. The agreement makes provision for District Council's to withdraw during the period of the Partnership and, although there is no specific means by which the County Council may terminate the Partnership, it is clear from the agreement that the Partnership has an end date of 30 June 2006.

Alternative Options considered and rejected:

None.

05.EC.130 NEW CONTRACTS PROCEDURE RULES

The Director of Legal Services submitted a report on proposals to introduce a revised version of the Contracts Procedure Rules to replace the existing Rules contained in Appendix 3, Part C of the Council's Constitution.

Decisions made:

That the Council be recommended to adopt the new Contracts Procedure Rules.

Reasons for Decisions:

To ensure that the Executive Cabinet had an opportunity to consider the new draft Contracts Procedure Rules, before submission to Council.

In May 2004, the Council adopted a new Corporate Procurement Strategy, which recognises the importance of strategic procurement, which includes having efficient and effective tendering procedures.

Alternative Options considered and rejected:

To continue with the existing Contracts Procedure Rules. This would hinder the implementation of the Corporate Procurement Strategy and meeting milestones contained in the National Local Government Procurement Strategy.

Executive Leader