

## **EXECUTIVE CABINET**

THURSDAY, 25TH JUNE 2015, 6.00 PM  
COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, CHORLEY

### **AGENDA**

#### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1 **MINUTES OF MEETING THURSDAY, 26 MARCH 2015 OF EXECUTIVE CABINET**

(Pages 5 - 12)

2 **DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS**

Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any pecuniary interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda.

If you have a pecuniary 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 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

Members of the public who have requested the opportunity to ask a question(s) on an item(s) on the agenda will have three minutes to put their question(s) to the respective Executive Member(s). Each member of the public will be allowed to ask one short supplementary question.

**ITEM OF EXECUTIVE LEADER AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS) (INTRODUCED BY COUNCILLOR ALISTAIR BRADLEY)**

4 **CHORLEY YOUTH ZONE**

Report of Director of Public Protection, Streetscene and Community (to follow).

5 **REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC SERVICES IN CHORLEY**

(Pages 13 - 30)

Report of Project Director.

6	<b>CENTRAL LANCASHIRE GYPSY, TRAVELLER &amp; TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE'S ACCOMMODATION ASSESSMENT - MAY 2015</b>	(Pages 31 - 38)
	Report of Chief Executive.	
	<b>ITEM OF DEPUTY EXECUTIVE LEADER AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER (RESOURCES) (INTRODUCED BY COUNCILLOR PETER WILSON)</b>	
7	<b>CHORLEY COUNCIL PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT - FOURTH QUARTER 2014/15</b>	(Pages 39 - 50)
	Report of Chief Executive.	
8	<b>PROVISIONAL REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN 2014/15</b>	(Pages 51 - 80)
	Report of Chief Executive.	
9	<b>CUERDEN VALLEY COUNTRY PARK VISITORS CENTRE</b>	(Pages 81 - 84)
	Report of Director of Public Protection, Streetscene and Community.	
10	<b>SINGLE FRONT OFFICE POLICIES REVIEW</b>	(Pages 85 - 114)
	Report of Customer and Advice Services.	
	<b>ITEM OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER (COMMUNITY SERVICES) (INTRODUCED BY COUNCILLOR BEV MURRAY)</b>	
11	<b>EXECUTIVE CABINET RESPONSE TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TASK GROUP ON NEIGHBOURHOOD WORKING</b>	(Pages 115 - 120)
	Report of Director of Public Protection, Streetscene and Community.	
12	<b>VCFS COMMISSIONING 2014/15 2016/17; END OF YEAR ONE</b>	(Pages 121 - 130)
	Report of Chief Executive.	

13 **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

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.

By Virtue of Paragraph 3: Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

Condition:

Information is not exempt if it is required to be registered under-

The Companies Act 1985

The Friendly Societies Act 1974

The Friendly Societies Act 1992

The Industrial and Provident Societies Acts 1965 to 1978

The Building Societies Act 1986 (recorded in the public file of any building society, within the meaning of the Act)

The Charities Act 1993

Information is exempt to the extent that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Information is not exempt if it relates to proposed development for which the local planning authority may grant itself planning permission pursuant to Regulation 3 of the Town & Country Planning General Regulations 1992(a).

**ITEM OF DEPUTY EXECUTIVE LEADER AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER (RESOURCES) (INTRODUCED BY COUNCILLOR PETER WILSON)**

14 **PROPOSED BUCKSHAW COMMUNITY CENTRE**

(Pages 131 - 136)

Report of Chief Executive.

**ITEM OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER (PUBLIC PROTECTION) (INTRODUCED BY COUNCILLOR PAUL WALMSLEY)**

15 **CCTV INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADE - PROCUREMENT UPDATE**

(Pages 137 - 142)

Report of Director of Public Protection, Streetscene and Community.

16 **POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICER - DEPLOYMENT UPDATE**

(Pages 143 - 146)

Report of Director of Public Protection, Streetscene and Community.

17 **ANY URGENT BUSINESS PREVIOUSLY AGREED WITH THE CHAIR**

Electronic agendas sent to Members of the Executive Cabinet Councillor Alistair Bradley (Chair), Councillor Peter Wilson (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Beverley Murray, Graham Dunn, Adrian Lowe and Paul Walmsley.

If you need this information in a different format, such as larger print or translation, please get in touch on 515151 or [chorley.gov.uk](http://chorley.gov.uk)

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<https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=117&Year=0>



**MINUTES OF****EXECUTIVE CABINET****MEETING DATE****Thursday, 26 March 2015****MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Councillor Alistair Bradley (Chair), Councillor Peter Wilson (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Graham Dunn, Adrian Lowe and Paul Walmsley

**MEMBER RESPONSIBLE:**

Councillors Steve Holgate and Danny Gee

**COUNCIL CHAMPIONS:**

Councillors June Molyneaux, Jean Cronshaw and Mark Jarnell

**OFFICERS:**

Gary Hall (Chief Executive), Lesley-Ann Fenton (Director of Customer and Advice Services), Jamie Carson (Director of Public Protection, Streetscene and Community), Chris Moister (Head of Governance), Susan Guinness (Head of Shared Financial Services), Simon Clark (Head of Health, Environment and Neighbourhoods), Martin Sample (Housing Team Leader (Private Sector)) and Ruth Rimmington (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

**APOLOGIES:**

Councillor Beverley Murray

**OTHER MEMBERS:**

Councillors Eric Bell, Charlie Bromilow, Henry Counce, Matthew Lynch, Mick Muncaster and John Walker

**15.EC.109 Minutes of meeting Thursday, 12 February 2015 of Executive Cabinet**

**Decision:** The minutes of the meeting of the Executive Cabinet held on 12 February 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Executive Leader.

**15.EC.110 Declarations of Any Interests**

There were no declarations of any interests.

**15.EC.111 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.

**15.EC.112 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 2014/15 Report Three**

The report of the Chief Executive was presented by the Deputy Executive Leader and Executive Member (Resources).

The report set out the provisional revenue and capital outturn figures for the Council as compared against the budgets and efficiency savings targets set for the financial year 2014/15. As the latest projected revenue outturn indicated an underspend against the approved budget for 2014/15, no action was required at this stage in the year.

The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy proposed that working balances were to be maintained at a level no lower than £2.0m due to the financial risks facing the Council. The current forecast to the end of February showed that the General Fund balance could be around £2.295m.

**Decision:**

1. **The full year forecast position for the 2014/15 revenue budget and capital investment programme was noted.**
2. **Request Council approve the set aside of around £100,000 of additional forecast revenue income from Council Tax Summons and Liability Order charges in 2014/15 to offset any future increased liability in bad debts as a result of these charges.**
3. **Request Council approve the use of £40,000 from in-year revenue underspends to fund additional temporary staffing resources required in the Single Front Office.**
4. **The forecast position on the Council's reserves was noted.**
5. **Request Council approve the following additions to the capital budget all externally funded from Section 106 receipts:**
  - **£35k for the improvement and equipping of the existing trim trail in Carr Brook;**
  - **£9.6k play and open space contribution on the Union Street, Whittle-woods play area;**
  - **£12.4k for play and open space provision at Coronation Recreation Ground.**
6. **Approval granted that the addition to the capital budget of £8.5k subsidy to Adactus Housing to be funded from the Regional Housing Pot.**
7. **Approval granted for the transfer of budgets within the capital programme to better reflect budget requirements.**
8. **Approval granted for the transfer of budgets between the capital and revenue budgets to better reflect future delivery of schemes.**
9. **Request Council approve the proposed re-profiling of the Capital Programme to better reflect delivery in 2014/15.**
10. **The addition to the capital programme of £3.365 million investment projects approved at Council on 3rd March 2015 was noted.**

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

To ensure the Council's budgetary targets are achieved.

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

None.

**15.EC.113 Joint Procurement Strategy 2009 to 2014 Performance Report and Proposals for a new Joint Procurement Strategy 2015 to 2018**

The report of the Chief Executive was presented by the Deputy Executive Leader and Executive Member (Resources).

The report sought approval for the Joint Procurement Strategy (JPS) with South Ribble Council to cover the period 2015/16 to 2018. The report provided a summary of progress and achievements achieved by the previous JPS and information on the National Procurement Strategy and Sustainable Procurement Policy.

The Policy incorporated changes required by new legislation. Significant savings had already been made by both authorities through the use of the Strategy and targets had been set for the future.

**Decision:**

- 1. Approval granted for the adoption of the Chorley and South Ribble Councils' 2015 to 2018 Joint Procurement Strategy.**
- 2. Approval granted that the current Sustainable Procurement Policy remain in force.**

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

To continue the successful delivery of a JPS with South Ribble Council via its Shared Financial Services arrangements.

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

Allow the previous JPS to expire.

**15.EC.114 Neighbourhood Priorities**

The report of the Director of Public Protection Streetscene and Community was presented by the Executive Leader and Executive Member (Economic Development and Partnerships).

The report updated Members on the delivery of the 24 neighbourhood priorities in 2014/15 and sought approval for the new 24 neighbourhood priorities to be delivered in 2015/16.

There was a diverse range priorities and some would require further consultation to fully understand and determine community needs. Funding for the delivery of the priorities would be through existing budgets, business as usual resources, leveraging in partner resources and approaching Parish Councils to release a proportion of their precept.

The priorities covered a range of issues, however some priorities did have similarities across neighbourhoods and some also fell within programmes of work planned for 2015/16. Where this was the case the particular programmes of work would take into account the respective priorities and seek to deliver them in those terms.

The attendance at the meetings was noted as positive, across the Borough, Lancashire and Parish Councillors, and the housing providers.

**Decision:**

1. **Approval granted for the 24 priorities and actions identified through the recent round of Neighbourhood Area meetings and for delivery in 2015/16 as listed in Appendix 1 of the report.**
2. **Delegated responsibility was granted to the Executive Member for Community Services to approve details costs for each priority as they emerge.**
3. **The successful delivery of neighbourhood priorities in 2014/15 as listed in Appendix 2 to the report was noted.**

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

To progress the priorities determined by the neighbourhood area representatives for the benefit of the communities within their respective neighbourhood areas during 2015/16.

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

None.

**15.EC.115 Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) Report 2015**

The report of the Director of Customer and Advice Services was presented by the Executive Member (Customer and Advice Services).

The report explained the Council's requirements in respect of the Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA), advised on HECA-related activity carried out to date, and set out the proposed HECA-related activity for the future. The Council had a statutory obligation to publish a HECA report.

The Council had a corporate strategy target for its Fuel Poverty rates to be below the North West average and to date this target had been met. An excellent example of the work the Council was undertaking was the Energy Switching Support Service, which helped to make customers' energy bills to be more affordable and, by generating cost savings, provided more disposable income for the household.

**Decision: Approval granted to the proposals set out in Appendix 1 of the report.**

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

By accepting the HECA report the Council has ensured that it is meeting its statutory obligations to publish such a report by 31 March 2015.

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

There were no alternative options to be considered in terms of providing a HECA report, because the Council has a statutory obligation to publish one.

**15.EC.116 Exclusion of the Public and Press**

**Decision: That press and public be excluded for the following items of business on the ground that it involves 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.**

**15.EC.117 Key Partnerships Monitoring Report**

The confidential report of the Chief Executive was presented by the Deputy Executive Leader and Executive Member (Resources).

The report was produced in accordance with the requirements of the council's key partnerships framework. It detailed the performance of the council's key partnerships against targets set for the current year, any emerging issues including whether the contract was on budget or subject to any overspend or underspend of budget and an assessment of the key partner's financial strength and stability.

**Decision: That the report be noted.**

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

To ensure effective monitoring of the council's key partnerships.

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

No alternative options considered.

**15.EC.118 Approval for Contract Procedure and Award for Waste Collection from Council Buildings and Market Walk Shopping Centre**

The confidential report of the Director of Public Protection, Streetscene and Community was presented by the Deputy Executive Leader and Executive Member (Resources).

The report sought approval for the award procedure and evaluation criteria for the two year contract to collect waste from Council owned buildings including the Market Walk shopping centre. The report also sought approval to award the contract described above.

**Decision:**

- 1. Approval granted to the award procedure and evaluation criteria for collecting waste from Council buildings and premises.**
- 2. Approval granted to the award of the contract for collecting waste from Council buildings and premises as set out in the report.**

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

Under the Council's Contract Procedure Rules approval by the Executive Cabinet for contract award for tenders greater than £75,000 is required.

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

To not agree contract procedure and award would fail to comply with the Council's Procurement rules.

**15.EC.119 Lancashire County Council: Integrated Home Improvement Services (IHIS)**

The confidential report of the Director of Customer and Advice Services was presented by the Executive Member (Customer and Advice Services).

The report provided an update on the Council's negotiations with Lancashire County Council, with regards to a Collaboration Agreement between LCC and the Council which would result in the Council's Home Improvement Agency (HIA) delivering

Integrated Home Improvement Services (IHIS) on behalf of LCC in Chorley with effect from 1 May 2015.

The report sought approval, in the form of a waiver of contract procedure rules, for the Council to enter into a partnership arrangement with a contractor to deliver the Minor Adaptations element of IHIS, for a period of eleven months from 1 May 2015. This would also require a waiver of contract procedure rules on the basis that there were circumstances which were genuinely exceptional and not of the Council's making.

**Decision: Approval granted for the Council to use a contractor to deliver the Minor Adaptations element of IHIS for an eleven month period commencing 1 May 2015.**

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

1. Appointing an experienced contractor to deliver the Minor Adaptations element of IHIS throughout Chorley will ensure that the service will be operational with effect from the launch date of 1 May 2015, in accordance with the timeframe set out in the 'Collaboration Agreement' between the Council and LCC.
2. Appointing such a contractor for an eleven month period will provide an opportunity to conduct a comprehensive options appraisal which will involve an analysis of various options including jointly tendering the handyperson and minor adaptations service as well as considering the possibility of directly employing operatives to deliver these services in-house.
3. The Handyperson contract ends on 31 March 2016 so it would be possible to carry out a joint tender during 2015/16 should this be considered the most effective approach.

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

An option of seeking Cabinet approval to go out to tender to appoint a contractor to deliver the Minor Adaptations service was considered but rejected on the basis that LCC have only recently (17 March) sent a draft Collaboration Agreement to the Council. Going out to tender without having first agreed the contents of the Collaboration Agreement would not have been appropriate.

**15.EC.120 Strategic Housing Structure**

The confidential report of the Director of Customer and Advice Services was presented by the Executive Member (Customer and Advice Services).

The report sought approval to make permanent temporary staffing arrangements in Strategic Housing which had been in place since May 2014.

**Decision:**

1. **Approval granted to the structure for formal consultation.**
2. **Approval granted that following consultation the final decision on the staffing changes be delegated to the Executive Member for Customer and Advice Services, subject to there being no fundamental changes to the proposition.**

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

To implement a permanent Strategic Housing staffing structure which will meet the needs of Chorley residents.

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

We could revert back to the structure approved in January 2014. However, given the temporary arrangements have worked well and we are likely to encounter the same issues with recruiting to the vacant Housing Support Services Manager post this option has been dismissed.

Chair

Date

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Report of	Meeting	Date
Project Director (Introduced by the Executive Leader and Executive Member for Economic Development and Partnerships)	Executive Cabinet	25 June 2015

## REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC SERVICES IN CHORLEY

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To present the report from the Commission on the Future of Public Services in Chorley and the potential responses to the recommendations.

### RECOMMENDATION(S)

- That the report is noted.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

- On 4 and 5 March, the council hosted an independent commission to examine the future of public services in the borough. The commission received evidence from a range of organisations and individuals, and has produced a final report.
- The report sets out the findings of the commission, and their recommendations for making public services sustainable while meeting the needs of the borough in the future. The full report and recommendations are set out in the appendix to this report.

<b>Confidential report</b> Please bold as appropriate	Yes	<b>No</b>
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<b>Key Decision?</b> Please bold as appropriate	Yes	<b>No</b>
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### REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

#### (If the recommendations are accepted)

- The Commission on the Future of Public Service in Chorley has made a series of recommendations based on the evidence that it has gathered about the challenges facing public services in the borough. It is important that the council considers these recommendations in its work, and specifically in developing relationships with partners and its future governance models.

### ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- None.

**CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

7. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all		A strong local economy	
Clean, safe and healthy communities		An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	✓

**BACKGROUND**

8. To support its work in examining potential future governance models for public services in the borough, the council established an independent Commission on the Future of Public Services in Chorley.
9. The commission was Chaired by Professor Steven Broomhead (Chief Executive of Warrington Council and former Chief Executive of the North West Development Agency), and had six other members who were from senior roles in a range of organisations involved in public services.
10. The Commission gathered evidence through a written call for evidence and then through a series of sessions held on the 4 and 5 March where organisations and individuals presented their views about public services in the borough.
11. The report from the commission was considered by the Future Governance Viability Working Group at their meeting on 3 June, and they recommended that it should be presented to the Executive Cabinet for noting.

**FINAL REPORT, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

12. The final report of the Commission has been recently published and is included in this report as Appendix A
13. The report includes 10 recommendations from the commission to local public services, aimed at providing a focus for change. The recommendations are:
  - Articulate a new collective vision for public services in Chorley
  - Strengthen and empower partnership working to act collectively
  - Hold a ‘Chorley conversation’ to talk about the future with residents and service users
  - Information and intelligence should be freely shared
  - ‘Test-beds’ for action and transformation should be identified
  - Public services should agree a model of locality-based working
  - Discuss and decide which neighbouring areas to work with to benefit Chorley
  - Embed a shared culture across public services
  - Focus on early intervention and prevention
  - All partners must fully engage
14. Also of note is that, in introducing the recommendations, the commission specifically references that Chorley is fettered in its ability to drive public service reform, partially because Chorley Council is limited in its power and resource.

15. The recommendations are not aimed specifically or solely at Chorley Council, although the report does reference that the council should be congratulated for its ambition and openness to change, which the commission felt would be important in driving the change that is needed.
  
16. While the recommendations are not necessarily aimed at the council, Chorley Council will have an important role in providing the leadership to change public services. Work has already started to develop a local response to the commission report and recommendations. This includes:
  - a. Reforming and refocussing the Chorley Public Service Reform Board, with an aim to gain a greater degree of commitment from partners, and provide the collective capacity and leadership to public services
  - b. Undertaking cost-benefit analysis of proposals to integrate health and well-being services in the borough.
  - c. Establishing a ‘Chorley conversation’ to engage residents and service users in any service change and design.
  
17. The outcome of the work undertaken in response to the final report and recommendations will be presented to the Future Governance Viability Working Group, who in turn will present their conclusions and recommendations back to Council.

**IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT**

18. 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		Policy and Communications	

**COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER**

19. No comments.

**COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER**

20. No comments

CHRIS SINNOTT  
PROJECT DIRECTOR

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Chris Sinnott	5337	4 June 2015	Commission Report – Exec Cabinet June 15

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# The commission on the future of public services in **Chorley**



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**Report and Recommendations 2015**

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## Foreword



I was extremely pleased to be invited to chair the Commission on the future of public services in Chorley. I, alongside my fellow commission members, have found the process fascinating and have been pleased by the commitment that has been evident amongst those who submitted responses to the call for evidence.

Public services are under an increasing amount of pressure, with decreasing budgets and increasing demand for services. These trends are set to continue for the foreseeable future, and so it is important that public services change to remain sustainable and be able to meet the demands that will be

faced in the future. Continuing with the approaches and service delivery models that have worked in the past will no longer be sufficient; real and transformational change is necessary.

Chorley Council and their partners who engaged in this process should be congratulated. It is an ambitious and brave organisation that sets out the challenges that are ahead and is open to the suggestions of others about what should be done in response. The partners in Chorley demonstrated that openness and it should support them into the future.

I have already expressed my disappointment about the decision of Lancashire County Council not to engage in the process. I understand the enormous challenges they face, and that a combined authority for Lancashire may answer some of the issues. However, given the engagement of every other major public sector organisation, the commission provided a great opportunity to examine those challenges and look collectively for solutions.

I want the work of the commission and this report to lead to action across public services in Chorley. The recommendations are challenging but should be achievable if everyone in Chorley, partners and residents, engage.

Change in public services is coming. Chorley is well-placed to respond and I hope that this report will support the work that is needed.

Professor Steven Broomhead  
Chair – Commission on the Future of Public Services in Chorley.



## Key messages

**Change in public services is coming.**

All public services must swiftly innovate and change. Without action, a decline in service quality and outcomes is inevitable.

The **current system is fragmented, cumbersome and clunky.** It does not work well for service users.

**Partnerships will need real commitment,** to deliver the change that is needed.

**There is a need to act now,** to develop new and deeper relationships, between public service organisations and different geographies.

There needs to be a **clear vision for change.**

**Coproduction and codesign of services need to become central** in services to engage service users and residents.

**Public services need to work for Chorley,** not individual organisations.

Services need to **focus on early intervention and be centred around individuals and communities.**

Decision making and service delivery should be **based at the lowest possible level** not on organisational boundaries.

**Chorley is well-placed to respond,** in terms of acumen and drive, but there are significant barriers to change.

A **step change is needed to deliver the change required**



# Summary

The independent Commission on the Future of Public Services in Chorley was established to support and challenge organisations involved in public services as they look to address the challenges in the years ahead.

The commission members were drawn from a range of backgrounds, all working in senior and influential positions around public services. They received evidence about the issues that will need to be tackled in the coming years and proposals for potential responses. Using that evidence, and their own expertise and experience, this report sets out the findings and recommendations of the commission. The report cannot provide a definitive answer for the challenges faced, but it is clear that the status quo is not an option and so the findings and recommendations aims to stimulate further discussion and action.

The full findings and recommendations can be found in the main body of the report but, in summary, the recommendations are:

- 1** Articulate a new collective vision for public services in Chorley
- 2** Strengthen and empower partnership working to act collectively
- 3** Hold a 'Chorley conversation' to talk about the future with residents and service users
- 4** Information and intelligence should be freely shared
- 5** 'Test-beds' for action and transformation should be identified
- 6** Public services should agree a model of locality-based working
- 7** Discuss and decide which neighbouring areas to work with to benefit Chorley
- 8** Embed a single culture across public services
- 9** Focus on early intervention and prevention
- 10** All partners must fully engage

# Commission members



**Professor Steven Broomhead - Chair**  
Chief Executive  
Warrington Borough Council



**Becky Booth**  
Chief Executive  
Spice



**David Fillingham CBE**  
Chief Executive, AQuA



**Neil McInroy**  
Chief Executive  
Centre for Local  
Economic Strategies



**Peter Colclough**  
First Chief Executive,  
Torbay Care Trust and  
consultant on integrating care



**Professor John Diamond**  
Institute Director, Institute  
for Public Policy and  
Professional Practice,  
Edge Hill University



**Peter Wilding OBE**  
Managing Partner, Public Service  
Transformation Network (North)

# Introduction and background

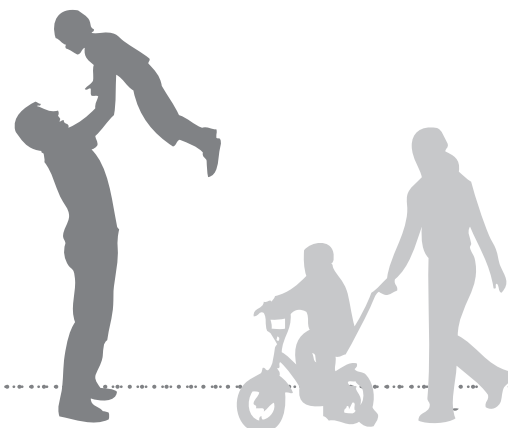
Public services are changing. Reducing budgets and increasing and changing demand mean that the public services that are currently available cannot continue to be delivered in the same way. Everyone involved in public services needs to be prepared to act to meet the challenges ahead. Chorley is not unique in the challenges that it faces, but the council and its partners should be applauded for the proactive and open approach they have taken in looking to the future.

This commission, set up by the council, to look at the future of public services in Chorley demonstrates their commitment to ensuring that the borough continues to be well-served by sustainable public services.

The commission was established and supported by Chorley Council, with support from its partners, but this report is the report of the commission members and is independent of the council.

The report is split into four main stages:

- 1** Chorley and its public services
- 2** Background and approach to the Commission
- 3** Findings
- 4** Recommendations



# Chorley and its public services

## Population

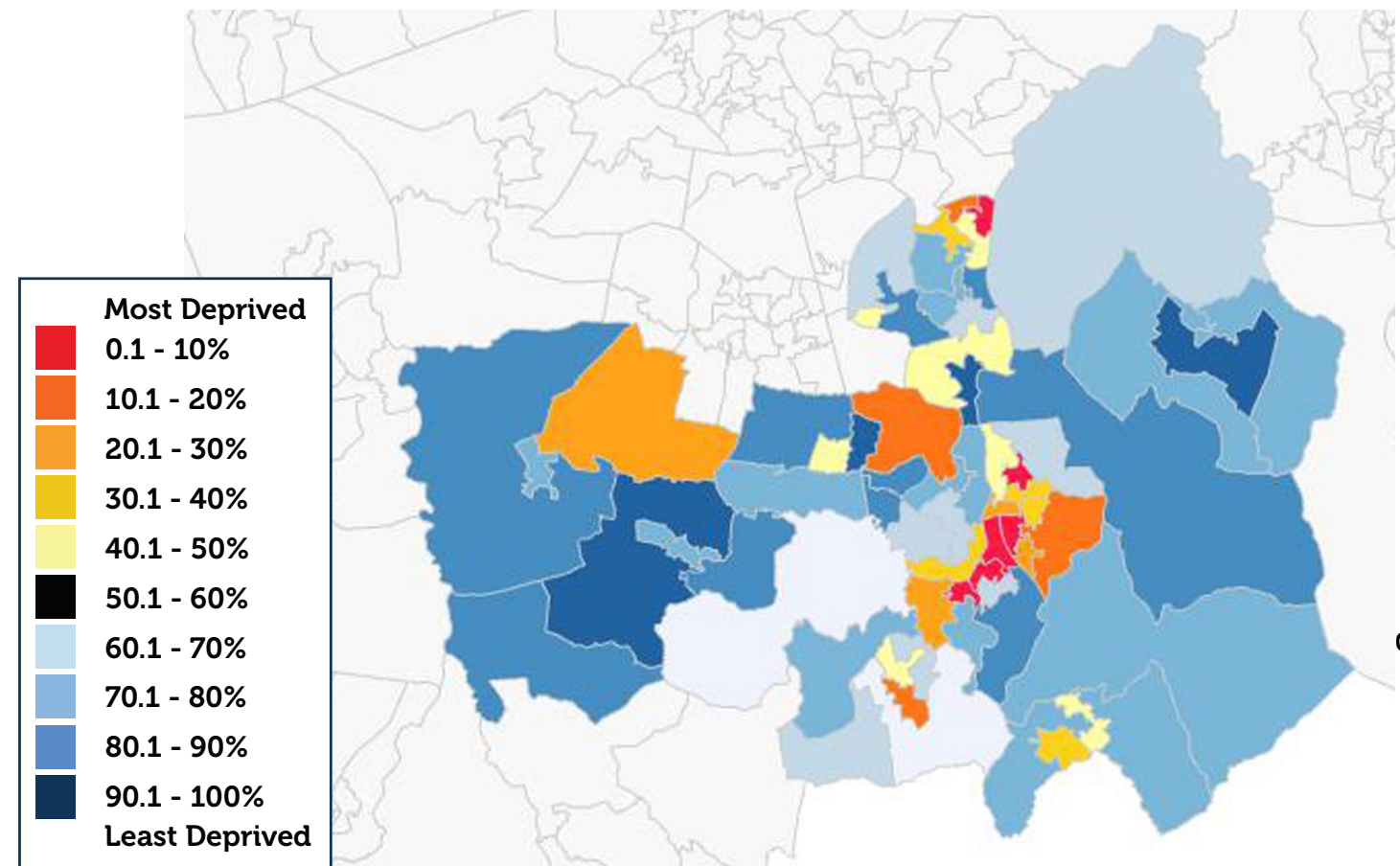
Chorley is at the centre of the North West, situated right on the M61, M6 and M65 motorways with easy access to the West Coast mainline, and airports at Manchester and Liverpool.

Chorley is bordered by Preston to the north and Blackburn to the east, with Wigan and Bolton to the south. Major cities Manchester and Liverpool are just over half an hour away offering easy access, while benefitting from the advantages of Lancashire.

The borough has a total population of 110,500. Chorley is predicted to have the fastest rate of population growth of any of the Lancashire districts between 2012 and 2037, with its population expected to rise to 125,400 by 2037. In addition, the population will grow older, with the proportion of the population aged over 85 years more than doubling between 2012 and 2037 to, 5.6%.

Chorley is the 173rd most deprived out of 326 local authority areas, with deprivation concentrated in particular parts of the borough, as shown in the map below.

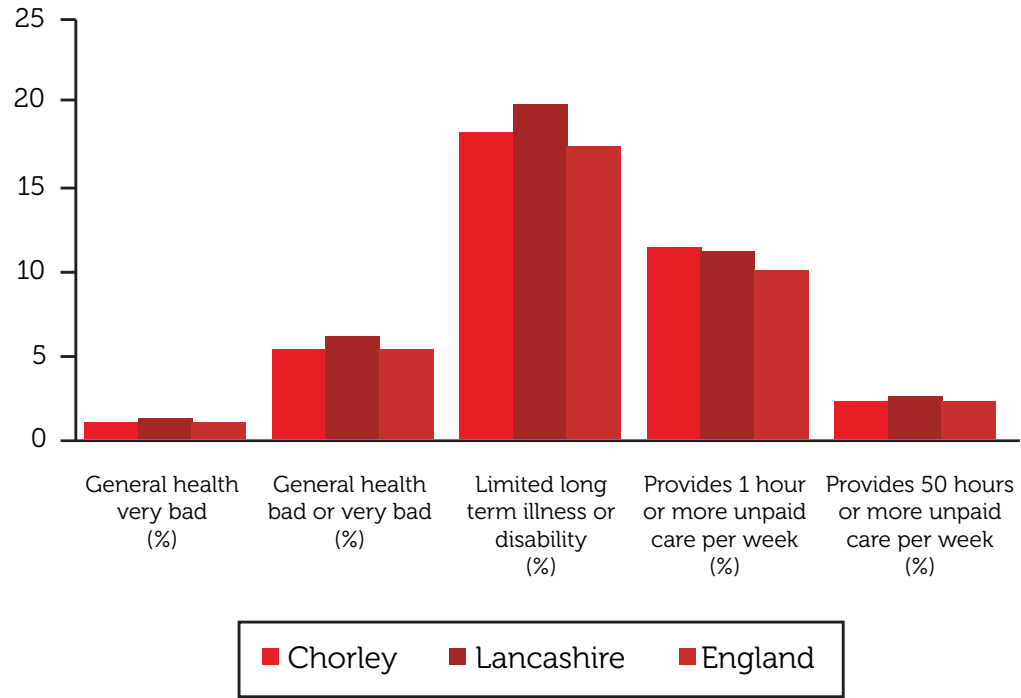
## Deprivation by Ward





# Health information

According to the 2011 census results, 5.5% of the population in Chorley have bad or very bad health, and 18.4% have a long term illness or disability. In addition 11.5% of the population provide one hour or more unpaid care per week, with 2.5% providing 50 or more.

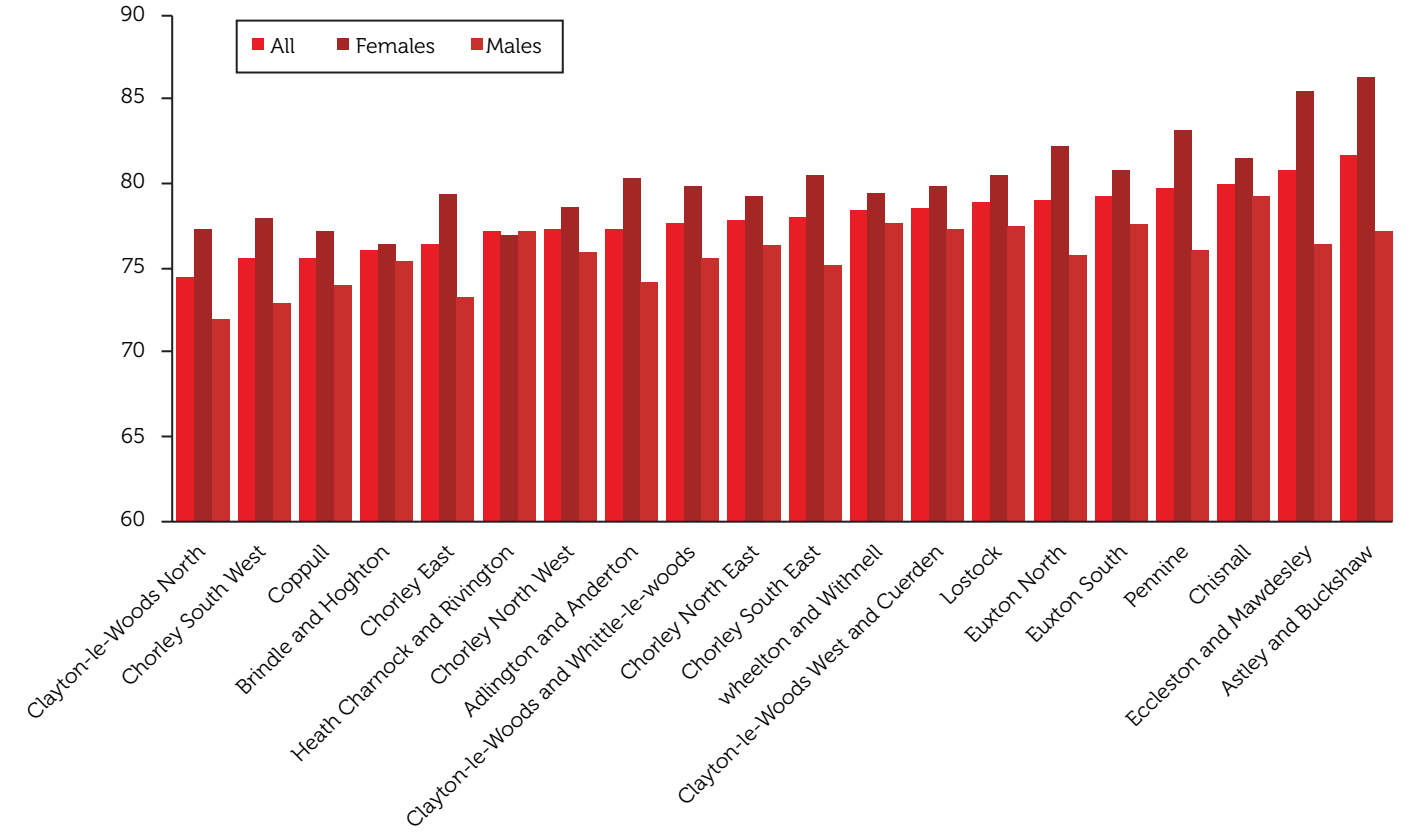


## Life expectancy

Overall, life expectancy in Chorley is similar to the rest of Lancashire and England:

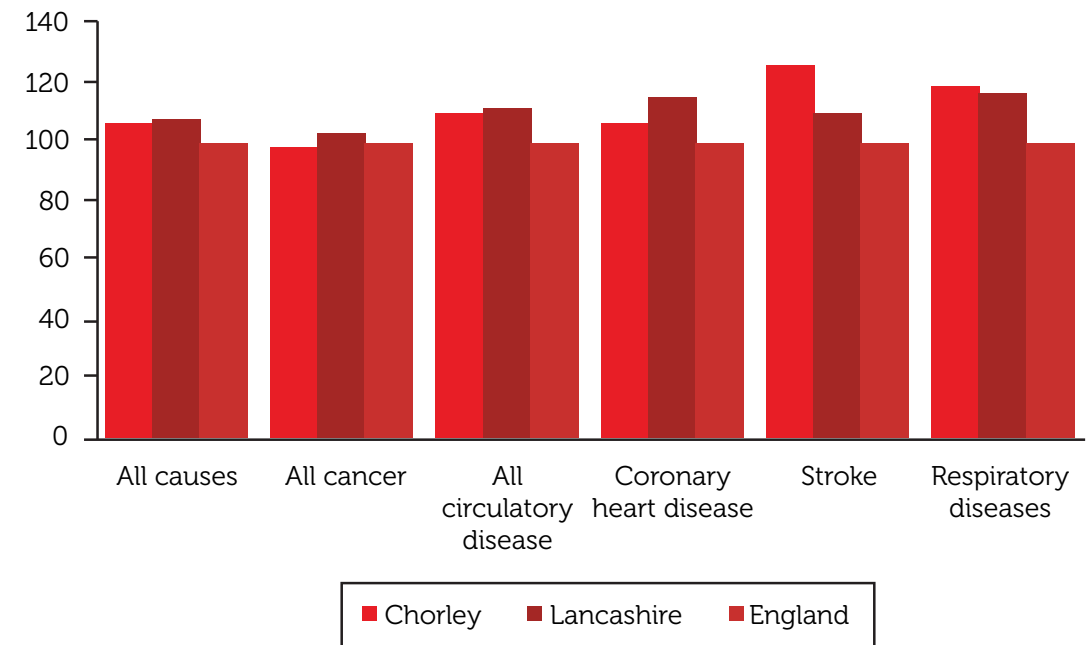
	Chorley	Lancashire	England
<b>Males</b>	78.3	77.7	78.9
<b>Females</b>	81.6	81.7	82.8

However, there is a marked gap in life expectancy with the borough that correlates with areas of deprivation. Four of the seven most deprived wards (Chorley East, Chorley South West, Clayton-Le-Woods North, and Coppull), feature in the five lowest wards for life expectancy. Men living in the least deprived ward can expect to live for 8.7 years longer than those in the most deprived area. For women, the gap is 7.2 years.



## Cause of death

The rate of deaths from stroke in Chorley is significantly higher than both Lancashire and all England, followed closely by respiratory diseases.



# Economic information

## Functional economic area

The whole of the borough of Chorley sits within the Preston Travel to Work Area (TTWA3), as defined by the 2001 Census TTWAs. However, although Chorley forms part of the Preston TTWA, the borough directly borders the Bolton, and Warrington & Wigan TTWAs, and it is evident from the 2011 Census data that significant commuting takes place across these boundaries too.

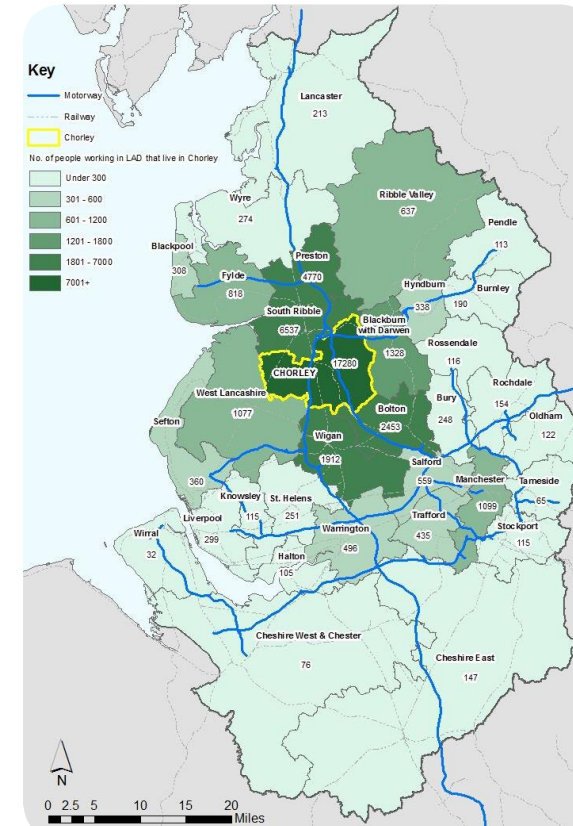
## 2001 Travel to Work Areas



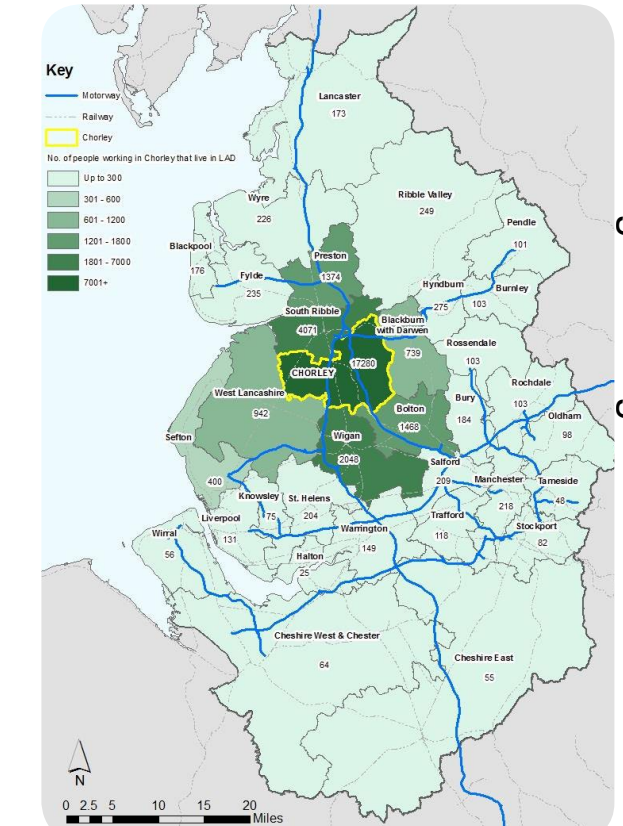
The most important geography for Chorley, in terms of work, is Chorley itself; some 40% of Chorley residents also work there, and 54% of Chorley's workers live there. For those residents of Chorley who work outside of the borough, South Ribble and Preston are the two most significant locations. But following close behind are Bolton and Wigan, with these being more important to Chorley in terms of in-commuting than Preston.

There is a distinct pattern of commuting along the M61 corridor. This includes Preston and South Ribble in the north with by far the largest net outflows, but also substantial net outflows of workers to local authority areas to the south east, predominantly Bolton, Wigan and other areas of greater Manchester, as demonstrated in the maps below.

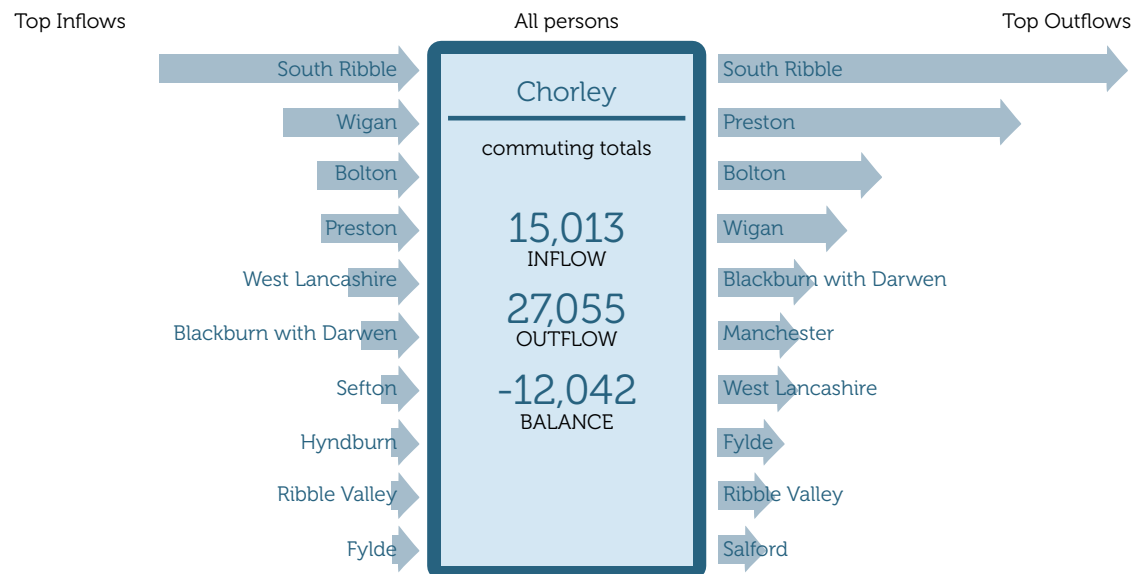
## Destination of residents from Chorley



## Origin of workers in Chorley



## Inflow and Outflow of workers for Chorley, at the 2011 Census



## Business sectors and occupations

Business administration and support services are particularly important in Chorley compared to elsewhere, employing over 6,000 people in 2013. The health sector is also more prominent in Chorley employing more than 7,000 people in 2013.

The concentration of managers, directors and senior officials in Chorley is notable and this category of occupations achieved the strongest growth during the period 2010 to 2014, rising from 3,600 to 6,200 workers. In absolute terms, professional occupations accounted for the largest cohort of workers in Chorley in 2014, with more than 7,000 people.

## Earnings

For those living in the borough, median gross weekly pay was £490 in 2014. For those working in the borough, the median gross weekly pay was £456. Given that there is a significant net outflow of workers this suggests that, as well as commuting out for skilled jobs, residents also commute outside of the borough for higher paid jobs.

**Skills**

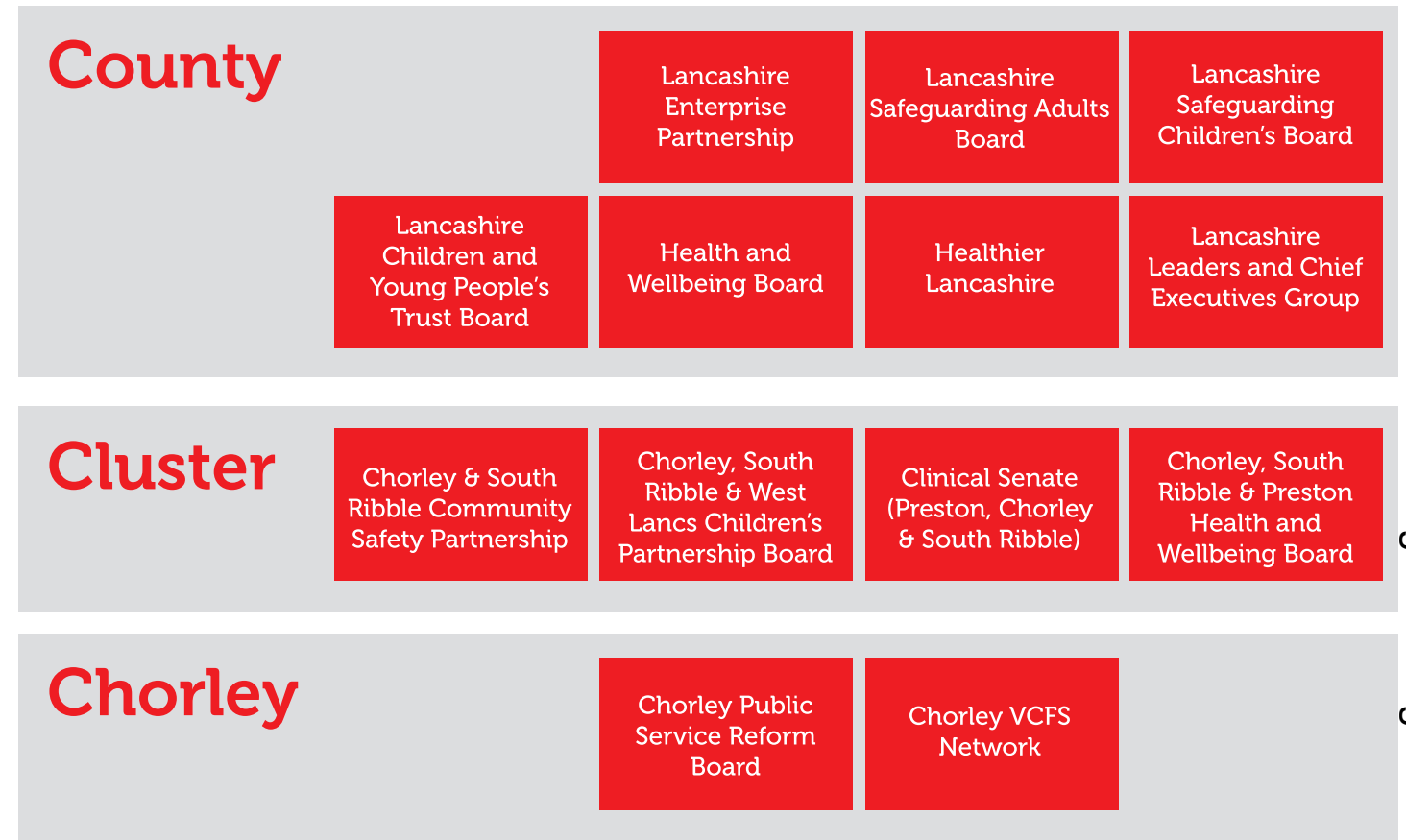
Education in Chorley is strong. Chorley has a well-qualified workforce: 35.9% of the population are qualified to Level 4 (Higher Education) or above (compared with 31% regionally and 35.2% nationally). Only 6.9% of the population has no qualifications (compared with 11% regionally and 9.3% nationally). In 2012/13, 66.8% of pupils achieved five or more GCSE A\*-C (including English and Maths), well ahead of the Lancashire average of 60.4%.

**Public Services**

The organisation of public services serving Chorley is complex, with different organisations serving different footprints. This is illustrated by the public sector organisations that work in Chorley:

	Sector	Geography
<b>Parish Councils</b>	Local Authority	Parished areas of the borough
<b>Chorley Council</b>	Local Authority	Borough of Chorley
<b>Lancashire County Council</b>	Local Authority	Lancashire County
<b>Chorley &amp; South Ribble CCG</b>	Clinical Commissioning Group	Chorley and South Ribble
<b>Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust</b>	Acute Services Provider	Greater Preston, Chorley & South Ribble
<b>Lancashire Care Foundation Trust</b>	Community Services Provider	County
<b>Lancashire Constabulary</b>	Police	County
<b>Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service</b>	Fire and Rescue Service	County

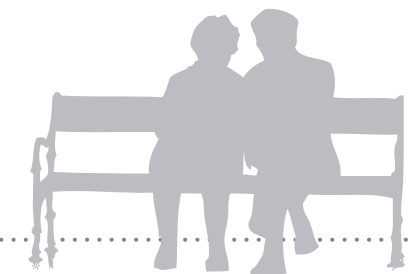
In a similar manner to the organisation of public services organisations, the partnerships that serve Chorley demonstrate complex arrangements in terms of geography, scope and engagement, as shown in the diagram below.



Public services have reduced costs and coped with increased demands in the past few years. This pressure is expected to increase in the coming years, with public sector organisations anticipating a significant budget gap in the coming years. This includes, for example:

- Chorley Council: a projected gap of £2.5 million by 2017/18
- Lancashire County Council: a projected gap of £241 million by 2017/18
- Lancashire Care Foundation Trust: savings of £48 million over the next three years
- Lancashire Fire and Rescue: a projected gap of £4.4 million by 2017/18
- Lancashire Police: a projected gap of £19.7 million by 2017/18
- Lancashire Teaching Hospitals: a budget deficit of £47 million in 2015/16

Each of the examples above relate to the full organisational budget, not just the Chorley borough. The partners have in place plans to manage most of the budget gaps identified. However, the savings required give an illustration of the level of change and challenge that will be faced in the coming years.





# Background and approach to the commission

Chorley Council created the commission as part of its work to examine future governance models for public services in the borough. It developed terms of reference for the commission and invited its partners to take part. All of the main public sector organisations for the borough chose to get involved, with the exception of Lancashire County Council.

## Terms of reference

The terms of reference for the commission set out some key aims. These were:

- To understand the challenges facing the delivery of public services in Chorley over the coming years and how this might affect residents and businesses in the borough.
- To propose high level models for how sustainable public services could be delivered in Chorley based on:
  - Early intervention
  - Protection of vulnerable people
  - Fully integrated working
  - Coproduction
- To identify likely barriers to the reform of public services in Chorley, and provide an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of local partnership working

A series of key questions were also included to guide the work of the commission, although the terms of reference gave freedom for the commission to consider other questions if they deemed them appropriate. The initial guiding questions were:

- What are the key challenges facing public services in Chorley over the medium to long term?
- How should public services be delivered in Chorley to make them sustainable and to meet the future needs of the borough? Particular reference could be given to:
  - the needs of older people
  - individuals and families with complex needs
  - supporting people to stay healthy, have the right skills and find the right job
  - economic development and business growth
- What are the key enablers that will make radical change in the delivery of public services in Chorley possible?
- What are the barriers to reaching the vision for this work?

## Commission membership

The membership of the commission was drawn from senior figures across public services who would be able to gather evidence from partners in Chorley in a supportive manner while challenging and testing submissions against best practice across the country and elsewhere. The commission members were:

- Chair: Professor Steven Broomhead: Chief Executive, Warrington Council

- Becky Booth: Chief Executive, Spice
- David Fillingham CBE: Chief Executive, Advancing Quality Alliance (AQuA)
- Professor John Diamond: Institute Director, Institute of Public Policy and Professional Practice, Edge Hill University
- Neil McInroy: Chief Executive, Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES)
- Peter Colclough: Consultant on integrated care and first Chief Executive of Torbay Care Trust
- Peter Wilding OBE: Managing Partner, Public Service Transformation Network North

## Call for evidence

A call for evidence to inform the work of the commission was made at the beginning of January. The call for evidence was posted on the council's website and social media feeds, and was also sent directly to the following organisations:

Adactus / CCH  
Age UK Lancashire  
Alzheimer's Society  
AQuA  
Association of Directors of Adult Social Care  
Association of Directors of Children's Services  
Chorley and South Ribble CCG  
Chorley Council  
Chorley VCFS Network  
District and unitary councils in Lancashire  
Early Intervention Foundation  
Healthier Lancashire  
HealthWatch Lancashire  
iNetwork  
Institute for Public Policy and Professional Practice - Edge Hill University  
Lancashire Association of Local Councils  
Lancashire Association of School Governing Bodies  
Lancashire Branch of National Association of Head teachers  
Lancashire Care NHS Trust  
Lancashire Constabulary  
Lancashire County Council  
Lancashire Fire and Rescue  
Lancashire Health and Well-Being Board  
Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership  
Lancashire Sport  
Lancashire Teaching Hospitals  
Local Government Association  
North and Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce  
North West Coast Academic Health Sciences Network  
Parish Councils in Chorley  
Runshaw College  
Wigan Council  
Well North



There were two versions of the call for evidence; one for organisations who know or work in Chorley, and another for organisations who did not. The basic questions posed were:

### Local organisations

- 1 What are the challenges facing public services in Chorley over the medium to long term?
- 2 What doesn't work well at the moment in the delivery of Chorley's public services?
- 3 What does work well at the moment in the delivery of Chorley's public services?
- 4 How should public services be delivered in Chorley to make them sustainable and to meet the future needs of the borough?
- 5 Are there any examples of innovation in public services elsewhere that Chorley should adopt?
- 6 What are the barriers to change?
- 7 Have you anything else you would like to add?

### Non-local organisations

- 1 What are the key challenges facing public services over the medium to long term?
- 2 What doesn't work well at the moment in the delivery of public services?
- 3 What does work well at the moment in the delivery of public services?
- 4 What are the key changes that need to be made to local service delivery to make them sustainable? Are there examples of best practice elsewhere that Chorley should adopt?
- 5 What governance and organisational structures will be needed to drive change in service delivery?
- 6 What are the barriers to change?

22 responses to the call for evidence were received and were presented to the commission. The responses to the call for evidence have been published on the council's website, and a full list of organisations responding is at the end of this document.

### Commission proceedings

The main proceedings of the commission were held over a two day period on the 4 and 5 March. Over the two days, the members of the commission had the opportunity to hear evidence and question 17 individuals representing 11 organisations involved in public services in Chorley.

There were four evidence gathering sessions, where participants were given an opportunity to set out what they saw as the challenges facing public services, and potential responses. These suggestions and ideas were then explored through questioning with the commission.

The sessions were held in public, and public service organisations were also invited to attend the event. Over 50 people watched the proceedings over the two days.

The proceedings were minuted. These minutes have been published on Chorley Council's website.

## Findings

### There is a need to act now

The financial challenges that each of the organisations involved in public services face over the coming years will be more difficult to manage than the reductions experienced over the past five years. The budget gap identified in the earlier section illustrates the collective challenge that is faced, with the resources available to the system as a whole continuing to reduce significantly. Continuing to manage reductions within individual organisations will have increasingly adverse and unplanned effects on other parts of the system.

Chorley has a window of opportunity to put in place changes and reforms to the system now that will help to ensure that the borough continues to be a good place to live and work, and that public services are sustainable. Without collective action and leadership, and investment in the development of new models of working, there is a clear risk that the standard of public services will deteriorate.

### Firm foundations are in place

Chorley as a place, and the public service organisations that serve its residents, has a strong track-record in working collectively to bring about improvements. Good working relationships between most partners was demonstrated through the evidence gathering stage of the commission, with most reporting that they found that they were able to highlight and discuss issues with other organisations locally to develop solutions.

However, while there are some excellent examples of work and good relationships, it was not comprehensive and deep. The commission received evidence from a range of partners from different sectors which indicated that decision making is often based on individual agreements and arrangements, and true and deep joint integrated working is limited.

In addition, most witnesses to the commission referred to good personal relationships when pressed on the basis for the strong partnership working in place. This is a good starting point, but a step-change will be needed to ensure that these partnerships are strong and committed enough to deliver transformational change.

### Public services are fragmented

A clear message from the evidence presented is that public services in Chorley are fragmented, in terms of both the delivery of services for individuals and decision making.

Although relationships between public service organisations are positive, a significant amount of evidence was presented around how the current approaches to decision-making are often cumbersome and rigid; delaying and potentially blocking transformation and change.



### Key example: Friday Street Health Centre

A number of written responses to the call for evidence and witnesses to the commission used the proposed Friday Street Health Centre to illustrate the cumbersome nature of decision making caused by fragmentation in the current system.

Friday Street is the location identified for a new health centre in one of the most deprived wards in the borough. A need for a new health centre to replace GP premises that were not fit for purpose was first identified and agreed over 10 years ago. Despite the engagement of a significant number of partners, the health centre is still not built and final agreement on the services to provide has still been made. Witnesses argued that a key cause of these delays was the complex and fragmented decision making needed to agree a new health centre when a range of partners are involved.

A number of witnesses argued that the current two-tier (or three-tier, including parish councils) system of local government is one of the key barriers to change, claiming that it is more challenging to get decisions, change and flexibility in county-wide decision making than in service areas that are the responsibility of the borough council. The background information given earlier in the report also illustrates this, with a range of different organisational footprints and partnership structures in place and making decisions that affect Chorley. There is further discussion later in this report about appropriate spatial levels for decision making, but it is evident that the current system does not lend itself easily to service transformation.

It is clear that the status quo and current system will not be sustainable. We think that it should be pragmatic and achievable to work within the current arrangements and deliver radical change, without significant reorganisation. However, this will only be possible if all partners are prepared to fully commit and engage in the change in Chorley, at whatever the right spatial level is for the function being delivered.

### Public services need to be focussed on outcomes with system-wide leadership

The focus in designing and delivering public services should be on improving outcomes for residents. Services should be more joined-up for citizens than they currently are, and this will take collaborative leadership across the system as a whole, rather than individual organisations and actors having responsibility and oversight of individual elements.

All of the contributors to the commission agreed that there was a need for public services to collaborate more and to be innovative in the approaches taken to delivering services. This will be more achievable if all of public services are able to focus on delivering improved outcomes across the whole system.

In the evidence presented, there were some examples of developing collective capacity, or example in a jointly funded post to support the public service reform board, and in the development of integrated neighbourhood teams. However, there is a need to develop this further to build collective capacity for change and cross-system reforms. This capacity needs to support the development and delivery of transformation that is across the system.

### There needs to be deep and meaningful commitment in partnership

In order to deliver the transformation of public services that all of the witnesses agreed will be needed in the coming years, there will be need to be a high degree of cooperation and commitment from everyone involved in public services. This needs to go beyond the current partnerships that are in place.

While the Public Service Reform Board and other partnership initiatives in Chorley provide a good starting point, the governance arrangements and commitments from individual organisations need to match the challenges ahead. The fragmented nature of the governance means that there is a diffuse focus on Chorley in decision making and this stymies the function of partnerships. As a starting point, the partnership structures, focus and ambition need to be reviewed to ensure that they support transformational change. This will include:

- **Develop a compelling case for full engagement:** given the current structures, there needs to be strong reasons for involvement in partnership working. Test beds should be developed to demonstrate how and why organisations should fully engage in partnerships.
- **The right people at the right time:** the roles and responsibilities of different actors within public services need to be better defined – from non-executive and executive decision making to operational delivery. Attendance at meetings is currently inconsistent, and it is not evident whether all partners are engaging to the same degree by ensuring that the right representative in terms of decision making autonomy or knowledge of service delivery engages in partnership working. It is also essential that decisions are filtered down organisations, with the right people allocated to turning strategy into delivery.
- **Devolution of resources and decision making:** public services in Chorley do not currently devolve decision making or resources to provide a single, integrated approach to delivering public services on a consistent basis. Partners should consider pooled budgets and devolution of decision making if they are committed to the transformation of public services.
- **A clear vision and mandate for integration:** the evidence received points to a level of ambition and a consistent vision for public services in Chorley. This needs to be clearly articulated to Chorley's citizens and then delivered on.

The right governance arrangements and structures need to be put in place with the full commitment of all partners to ensure that when the financial challenges grow further over the next few years partnership working can still deliver good quality public services. However, it is important that activity to reform public services and increase integration continues and intensifies. The commission heard a great deal of evidence about how some issues, such as supporting people with mental health issues, draw on a large amount of resources of a large range of organisations. This, or a similar issue, could be the basis for 'test-bed' work to drive the integration of services.

### Early intervention and prevention are key to making public services sustainable

The commission received evidence that demonstrated that the key to managing public services with fewer resources and increasing demand is to target effort and resources to services and interventions that will either prevent future need, or limit the costs of dealing with problems later. Across the whole of public services early intervention, particularly where it is effectively targeted is a proven method for reducing the costs of delivering services while improving outcomes at the same time. Too often, public services are still focussed

on responding to demands that arise from a failure instead of preventing the need in the first instance. Examples given to the commission of effective early intervention in Chorley included the Working Together with Families programme, and the approach taken by Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service to prevent fires. These examples need to become the norm across the whole system.

### Use test-beds to build the compelling case for change

The challenges that are faced will mean that there will need to be a step-change in the way that public services are delivered and the organisations are managed. However, it is important that partners in Chorley ensure that action is taken now to make improvements to services for citizens.

This is vital to ensure that public services improve outcomes and effectively manage demand, but also to demonstrate the benefits that could be gained from wider and deeper change.

Partners should decide locally what is the focus, but they should aim to ensure that it supports the principles of joining-up services, supporting early intervention and managing demand across the system (rather than within organisations). Determining and initiating these 'test beds' should be a priority area for action for partners in the short term suggestions, based on the evidence the commission received, could include:

- **managing mental health**
- **locality working, focussed on deprived neighbourhoods**
- **health and well-being**

These test beds may focus on the most vulnerable people, who already have complex needs and requirements from public services. Developing more integrated services that support these individuals and communities to remain more independent is not in conflict with the principles of early intervention, and should support the management of the demand across the system.

#### Key example: Mental Health support

An area of public services that was mentioned by a wide number of contributors to the process as demonstrating the challenges faced within the current public services system is support for people with mental health conditions.

For example, healthcare providers noted that access to services could sometimes be difficult, because of the stigmas associated with mental health. Emergency services argued that a disproportionate amount of time and resources was dedicated to providing support to people and situations when they had reached crisis point. Representatives from the education system felt that they had an increased pressure over recent years, and that the lack of a system-wide approach had detrimental effects on the outcomes for individuals. Many witnesses felt that the demand for services would be better managed across the system as a whole, and that improvements could be made by taking a system-wide approach.

These areas should be driven and delivered by joint investment and capacity across the system. There should be collective investment in delivering sustainable improvements across the areas of focus which should improve outcomes and provide approaches that can then be applied across the system.

### Find the right locality for decision making and delivery

Much of the debate about whether a unitary authority for Chorley is suitable is based around scale and size. The same is true of discussions around public service reform. The commission received evidence that suggests that there is a feeling that, when considering matters relating to Chorley, decision making at a county level is at the moment cumbersome and inflexible, and often does not adapt to suit local circumstances. Witnesses also noted that there are some services that are best delivered on a wider basis, for example specialist health services, elements of economic development and emergency services.

#### Key example: Healthcare

Witnesses discussed with the commission how different functions may be suited to working on different spatial levels. One example given was around healthcare. There was a common view that some functions, particularly primary and community-based care and well-being, were best suited to local decision making and delivery.

However, other functions, such as specialised services were better suited to larger catchment area to provide economies of scale and greater ability for staff and organisations to specialise.

Most of the witnesses felt that the borough of Chorley potentially provides a suitable population size to base the design and decision making of many public services – particularly around community safety, health and well-being, environmental services and community engagement and leadership. Many of these services could, and should, be delivered on an even smaller basis, around agreed localities – empowering frontline workers to deliver services that are based around the needs of individuals and communities. For example, evidence suggests that a population of around 20,000 to 70,000 provide a good basis for the integration of health and social care teams.

There is no single right spatial level to deliver services. At present, the organisational structures and responsibilities drive decisions about this, rather than the right level being determined by the need of the function that is being delivered. Public services in Chorley need to work together to deliver services and decision making at the lowest practicable level driven by function.

### Build democracy and accountability into the system

There is a risk with increasing complexity in public service delivery and pooling of sovereignty among organisations that the accountability for the delivery of key services is lost or confused. The role of elected members, politicians and non-executive directors needs to be considered in the development of the future system.

At the moment, elected representatives are included in some elements of partnership structures, but not in others. Their role is inconsistent and not structured. The current fundamental principle is that ultimate decision making is retained by individual organisations. This is a barrier to real change and integration in the system. A consistent and clear role needs to be developed for elected representatives and non-executive roles to ensure that oversight, scrutiny and democratic accountability are maintained and developed in new structures that are established.



### **Key example: Public Service Reform Board**

The Chorley public service reform board illustrates the lack of consistency in democratic representation in partnership and joint working in the borough. The board is chaired by the Leader of the borough council, and includes an Executive Member from Lancashire County Council. The rest of the membership of the board is made up of senior managers. There are no clear mechanisms in place for the roles that different representatives play, or for accountability and scrutiny of decision making.

### **You all work for Chorley**

Change cannot just be delivered through agreements and new structures and governance arrangements. There will need to be a radical shift in the cultures and behaviours of everyone involved in public services, at all levels.

When asked, witnesses to the commission generally said that residents would recognise and identify with their local town or village, but that they would identify with the borough of Chorley as a place where public services were delivered.

An overriding principle should be that everyone involved in public services in Chorley works for Chorley; not their individual organisation. This should guide decision making at the strategic level as well as in the frontline delivery of services.

As well as setting out a vision for the transformation of services, partners involved in public services will also need to set out clearly the expected behaviours and cultures of those working in public services in Chorley – to ensure that there is a seamless approach to how services are delivered. This needs to be articulated and then partners need to work together to implement and embed a new approach across their workforce.

There needs to be a development of collaborative leadership in the delivery of public services in Chorley. This will need a change in the culture of organisations, and an investment of time and resources to develop and embed.

### **Listen to the voice of residents and service users**

The commission heard compelling evidence from a community activist who described how communities can be supported to improve services and local areas themselves, using the assets that are available locally to drive change. The community and service users need to be given the opportunity and tools to be able to engage in the development and delivery of services that affect them. The stories of service users need to be used to understand the issues and to inspire the involvement and engagement of others. Plans developed and explained from the perspective of service users will be more compelling.

Public services in Chorley need to find a consistent approach to ensuring that service users can take an active role in codesigning and coproducing services. This will be supported by ensuring that frontline workers are empowered and that the culture and behaviour change in public services is developed and implemented.

### **Key example: Travel to work**

As set out the earlier section of the report, 50% of residents of Chorley commute out of the borough to work. The pattern of commuting follows the M61, with significant numbers commuting to South Ribble and Preston to the north and to Bolton and Wigan in the south. Workers from other areas, particularly South Ribble, Bolton and Wigan, commute into Chorley. This demonstrates that Chorley's economy and residents are limited by existing administrative boundaries, and this needs to be recognised in the approaches taken to engaging other areas.

### **Chorley needs to face in different ways to get the best for residents**

Chorley's geography means that it is a 'between' place. It is located to the immediate north of Greater Manchester and the current focus of the Northern Powerhouse; it is part of Lancashire and on major transport links making access to and from the borough very easy.

Chorley needs to be flexible in how it engages with neighbouring areas, and not precluded from considering options because of administrative boundaries. For example, this may mean working with neighbouring areas in Greater Manchester on economic growth, alongside engagement with the rest of Lancashire. The borough may be best served by engaging across the region, and this does not need to take away from any feeling of place that already exists.

### **Chorley Council and its partners serve the borough well**

Chorley Council deserves recognition and praise for its level of ambition for the borough and its willingness to tackle the challenges ahead. The development of this commission and the work around it demonstrates a willingness and openness to change. It was evident throughout the commission that the council is well-regarded and viewed as a strong partner for its residents with a flexible and ambitious approach.

In the same way, the key public service partners who engaged in the process should also be praised. They also demonstrated willingness to change, and recognition that change is needed. All of these partners have been key to ensuring that the strong foundations of partnership working in Chorley are in place and provide a vehicle for future change.

It is disappointing that Lancashire County Council decided not to engage in the commission. While it is understandable that the County Council is facing huge resourcing pressures and change of its own, this was an opportunity to look forwards and work together to face those challenges. It is critical that the council works with other public service providers in Chorley to deliver new flexible ways of working that meet local needs. Without this engagement, the change needed will be significantly more difficult to achieve.

### **Chorley is not unique**

The challenges that public services in Chorley face are not unique, and are evident elsewhere. However, the approach that is being taken, starting with this commission, should place Chorley in a good position to proactively change public services in a way that makes them sustainable into the future. Other areas of the country would benefit from noting the findings of this report, and in the response that will take place in Chorley as an example of whole-system change.



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# Recommendations

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The commission has found that Chorley's ambition is fettered and constrained by its wider operating context, and level of power and resource which Chorley Council has. While some things are beyond Chorley's control, these recommendations present a practical means of changing some of these constraints and driving public service reform.

**1 Articulate a new collective vision for public services in Chorley**

Partners should quickly and clearly articulate the aims for the transformation of public services in Chorley over the coming years. It should be outwardly facing, and concentrate on the outcomes that will be achieved rather than the structures that will be put in place to deliver it. It should be based on action and collective investment to deliver the change that will be needed in the coming years.

**2 Strengthen and empower partnership working to act collectively**

The Chorley Public Service Reform Board should be refocused and empowered to make decisions about public services in Chorley. Decision making should be devolved from organisations to the partnership and budgets should be pooled. The right representatives who can make autonomous decisions about services in Chorley need to be committed to the partnership, with a sense of collective leadership of public services in the borough.

**3 Hold a 'Chorley conversation' to talk about the future with residents and service users**

Service users and residents should be included in the development and design of changed services. The story from the community activist from one locality needs to be used to inspire others. An asset-based approach should be adopted, recognising that individuals and communities have the resources to change but need public services to support them by working with them rather than just providing transactional services.

**4 Information and intelligence should be freely shared**

The rich intelligence held across public services could be a key to driving real change. If public services in Chorley can more freely share data and intelligence, it would be far easier to establish services focussed around early intervention and prevention than services that respond to failures as is too often currently the case.

**5 Test-beds' for action and transformation should be identified**

Working across public services needs to remain focussed on delivering better outcomes for the residents of Chorley. It would be very easy to become focussed on developing new structures and so it is important that public services agree a series of 'test-bed' areas where action can be undertaken quickly to improve public services. One potential area could be around the issues caused in managing mental health effectively.

In addition, there is a need to work to better understand the totality of the resources available to public services in Chorley. This understanding would support partners to advance greater sharing and pooling of resources.

**6 Public services should agree a model of locality-based working**

Many services are best delivered and integrated on a neighbourhood basis, where individual frontline workers should be empowered to deliver the right service for individuals and communities. Public services should develop a common understanding and approach to locality-based working, starting with a single understanding of standard localities across the borough.

**7 Discuss and decide which neighbouring areas to work with to benefit Chorley**

Chorley needs to engage with all its neighbours, regardless of administrative boundaries, to get the best deal for the borough. Work should be undertaken to engage with other partners across the region to identify opportunities to strengthen Chorley's position, sustain public services and grow the economy.

**8 Embed a shared culture across public services**

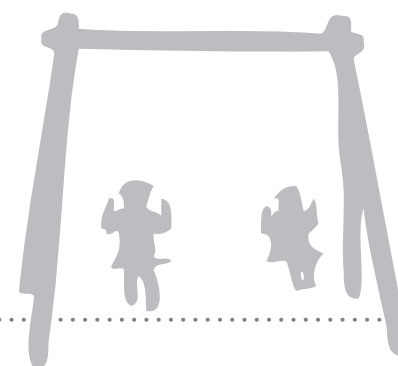
A common culture should be developed across public services in Chorley, with the focus on delivering for the borough rather than individual organisations. Work should be undertaken to develop a common culture and approach across public services. This needs to support the delivery of the vision for transformed public services and to embed a sense of collaborative leadership across the system.

**9 Focus on early intervention and prevention**

The work to develop new public services in Chorley should focus on the benefits that could be delivered by having services focussed on early intervention and preventing demand for services arising in the first place. Integrated and joint-working, with good data and intelligence sharing, would make early intervention more effective and efficient.

**10 All partners must fully engage**

Transformation in public services will not be achieved without significant commitment from all partners. The commitment needs to move beyond lip-service and short term promises. It needs to be meaningful and honest. If the recommendations above are to be successfully implemented, it will need the full commitment of partners, and all partners to be up-front about what they can and cannot accept in terms of change.



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# Representations to the commission

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The following organisations and individuals made representations to the commission, either by responding to the call for evidence or speaking during the commission proceedings:

Age UK Lancashire

AQuA

Burnley Council

Chorley and South Ribble CCG

Chorley Council

Chorley VCFS Network

Cllr Alan Whittaker

Cllr Alistair Bradley

Cllr Peter Wilson

Community Pharmacy Lancashire

Donna Hussain

Healthier Lancashire

Healthwatch Lancashire

Heskin Parish Council

Institute for Public Policy and Professional Practice, Edge Hill University

Lancashire Association of School Governing Bodies

Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust

Lancashire Constabulary

Lancashire Fire and Rescue

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

North and Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce

North West Coast Academic Health Science Network

Runshaw College

Well North

Wheelton Parish Council

Wigan Council

The commission is grateful for the time and effort that each of the contributors made to the proceedings.



Report of	Meeting	Date
Chief Executive (Introduced by the Executive Leader and Executive Member for Economic Development and Partnerships)	Executive Cabinet	25 June 2015

## **CENTRAL LANCASHIRE GYPSY, TRAVELLER & TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE'S ACCOMMODATION ASSESSMENT – MAY 2015**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To inform members about the revised Central Lancashire Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) – May 2015.

### **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2. It is recommended that members note the findings of the GTAA.
3. That members note the proposal at paragraph 44 that Council will be asked to approve that officers undertake further work to ascertain when the government's revised guidance on Travellers is likely to be issued and to explore the issue of 'local circumstances' that may apply to Chorley Borough.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT**

4. A revised GTAA published in May 2015 has identified a need for 11 permanent pitches for Travellers in Chorley Borough, (an additional 6 to the 5 being progressed through the Chorley Local Plan 2012-26) 22 in Preston, 1 in South Ribble and a Central Lancashire wide need for 4 transit pitches to 2026.
5. The GTAA forms part of the evidence to the Central Lancashire Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Local Plan (June 2015), the Issues and Options version of which is currently being drafted.

<b>Confidential report</b> Please bold as appropriate	Yes	<b>No</b>
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<b>Key Decision?</b>	Yes	<b>No</b>
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### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

#### **(If the recommendations are accepted)**

6. The GTAA provides an up to date assessment of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople's housing needs in the Central Lancashire area. Its findings inform the approach taken to cover this issue in Local Plans and it forms part of the evidence base behind the Central Lancashire Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Local Plan..

**ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

- 7. Failure to undertake a GTAA and progress a local plan to allocate sufficient land to meet the identified need for new pitches would be contrary to national planning policy guidance.

**CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

- 8. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all	X	A strong local economy	X
Clean, safe and healthy communities	X	An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	X

**BACKGROUND**

- 9. The previous GTAA published in May 2007 covered a 10 year period to 2016. It was used to evidence the Central Lancashire Core Strategy, which was found sound and adopted by the Central Lancashire Councils in July 2012.
- 10. However, at the Chorley Local Plan Examination hearing (April 2013), the Inspector did not accept that this study was sufficiently up to date and only issued a Partial Report (on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2013) on her findings into the soundness of the Plan on all matters other than those relating to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. It was her intention to re-convene the Examination following completion and consultation on an up to date Central Lancashire GTAA and consultation on proposed sites and policies in order to enable the progression of the Chorley Local Plan to adoption.
- 11. Arc4 was commissioned by the Central Lancashire Authorities (Chorley Council, Preston City Council and South Ribble Borough Council) in July 2013 to undertake a Central Lancashire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment to determine the need for any additional pitch and plot provision in the area.
- 12. This study was initially completed in January 2014 and identified a need for 5 permanent pitches for Travellers in Chorley Borough, 15 in Preston, none in South Ribble and a Central Lancashire wide need for 15 transit pitches to 2026. No need for Travelling Showpeople accommodation was established in Central Lancashire.
- 13. The GTAA was considered by the Inspector, however she was concerned that it may have underestimated the level of need and she asked for further detailed work on this matter. In the meantime, in order to progress the Chorley Local Plan to adoption, she advised that a site of 5+ permanent Traveller pitches should be allocated.
- 14. Accordingly, additional fieldwork was undertaken by Arc4 between 7<sup>th</sup> June 2014 and 6<sup>th</sup> October 2014. This provided more detailed information about current and future accommodation needs and aspirations of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
- 15. The revised GTAA was completed in May 2015. It has identified a need for 11 permanent pitches for Travellers in Chorley Borough (an additional 6 to the 5 being progressed through the Chorley Local Plan 2012-2016), 22 in Preston, 1 in South Ribble and a Central Lancashire wide need for 4 transit pitches to 2026. There is also an ‘aspirational need’ identified for 13 Travelling Showperson plots in Central Lancashire.

**DEFINITION OF GYPSY AND TRAVELLER**

16. The definition of 'Gypsies and Travellers' is set out in the Government's 'Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (March 2012) as:

*'Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependents' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently....'*

**LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT**

17. In March 2012 the Government published both the National Planning Policy Framework and its Planning Policy for Traveller Sites. These documents replace all previous national planning policy and guidance in respect of Gypsies and Travellers. This national guidance is a material consideration in determining local planning applications and its overarching aim is 'to ensure fair and equal treatment for Travellers'.
18. Under this guidance Local Authorities should make their own assessment of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation needs for the purposes of planning, and plan for sites over a reasonable timescale.
19. The policy also states that:
- Plan making and decision taking should aim to reduce the number of unauthorised developments and encampments and make enforcement more effective.'
  - Planning policies need to be fair, realistic and inclusive; and
  - Planning policies should increase the number of Traveller sites in appropriate locations with planning permission, to address under-provision and maintain an appropriate level of supply.
20. It is within this policy context that local planning authorities have to plan future provision for Gypsies and Travellers across their respective areas. The Framework emphasises the role of evidence and how it should be used within this context. Policy A: Using evidence to plan positively and manage development stresses the need for timely, effective and on-going community engagement (both with Travellers and the settled community); in addition the 'use of a robust evidence base to establish accommodation needs to inform the preparation of Local Plan and make planning decisions' is advocated.
21. Paragraphs 8 and 9 of Planning Policy for Traveller Sites state that;
- 'Local planning authorities should set pitch targets for Gypsies and Travellers and plot targets for Travelling Showpeople which address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs of Travellers in their area, working collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities'.
- Local planning authorities should, in producing their Local Plan:
- a) Identify and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of sites against their locally set targets;
  - b) Identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years six to ten and, where possible, for years 11-15;
  - c) Consider production of joint development plans that set targets on a cross-authority basis, to provide more flexibility in identifying sites, particularly if a local planning authority has special or strict planning constraints across its area (local planning authorities have a duty to cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries);



- d) Relate the number of pitches or plots to the circumstances of the specific size and location of the site and the surrounding population’s size and density; and
- e) Protect local amenity and environment.

22. Despite the revocation of the North West Regional Spatial Strategy (North West of England Plan – Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021) in May 2013, the need for strategic planning remains, especially to ensure coherent planning beyond local authority boundaries. To this end the Localism Act (2011) introduced on local planning authorities the Duty to Co-operate in relation to planning sustainable development. Under this Duty local planning authorities must engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in the preparation of development plan documents, other local development documents, and activities that can be considered in any way to prepare the way for development plan documents. Under the Act the sustainable development or use of land that would have a significant impact on at least two planning areas is considered to be a strategic matter falling within the Duty to Co-operate<sup>1</sup>.
23. Paragraph 181 of the National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework) states that “Local planning authorities will be expected to demonstrate evidence of having effectively co-operated to plan for issues with cross-boundary impacts when their Local Plans are submitted for examination”.
24. The Framework also provides further guidance on the duty, focusing on “planning issues that cross administrative boundaries, particularly those which relate to the strategic priorities set out in paragraph 156”. (Para 178, The Framework). The Framework is clear that local planning authorities (LPAs) and other public bodies should work collaboratively on Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople provision and reflect this in Local Plans.

**STUDY METHODOLOGY**

25. The methodology used for the study was as prescribed by the legislation, and guidance contained in the Framework and Planning Policy for Traveller Sites. It also included the ‘Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments – Guidance’ (CLG 2007).
26. It comprised; interviews with Gypsies and Travellers, desktop analysis of existing documents, data and pitch information, a key stakeholder on-line questionnaire for professionals who have direct contact with Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities, a review of the bi-annual caravan count for DCLG and Local Authority information on existing site provision (permanent and temporary) and unauthorised encampments.
27. The results of the study are set out below:

**HEADLINE FINDINGS – PERMANENT PITCH REQUIREMENTS BY AUTHORITY**

	Chorley	Preston	S Ribble
<b>Total additional requirement to 2026 for Gypsy and Traveller pitches to fit to Local Plan timeframe 2013/14 to 2026</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>1</b>

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<sup>1</sup> The Localism Act 2011 Part 6 Chapter 1 Duty to co-operate in relation to planning of sustainable development Section 110

28. The report also highlights a shortfall of 13 Travelling Showperson plots to 2026. This is based on aspirational need across Central Lancashire and is explained further in paragraph 29.

#### **TRANSIT NEED REQUIREMENT**

29. The study also identifies a need for 4 transit pitches across Central Lancashire. This need is calculated using data on unauthorised encampments from each of the three authorities (numbers of caravans and duration of stay). The report recommends that Central Lancashire authorities work together to explore the opportunities of a joint provision to satisfy this need.

#### **TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE NEED**

30. In respect of the Travelling Showpeople's 'aspirational need' of 13 identified, this cannot be quantified as actual need.
31. The revised study secured 9 interviews with Travelling Showpeople, none of whom live in the Central Lancashire area. In addition, none presented themselves as having a 'need' to locate within Central Lancashire. Of the 9 Travelling Showpeople who were interviewed, 8 expressed a desire to re-locate to Central Lancashire, 4 specifically mentioned Chorley as a preferred base for their yard. However, this 'aspiration' to live in Central Lancashire would only be taken as a 'need' if it could be demonstrated that there are family connections or work reasons to locate in Central Lancashire. As only 3 households provided details on where they travel to, a 'need' cannot be accurately quantified. All those respondents are currently accommodated in surrounding areas. Chorley is only mentioned as a destination for one of the households for one month during a full year of travelling therefore there is no evidence to suggest that Chorley should accommodate these Showpeople.
32. In the absence of more complete information, the study recommends that further engagement work is undertaken as part of the Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Local Plan in order to establish whether there is in fact a need for permanent Travelling Showpeople plots.

#### **GYPSY AND TRAVELLER AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE LOCAL PLAN**

33. Chorley's permanent Travelling pitch need figure of 11 is largely based on the Traveller Community currently residing at Hut Lane projected forward to 2026 (the emerging Chorley Local Plan period). The prescribed model takes their presence as a current indication of need for a permanent site. Given that the current local plan will allocate 5 permanent pitches at Cowling Farm, the remaining 6 would need to be allocated through the Traveller Local Plan.
34. Chorley Council will progress a permanent site for a minimum of 5 Traveller pitches through its Local Plan. A report recommending the endorsement of the Inspector's Minded Modifications and the adoption of the Local Plan is going to Council on 21<sup>st</sup> July.
35. Chorley's remaining 6 permanent Traveller pitches and any additional 'need' across Central Lancashire will be explored through a Local Plan on Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
36. A public consultation on an Issues and Options version of this document will invite comment on the study methodology and identify key issues that have to be addressed by the plan.

37. Central Lancashire officers and Members will agree how and where the transit need can be best provided and proposed sites will be subject to a sustainability and deliverability assessment. Preston, South Ribble and Chorley will also explore how best to satisfy their respective permanent Traveller site needs and any Travelling Showpeople need.
38. Outside Central Lancashire, surrounding authorities are all progressing their own GTAA's, therefore their respective Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople needs will be covered by these. Any cross boundary need will be satisfied through the arrangements set up under the duty to cooperate.

## NEXT STEPS

39. Failure to undertake a GTAA and progress a local plan to allocate sufficient land to meet the identified need for new pitches would be contrary to national planning policy guidance and would have a number of impacts including:
  - Continuing the current problem of unauthorised development and encampments, as well as tensions with the settled community;
  - Reinforcing the cycle of nomadism for those Gypsies and Travellers who may prefer a more settled existence, but cannot find a permanent site;
  - Restricting the Councils' ability to enforce against unauthorised development as ability to enforce is related to proactivity in meeting the need for new provision; and
  - Increasing the difficulty of ensuring that the Gypsy and Traveller community has access to all the support and services they need.
40. The Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment Guidance (CLG 2007) states 'This guidance aims to provide advice on carrying out an assessment of the accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers. It is not exhaustive or prescriptive. While it is recommended that the basic principles outlined in it should be followed, the exact approach will need to be adapted to local circumstances.'
41. The GTAA is largely based on the Traveller Community currently residing at Hut Lane projected forward to 2026. However, the guidance does not specifically state that an existing temporary permission for Travellers should constitute a need. Rather Para 62 states that such information should be used to 'inform the assessment'.
42. However, an illustration of how current and future need might be calculated (para 96) considers unauthorised encampments and unauthorised developments for which planning permission is not expected as constituting a need, therefore the implication is that a temporary permission is considered need. Indeed, the consultants have advised that their model is widely used throughout England and has been considered sound/robust at a number of public examinations.
43. In addition to this in September 2014 the government undertook public consultation on updating the PPTS. Within this paper it proposed to change the definition of Travellers and also proposed that draft planning guidance on assessing accommodation needs of gypsies and Travellers would be laid in Parliament (as required under Section 226 of the Housing Act 2004). This commitment was re-affirmed in parliament on 10 June to be undertaken at the "earliest opportunity".
44. There may therefore be an argument to state that given the governments intentions, the existing guidance is out of date and no-longer fit for purpose, which makes the figures that have been arrived at potentially open to challenge. There could also be merit in exploring whether there are local circumstances that could influence the final figure of need in Chorley.



- 45. It is therefore intended to take a report to Council on 21<sup>st</sup> July recommending that further work be undertaken by Officers to ascertain when the government’s revised guidance on Travellers is likely to be issued and to explore the issue of ‘local circumstances’ that may apply to Chorley Borough.
- 46. Officers will then report on this work and any implication it may have for the figure of need identified in the GTAA. A revised timetable for the progression of the Central Lancashire Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Local Plan can then be set.
- 47. Before the Traveller Local Plan is adopted, should any applications be submitted for Gypsy or Traveller sites, Central Lancashire Authorities will apply Core Strategy Policy 8: Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople in order to assess the appropriateness of any proposed sites.

**IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT**

- 48. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors’ comments are included:

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

**COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER**

- 49. Inevitably any increase in pitch numbers will have an impact on the resources required to create the site. At this point in time, and until the master planning of the site is completed and the DPD adopted, it is not possible to identify the full cost implications. In previous reports I have highlighted that the infrastructure costs of developing out the site could be significant and at this point in time nothing has changed.
- 50. We will, of course, look to the HCA to part fund some or all of this potential development, but again, until such time that there is clarity on the exact requirements I am unable to furnish members with an estimate of costs.
- 51. Given the time frames and the next steps the outcomes from pieces of work referred to above will need to feed into the Councils budget setting process and I will, of course, bring details before members as soon as this is possible.

**COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER**

- 52. As the report addresses issues of fact or professional judgment there are no comments in this regard. The statements concerning the implications of non-adoption are supported.
- 53. One of the potential reasons for scrutinising the GTAA figures further is the intention of the Government to revisit and update the policy documents concerning Gypsy and Travellers. This commitment was re-affirmed in parliament on 10 June to be undertaken at the “earliest opportunity”. Given that existing need, as stated by the occupiers of the temporary Gypsy and Traveller site, is to be met by allocations within the Local Plan document, it could be argued that by fixing in a local planning policy document now, measures to address future need based upon methodology and policies that are to be updated (whatever the impact of the updating) is premature. This position, if taken, will need frequent revisiting to ensure that no stakeholders are being adversely affected by any delay caused in adopting the traveller local plan.

<b>Background Papers</b>			
<b>Document</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>File</b>	<b>Place of Inspection</b>
Central Lancs GTAA	May 2015	web	<a href="http://chorley.gov.uk/Pages/AtoZ/Examination-news.aspx">http://chorley.gov.uk/Pages/AtoZ/Examination-news.aspx</a>

<b>Report Author</b>	<b>Ext</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Doc ID</b>
Peter McAnespie	5286	27 May 2015	

Report of	Meeting	Date
Chief Executive (Introduced by the Executive Member for Resources)	Executive Cabinet	25 June 2015

## **CHORLEY COUNCIL PERFORMANCE MONITORING – FOURTH QUARTER 2014/2015**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. This monitoring report sets out the performance against the delivery of the Corporate Strategy, and key performance indicators during the fourth quarter of 2014/15, 1 January to 31 March 2015.

### **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2. That the report be noted.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT**

3. This report sets out performance against the Corporate Strategy and key performance indicators for the fourth quarter of 2014/15, 1 January to 31 March 2015. Performance is assessed based on the delivery of key projects and against the measures in the new 2014/15 – 2016/17 Corporate Strategy along with key service delivery measures.
4. The report also provides an update on the performance of last year’s Corporate Strategy projects and the outcomes achieved. All projects have been successfully completed or are rated green with highly positive outcomes that have been developed and taken forward in 2015/16.
5. Overall performance of 2014/15 key projects is excellent, with 94% of the projects on track or scheduled to start later in the year. One project; Deliver the Chorley Youth Zone has been rated amber due to delays in the agreement of the design, operation and funding for the Chorley Youth Zone.
6. Overall performance on the Corporate Strategy indicators and key service delivery measures is good. 75% of the Corporate Strategy indicators and 90% of the key service measures are performing above target or within the 5% tolerance.
7. The Corporate Strategy measures performing below target are; the median workplace earnings in the borough, the number of town centre visits, the number of long term empty properties in the borough, and the percentage of customers dissatisfied with the way they were treated by the Council. Action plans have been developed to outline what action will be taken to improve performance.
8. The key service delivery measure performing below target is; the time taken to process all new claims and change events for Housing and Council Tax benefit. Again, an action plan is included within the report which outlines what actions are being taken to improve performance.

<b>Confidential report</b> Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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<b>Key Decision?</b> Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**(If the recommendations are accepted)**

- To facilitate the on-going analysis and management of the Council's performance in delivering the Corporate Strategy.

**ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

- None.

**CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

- This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all	✓	A strong local economy	✓
Clean, safe and healthy communities	✓	An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	✓

**BACKGROUND**

- The Corporate Strategy is the key strategic document for the authority and includes performance indicators and key projects which focus on delivering the Council's four priorities.
- The Corporate Strategy was refreshed and approved by Council in November 2014. The new strategy includes 18 key projects, aimed at learning from and strengthening successful activity in 2013/14.
- Performance measures have also been updated for 2014/15 so that where targets were being successfully achieved they have been amended to ensure that they remain challenging and reflective of the Council's ambitions.

**PERFORMANCE OF 2013/14 CORPORATE STRATEGY PROJECTS**

- In 2013/14 there were 20 key projects identified for delivery. The majority of these projects have now been completed with positive outcomes.
- A summary of each of the 2013/14 Corporate Strategy key projects can be found at Appendix A.

**PERFORMANCE OF KEY PROJECTS – 2014/15 CORPORATE STRATEGY**

- Following the refresh of the Corporate Strategy in November, 18 key projects have been identified for delivery in 2014/15 – 2016/17. Project delivery commenced following approval of the strategy in November 2014 and at the end of the fourth quarter overall performance of key projects is excellent. 17 of the 18 projects (94%) are either on track or scheduled to start later in the year.

18. At the end of the fourth quarter, 14 projects (78%) were rated green, meaning that they are progressing according to timescale and plan:
- Digital access and inclusion
  - Explore alternative ways of providing home ownership
  - Establish a business case and model for an Extra Care scheme
  - Improve the functionality of online services
  - Delivery of an improved CCTV provision
  - Chorley Flower Show
  - Destination play area Astley park
  - Deliver improvements to Rangletts recreation ground
  - Deliver improvements to Market Street
  - Progress key employment sites
  - Develop and agree plans for delivery of the Friday Street Health Centre
  - Deliver the Chorley Public Service Reform Board work plan
  - Progress plans to extend market walk
  - Investigate future business models for public services in Chorley
19. 3 projects (17%) had not started by the end of the fourth quarter, as they are scheduled to start later in the year in order to balance out project work with core business and manage staff capacity.
- Development and delivery of community action plans
  - Implement a working together with families employment scheme
  - Increase visitor numbers to Chorley
20. One project (5%) is currently rated as ‘amber’, which is early warning that there may be a problem with the project:

Project Title		Project Status
Deliver the Chorley Youth Zone		Amber
<b>Explanation</b>	Following on from last year’s corporate strategy project, the plan was to have reached agreement on the design, operation and funding for the Chorley Youth Zone by 31 March, 2015. This work is ongoing and progress is being made.	
<b>Action Required</b>	A separate report on the Chorley Youth Zone has been provided elsewhere on the agenda.	

**PERFORMANCE OF CORPORATE STRATEGY MEASURES**

21. At the end of the fourth quarter, it is possible to report on 16 of the key performance indicators within the Corporate Strategy. 11 indicators (69%) were performing on or better than target. The full outturn information for the performance indicators is included at Appendix A.
22. The following indicators are performing better than target:
  - % of the population with NVQ level 3 and above
  - Number of projected jobs created through targeted interventions
  - Number of projected jobs created through inward investment
  - % of working age people on out of work benefits
  - The % of 16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)
  - Growth in business rate base
  - % of businesses ceasing to trade
  - The number of visits to Council's leisure centres
  - Number of young people taking part in 'Get Up and Go' activities
  - Number of affordable homes delivered
  - Number of Homelessness Preventions and Reliefs
23. One indicator (6%) is performing slightly below target, but is within the 5% tolerance threshold:
  - Overall employment rate
24. Four indicators (25%) performed below target; the median workplace earnings in the borough, the number of town centre visits, the number of long term empty properties in the borough, and the percentage of customers dissatisfied with the way they were treated by the Council.
25. The table below gives the reasons why performance is currently below target, and the steps that are being taken to improve performance. A brief analysis of trend has also been provided to give some context to the performance value:

<b>Performance Indicator</b>		<b>Target</b>	<b>Performance</b>
<b>Median workplace earnings in the borough</b>		Better than the North West Average (£482.50)	£455.50
<b>Reason below target</b>	Current performance is 5.6% below the North West average according to information from the ONS annual survey of hours and earnings - workplace analysis. The earnings by residence is £490.00 which is higher than the North West Average of £484.60, this suggests that residents commute outside the borough for higher paid jobs.		
<b>Action required</b>	Whilst significant progress had been made to both attract new business to Chorley and support the expansion of existing Chorley-based businesses, there is a 12 to 18 month lead-in time for jobs created with the support of the Choose Chorley grant and Chorley Business Investment for Growth grant.  Work to promote inward investment and support to existing businesses will continue.		
<b>Trend:</b>	At quarter four 2013/14 performance was £465.50; which is slightly better than current performance.		

Performance Indicator		Target	Performance
<b>Number of town centre visits</b>		<b>37,500</b>	<b>31,037</b>
<b>Reason below target</b>	<p>There are numerous factors that can affect the number of town centre visits during the collection period.</p> <p>Further analysis of the data indicates that; footfall is gradually increasing on a Tuesday suggesting that the Covered and Flat Iron markets are attracting shoppers, Friday trading is low, and footfall on a Saturday is in strong decline particularly in secondary locations.</p> <p>The footfall count was only undertaken the week after completing the public realm at Market St (South) and the benefits from the completion of this scheme are yet to be realised in full at the time of the count.</p> <p>Research suggests that families continue to be attracted to out-of-town shopping centres and retail parks, and nationally there is a decreasing footfall on the high street and an increase in on-line purchasing.</p>		
<b>Action required</b>	<p>It is anticipated that the Market Walk extension will improve the retail and leisure offer in the town centre, attracting quality national retailers, which in turn will increase the number of visitors. Also public realm improvements along Market Street will improve trading positions in this secondary retail location.</p>		
<b>Trend</b>	<p>At the end of quarter four 2013/14 performance was 29,846, current performance shows a 4% increase year on year.</p>		

Performance Indicator		Target	Performance
<b>The number of long term empty properties in the borough</b>		<b>195</b>	<b>210</b>
<b>Reason below target</b>	<p>Performance of this indicator is affected by fluctuations in the housing market and delays in probate cases. The increasing volume of new build development in Chorley can also have an impact on the market for older properties, particularly those requiring modernisation.</p>		
<b>Action required</b>	<p>The number of long term empty properties will continue to be monitored on a monthly basis and if there is a further increase action will be taken to advise owners how they may market their property for sale and or obtain loans from financial institutions, including Credit Unions.</p> <p>The work to reduce the number of long term empty properties will be supported by the Empty Property Officer. The Officer has been looking at the empty properties which are not currently for sale; this has been carried out on 24 properties so far and there has been a 50% response rate. A more personalised approach to the owners who are not answering is being taken. The Officer is looking into responses to determine which if any the Council can assist with, as well as investigating the next group of properties to deal with.</p>		
<b>Trend:</b>	<p>At quarter four 2013/14 performance was 202.</p>		

Performance Indicator		Target	Performance
<b>% of customers dissatisfied with the way they were treated by the Council</b>		20%	21.3%
<b>Reason below target</b>	<p>Performance has improved considerably when compared to the previous year, and has shown a continuous improvement during 2014/15.</p> <p>Customer dissatisfaction continues to focus around issues with the progress of requests rather than problems with individual services. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not letting customers know the outcomes of their requests</li> <li>• Not keeping customers informed of progress</li> <li>• Not responding within a reasonable time frame</li> </ul> <p>This is often in relation to more complex enquiries and requests where officers need to consult with other agencies to determine an accurate response.</p>		
<b>Action required</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey response rates continue to be monitored to ensure we are maximising the number of responses; the survey has recently been optimised to ensure that respondents are able to quickly and easily give their views</li> <li>• Articles/internal communications continue to be shared on the loop on a regular basis reminding staff of the importance of customer call backs</li> <li>• Service heads and managers have been challenged to make significant improvements to ensure that customers are kept informed of progress – this work is ongoing and will be followed up individually with service managers</li> <li>• Customers continue to be able to track the progress of their requests online 24/7 via the My Account system.</li> <li>• Facilities such as reporting on call backs are to be utilised by managers to improve their service call back response rate.</li> </ul> <p>Overall this work is ongoing and actions and priorities are being identified and implemented in order to reduce levels of customer dissatisfaction</p>		
<b>Trend:</b>	<p>In comparison at the end of quarter four 2013/14 dissatisfaction was 28.7%, and in 2012/13 was 32.2%.</p>		

**PERFORMANCE OF KEY SERVICE DELIVERY MEASURES**

26. There are some important indicators that are not included within the Corporate Strategy, but are measured locally as indicators of service performance. There are ten indicators that can be reported at the end of the third quarter. The full outturn information for this is included at Appendix B: Key Service Delivery Measures

27. Six (60%) of the Key Service delivery measures are performing better than target:
- Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'major' application types
  - Number of households living in Temporary Accommodation (NI 156)
  - Number of missed collections per 100,000 collections of household waste
  - Supplier Payment within 30 days
  - Average working days per employee (FTE) per year lost through sickness absence
  - Percentage of Council Tax collected

20. Three indicators (30%) are performing slightly below target, but are within the 5% tolerance threshold:

- Vacant Town Centre Floor Space



- Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'minor' application types
- Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'other' application types

28. There is currently one indicator (10%) that is performing below target. This indicator relates to the time taken to process all new claims and change events for housing and council tax benefit.

29. The table below gives the reasons for this worse than anticipated performance, and the steps that are being taken to improve performance:

Performance Indicator		Target	Performance
<b>Time taken to process new claims and change events for Housing and Council Tax benefit</b>		10 days	11.65 days
<b>Reason below target</b>	The year to date performance was impacted by the ongoing single front office staff changes, training and mentoring programme. A further impact on performance has been the increasing number of new claims and change events that have taken place.		
<b>Action required</b>	The programme of staff training and mentoring in this area is ongoing, but has been scaled down to release resources. Further analysis is being undertaken on the number of new claims and change events, in order to establish if something further can be done to help reduce these. Capacity grid will continue to be used to outsource the processing of some benefits claims during busy periods.		
<b>Trend:</b>	Performance at the end of quarter four 2013/14 was 10.42 days		

**IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT**

30. 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	✓	Policy and Communications	

GARY HALL  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Louise Wingfield	5061	4 June 2015	Fourth Quarter Performance Report 2014/15

**Appendix A: Performance of 2013/14 Corporate Strategy Projects**

**A STRONG LOCAL ECONOMY**

<b>Deliver the Chorley Works unemployment project</b>	<b>Green</b>
<p>This was a 12 month pilot which commenced in May 2014; with an expected completion date of June 2015. To date 110 residents have been referred with 46 signed up for Chorley Works, 18 of these have received employment upon completion of a placement, and a total of 55 training courses have been completed.</p>	

<b>Deliver the inward investment campaign</b>	<b>Complete</b>
<p>The campaign has successfully established the Choose Chorley brand and Chorley as a great place to do business. Activities over the last year have included the development and launch of the Chorley website, the lighting of Rivington Pike and April Fools which created a lot of media attention, an advertising campaign which included an email campaign with Business Desk as well as outdoor advertising in Manchester, including Manchester airport and railway stations, social media and press releases, and Choose Chorley Events.</p> <p>All of the activities have contributed to raising Chorley’s profile as a place to do business.</p>	

<b>Carry out improvements to the town centre</b>	<b>Complete</b>
<p>This project delivered a number of actions in line with the Town Centre Masterplan including the ASDA junction, Market Street (south) public realm improvements, Market Street Shop Front Improvements, and 98-102 Market Street.</p>	

<b>Market Walk</b>	<b>Complete</b>
<p>This project has been completed with the transfer of the operational and financial management of Market Walk from Deloitte who managed these services on our behalf, to the Council to deliver in house.</p>	

**CLEAN, SAFE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES**

<b>Friday Street health centre</b>	<b>Green</b>
<p>This project has carried forward to the 2014/15 – 2016/17 corporate strategy, with progress made against a number of workstreams. The project has been successful in securing some approval for funding from the Primary Care Infrastructure fund of £4million. This will be confirmed pending the approval of a business case. The feasibility study has been completed and the Project Board will continue to ensure that progress is made over 2015/16.</p>	

<b>Implement Astley 2020</b>	<b>Green</b>
<p>The delivery of the Astley 20:20 development plan covers many areas including the destination play area, event parking, event staging, footpath lighting, sensory garden, street furniture, and pathway improvements.</p> <p>This project is an ongoing programme of work and will be monitored as part of the organisational plan for 2015/16.</p>	

<b>Host Chorley element of cycling tour of Lancashire</b>	<b>Complete</b>
<p>The project met all stated outcomes and in certain examples exceeded the project objectives, such as the community engagement. The Sky ride local programme saw excellent retention, and the Grand Prix had excellent and positive feedback. Legacy and community activity will continue to develop over 2015.</p>	

<b>Deliver environmental improvements as part of the Cleaner Chorley campaign</b>	<b>Complete</b>
<p>The campaign was launched in the summer with a new message ‘Don’t Mess With Chorley’ highlighting to residents problems with flytipping and dog mess, as well as action taken.</p> <p>Key elements of the campaign have been a social media focus on flytipping, an oversized bin which was put in various dog fouling hotspots to highlight and question how big do bins need to be for people to use them, various ‘don’t mess with Chorley’ visuals which have been used on bus shelters and bin wagons and targeted clean up days.</p> <p>The campaign plan has been completed for the first year and will be incorporated within the ongoing Civic Pride campaign during 2015/16.</p>	

<b>Deliver the Chorley Youth Zone</b>	<b>Amber</b>
<p>This project has carried forward to the 2014/15 – 2016/17 corporate strategy.</p>	

<b>Improve play areas and sports facilities (Year 1 of the play and open spaces strategy)</b>	<b>Green</b>
<p>This project is an ongoing programme of work to will carry out the improvements to the play areas and open spaces that have been identified in year one of the Play, Open Space and Playing Pitch Strategy 2013-18 in order to ensure future provision for local residents. This will be monitored as part of the organisational plan for 2015/16.</p>	

**INVOLVING RESIDENTS IN IMPROVING THEIR LOCAL AREA AND EQUALITY OF ACCESS FOR ALL**

<b>Deliver the welfare reforms action plan</b>	<b>Complete</b>
<p>The objectives have been met and positive outcomes achieved particularly in respect of minimising the impact on affected households, helping residents in to work and establishing positive working relationships with our partners.</p>	

<b>Implement initiatives to overcome social isolation</b>	<b>Complete</b>
<p>The project has created two successful social “Let’s Do Lunch” groups one linked to the existing over 60’s group within Croston and a new group which meets at the Methodist Hall in Croston. A group has been formed called the Coffee Club that meets weekly at Tatton Community Centre, Chorley East Neighbourhood area.</p>	

<b>Expand the food bank</b>	<b>Complete</b>
<p>The focus of this project was to ensure the availability of short term food provision for individuals and families from across the borough in crisis situations. The Living Waters Storehouse provide the main food bank facility in Chorley, a budget of £15,000 was allocated to enable them to improve their existing facility and meet increasing local demand. A further £15,000 has been allocated through the budget process to providing support to food provision schemes in 2015/16.</p>	

<b>Extend Chorley's time credits (Year 1)</b>	<b>Complete</b>
Work on this has now embedded into business as usual, with the use of time credits continuing to expand and develop across Chorley and a varied time out opportunity menu now extending to other parts of the County and areas of the UK.	

<b>Develop the offer at Chorley's Credit Union</b>	<b>Green</b>
The Credit Union is developing well in Chorley, exceeding all targets by the end of year two and is in a very strong position as it enters in to year three.	
This will be monitored as part of the organisational plan for 2015/16.	

### **AN AMBITIOUS COUNCIL THAT DOES MORE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS AND THE LOCAL AREA**

<b>Bring the property services contract back in house</b>	<b>Complete</b>
This project oversaw the insourcing of property services following the termination of the property contract with Liberata; work involved the TUPE negotiations, and the establishment of an in-house property service which included the provision of office space and asset management software.	
The service has now been fully established in house, and is operating from the Town Hall.	

<b>Extend the use of mobile devices across the Council</b>	<b>Complete</b>
The in-house development of the My Account and My Work systems improved the recording and reporting of customer requests for front line staff and the blackberry devices were replaced with iPhones. Additionally a scheduled work system has been developed which facilitates recording and reporting of scheduled work relating to grounds maintenance, street cleaning etc.	
Alongside this councillors and senior managers have been supplied with data enabled iPads with ultra-broadband internet access, enabling paperless meetings and remote working, in line with the council's digital strategy.	


<b>Deliver Chorley Council energy advice and switching service</b>	<b>Complete</b>
The service is working well, with the majority of customers who have accessed the service to date able to make significant anticipated savings on their annual energy bills (gas and electricity). Work on this has now embedded into business as usual.	

<b>Change working practises to fit neighbourhood working and public health priorities</b>	<b>Complete</b>
A replacement team manager was successfully recruited and commenced in post Oct 2014 and all identified training needs for officers have been met. Changes in work practices and new roles and responsibilities have been embedded in day to day work.	

















<b>Deliver a project to improve customer satisfaction</b>	<b>Complete</b>
Detailed work has been undertaken to understand the reasons for dissatisfaction, which are consistently due to not letting customers know the outcomes of their requests, keeping customers informed of progress, or responding within a reasonable time frame. This information has formed the basis of internal communication messages to managers and staff on the importance of dealing with customers in a timely manner and keeping them informed. This has successfully resulted in a reduction in dissatisfaction from over 30% to just over 20%.	

**Appendix B: Performance of Corporate Strategy Key Measures**

 Performance is better than target

 Worse than target but within threshold


 Worse than target, outside threshold

Indicator Name	Polarity	Target	Performance Quarter 4	Symbol	Trend*	% Change (year on year)
% of the population with NVQ level 3 and above	Bigger is better	57%	<b>60.5%</b>		↑	<b>+5.9%</b>
Town Centre Visits	Bigger is better	37,500	<b>31,037</b>		↑	<b>+4.0%</b>
Median workplace earnings in the borough	Bigger is better	£482.50	<b>£455.50</b>		↓	<b>-2.2%</b>
Overall employment rate	Bigger is better	80%	<b>76.6%</b>		↓	<b>-3.2%</b>
Number of projected jobs created through targeted interventions	Bigger is better	100	<b>127</b>		↓	<b>-4.5%</b>
Number of projected jobs created through inward investment	Bigger is better	50	<b>62</b>		↑	<b>+6.89%</b>
% of working age people on out of work benefits	Smaller is better	9.6%	<b>8.3%</b>		↑	<b>-7.8%</b>
The % of 16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)	Smaller is better	4.8%	<b>3.6%</b>		↑	<b>-29.4%</b>
Growth in the business rate base	Bigger is better	2%	<b>2.62%</b>		↑	<b>+213%</b>
% of businesses ceasing to trade	Smaller is better	10.1%	<b>9.6%</b>		↑	<b>-16.7%</b>
The number of visits to Council's leisure centres	Bigger is better	1,000,000	<b>1,097,191</b>		↑	<b>+1.3%</b>
Number of young people taking part in 'Get Up and Go' activities	Bigger is better	15,000	<b>20,958</b>		↑	<b>+13.2%</b>
Number of affordable homes delivered	Bigger is better	200	<b>294</b>		↑	<b>+14%</b>
Number of Homelessness Preventions and Reliefs	Bigger is better	200	<b>810</b>		↑	<b>+15.6%</b>
Number of long term empty properties in the borough	Smaller is better	195	<b>210</b>		↑	<b>-1.9%</b>
% of customers dissatisfied with the service they received from the council	Smaller is Better	20%	<b>21.3%</b>		↑	<b>-25.8%</b>











*\*Trend shown is for change from quarter 4 2013/14*

**Appendix C: Performance of key service delivery measures**

 Performance is better than target

 Worse than target but within threshold

 Worse than target, outside threshold

Indicator Name	Polarity	Target	Performance Quarter 4	Symbol	Trend	% Change (year on year)
Time taken to process all new claims and change events for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit	Smaller is better	10 days	<b>11.65 days</b>		↓	<b>+11.8%</b>
Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'major' application types	Bigger is better	70%	<b>71.88%</b>		↑	<b>+38.62%</b>
Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'minor' application types	Bigger is better	65%	<b>64.09%</b>		↓	<b>-7.9%</b>
Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'other' application types	Bigger is better	80%	<b>78.44%</b>		↓	<b>-5.2%</b>
Number of households living in Temporary Accommodation (NI 156)	Smaller is better	25	<b>12</b>		↓	<b>+20%</b>
Number of missed collections per 100,000 collections of household waste	Smaller is better	49	<b>41</b>		↓	<b>+10.8%</b>
Supplier Payment within 30 days	Bigger is better	99%	<b>99.33%</b>		↓	<b>-0.3%</b>
Average working days per employee (FTE) per year lost through sickness absence	Smaller is better	6.44 days	<b>5.98 days</b>		↑	<b>-7.1%</b>
Vacant Town Centre Floor Space	Smaller is better	6%	<b>6.02%</b>		↓	<b>+36.5%</b>
% Council Tax collected	Bigger is better	97.65%	<b>97.8%</b>		↑	<b>+0.2%</b>

*\*Trend shown is for change from quarter 4 2013/14*



Report of	Meeting	Date
Chief Executive (Introduced by the Executive Member for Resources)	Executive Cabinet	25 June 2015

## **PROVISIONAL REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN 2014/15**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To present the provisional revenue outturn figures for the Council as compared against the budgets and efficiency savings targets set for the financial year 2014/15.
2. To present the provisional outturn figures for the 2014/15 Capital Programme and update the Capital Programme for financial years 2015/16 to 2017/18 to take account of the re-phasing of expenditure from 2014/15 and other proposed budget changes.
3. The accounts are provisional at this stage and are also subject to final checking and scrutiny by the Council's external auditor. Should there be any significant changes to the outturn as a result of this process a further report will be submitted to Executive Cabinet.

### **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

4. Note the full year outturn position for the 2014/15 revenue budget and capital investment programme.
5. Request Council approval for slippage requests and other transfers to reserves outlined in Appendix 2 of the report to finance expenditure on specific items or projects in 2015/16.
6. Approve the transfer of £176k net income from Market Walk in 2014/15, split 80:20 between the Change Management Reserve and Equalisation Reserve (to limit the future impact of any potential reduction in income).
7. Note the impact of the final capital expenditure outturn and approve the re-phasing of capital budgets to 2015/16.
8. Request Council approval of the financing of the 2014/15 Capital Programme to maximise the use of funding resources available to the Council.
9. Note the 2014/15 outturn position on the Council's reserves.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT**

10. The Council's overall savings target of £130k in 2014/15 from management of the establishment has been achieved.
11. There is a provisional underspend against the budget at year-end of £139k (as detailed in Appendix 1) which takes into account requests for slippage of committed items of £424k. The following items are excluded from the provisional underspend:

- Balances remaining from new investment items added to the budget in 2014/15.
- Additional net income generated from Market Walk.
- Any surplus/deficit relating to Business Rates Retention.

12. In the 2014/15 budget the expected net income from Market Walk is £559k. The final outturn position, after taking into consideration £102k reserved to fund feasibility costs of the proposed extension and £100k transferred to fund further Town Centre Investment, is £735k. The proposed surplus of £176k will be transferred to reserves, allocated 80:20 between the change management reserve and the Market Walk income equalisation reserve. This will bring Market Walk reserves to £200k by 31st March 2015.
13. The provisional capital outturn for 2014/15 is £3.655m.
14. The Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy proposed that working balances were to be maintained at a level no lower than £2.0m due to the financial risks facing the Council. I am pleased to report that should the recommendations in this report be accepted, the level of balances proposed at 31 March 2015 will exceed the minimum of £2.0m by £0.288m. This puts the Council in a strong position for the start of the next financial period.

<b>Confidential report</b> Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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<b>Key Decision?</b> Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
<b>Reason</b> Please bold as appropriate	<b>1, a change in service provision that impacts upon the service revenue budget by £100,000 or more</b>	2, a contract worth £100,000 or more
	3, a new or unprogrammed capital scheme of £100,000 or more	4, Significant impact in environmental, social or physical terms in two or more wards

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**  
(If the recommendations are accepted)

15. To ensure the Council’s budgetary targets are achieved.

**ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

16. None.

**CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

17. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all		A strong local economy	√
Clean, safe and healthy communities		An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	√

Ensuring cash targets are met maintains the Council’s financial standing.



**BACKGROUND**

18. The last report to the Executive Cabinet of 26<sup>th</sup> March contained a projected outturn for 2014/15 which outlined a forecast underspend of £146k based on information to the end of February and that the level of General Balances at year-end would exceed the minimum £2.0m set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy by £0.295m.
19. The previous forecast underspend reported to Executive Cabinet excluded the following special items:
  - Any underspends on committed items which are expected to be carried forward into 2015/16.
  - Investment items added to the budget in 2014/15.
  - Additional net income generated from Market Walk.
  - Any surplus/deficit relating to Business Rates Retention.
20. The Council's approved revenue budget for 2014/15 included target savings of £130,000 from management of the staffing establishment.
21. It was recommended in the June budget monitoring report that £100k of additional income from Market Walk be transferred to invest in the Town Centre Grants Programme and that any surplus additional income, previously forecast to be around £142k, be divided on a 80:20 basis between two reserves: the equalisation reserve to smooth any fall in forecast income from Market Walk in future years; and the change management reserve which would assist in funding future organisational change.
22. The previous forecast for capital expenditure in 2014/15 was £5.383m.

**SECTION A: CURRENT FORECAST POSITION – REVENUE**

23. The net expenditure at the end of the financial year shows a provisional underspend against the Council's budgets of around £139,000 (after taking requests for slippage and other special items into account). Details of the revenue outturn position are shown in Appendix 1 and requests for slippage and the transfer of resources to reserves are outlined in Appendix 2. Analysis of the main variances over and above those previously reported in monitoring is shown in the table below. Further details are contained in the service unit analysis available in the Members' room.

**ANALYSIS OF MOVEMENTS****Table 1 – Significant Variations from the last monitoring report**

Note: Savings/underspends are shown as ( ).

	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure:</b>		
Meals on Wheels Service	(24)	
Property Searches Legal Settlement	30	
Chorley Local Plan	<u>(19)</u>	(13)
<b>Income:</b>		
Land Charge Search Fees	(12)	
Public Realm Agreement (roundabout maintenance)	(17)	
Community Infrastructure Levy – award of costs	(17)	
Planning Income	<u>23</u>	(23)
<b>Other:</b>		
Housing Benefits	(27)	
Net Financing (Interest on Investments)	18	
Increase in Bad Debts Provision	42	
Other minor variances	<u>10</u>	43
<b>Net Movement (excluding slippage items)</b>		<b>7</b>

24. In 2014/15 the Council introduced a new mainstream investment budget of £30k for the Meals on Wheels service to deliver hot meals to older vulnerable people. The service offered 3 meals per week at a subsidised rate as well as support with minor household duties. Take up of the service has been limited in the first 12 months with expenditure for the year around £6k resulting in an underspend against budget of £24k. Actions have been put in place to increase numbers including increasing the subsidies to 5 days a week and providing an introductory offer of 2 weeks at half price. As this is a recurrent budget a further £30k is available in 2015/16 and this should be sufficient to cover any costs over the next 12 months.
25. The previous monitoring report to Executive Cabinet on 26 March detailed an estimated liability to the Council of around £120k in relation to the outstanding legal settlement for property search fees. The estimate was based on a briefing note received in December from Bevan Brittan Solicitors and included the estimated settlement figure of around £90k plus costs of £30k. A further update has since been received on 31 March with a revised settlement figure of £110k and costs of £40k. Whilst the settlement amount is still subject to change, our solicitors expect any adjustments to be minor. Based on this latest information, the revised costs have been charged to the 2014/15 revenue account.

However, there may be some good news on the horizon as Bevan Brittan Solicitors have just confirmed that Central Government is intending to make two interim payments to authorities in respect of LLCR personal search fees amounting in total to £8m and £34m. They do not yet know the amount of the interim payments for each authority or when the payments will be made. As such, members will be updated in future budget monitoring reports once Central Government have published details of the individual grants awarded.

26. One issue highlighted in previous monitoring reports was the legal costs associated with the site allocation for Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople under the Chorley Local Plan 2012-26. Following the re-opening of the examination hearing, the previous estimates for legal costs were around £42,000 required to cover potential costs of the Programme Officer, Inspector and Barrister. Although there is no change to the overall estimate of costs at this stage, a significant proportion of the work will only be carried out in the new financial year. As a result, the revised forecast for 2014/15 costs has been reduced by £19,000.
27. Income levels received throughout 2014/15 for Land Charge Searches indicated that the final outturn position would be broadly in line with budget. However, in quarter 4, agreement was reached with TM Property Search for one-off requests for searches and this generated additional income of around £17k. Other routine requests fell slightly in the final quarter, reducing this surplus to around £12k for the year.
28. Each year the Council receives an agreed sum from Lancashire County Council under the Public Realm agreement for grass cutting, verge maintenance, weed control and sign cleaning. In addition to this, the Council's Streetscene team has carried out work to Chorley roundabout displays and the Central Avenue Embankment. LCC have until recently been unable to confirm if the Council would receive additional payments for this work but agreement has finally been reached and a sum of around £17k has now been received for 2014/15.
29. One issue that is finally drawing to a close is the legal case with Fox Strategic Land and Property over the charges made by the Council under the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The court dismissed the case and ruled in the Council's favour over 12 months ago. However, the total legal costs incurred of around £64k (shared with Lancashire County Council, Preston City Council and South Ribble Borough Council) and the prospect of having them reimbursed has still to be settled. The Council has rejected a settlement offer of £60k and is pursuing a claim for around £78k to cover the legal costs and staff time involved with the case. As the issue is still ongoing, an estimated minimum recovery figure of £60k has been assumed in the 2014/15 accounts and this will offset the Council's share of residual costs reported in 2013/14. The final outcome will be reported to members in future budget monitoring reports.
30. Previous forecasts of income levels from Planning Applications had estimated a deficit of around £25k against the annual budget of £650k. Income levels have continued to fall over the final quarter of 2014/15 and the actual total received for the year stands at £602k, a further reduction of £23k. This compares to a total of £648k received in 2013/14.
31. Monitoring reports throughout 2014/15 highlighted the significant increase in the level of housing and council tax benefit overpayments recovered as a result of pro-active investigation work. Income levels for the final quarter continued to show an increase in the level of costs recovered compared to budget and this has generated an additional surplus in income. Although this increases potential income levels to the revenue account, not all of this income will be fully recovered and consideration is also given to the levels of outstanding debt for both current and previous years. The total level of debt outstanding at the end of March has been reviewed and as a result, the provision for non-recovery (Bad Debt Provision) has been increased accordingly. After taking this into account, there remains a further surplus of £27k from previous forecasts on housing benefit payments.
32. The previous monitoring report highlighted the potential impact of lower interest rates on Council investments resulting in a forecast reduction in interest receivable. Interest rates have remained low over the final quarter of the year and this has further reduced income levels compared to budget resulting in a shortfall of around £18k.
33. As previously outlined, the level of debt outstanding for Housing & Council Tax benefit overpayments is reviewed at the end of March to assess the provision required for potential

non-recovery of the debt (Bad Debt Provision). This principal also applies to other non-benefit related debts (sundry debtors) outstanding at the end of the financial year. The analysis of these outstanding debts showed an increase in the level of arrears of around £112k compared to the figure as at 31 March 2014. Although the majority of these debts may still be recovered over time it is prudent to increase the provision for non-payment to mitigate against the risk of default. As a result, the bad debt provision for sundry debtors has been increased by £42k.

34. As previously detailed in the report to Executive Cabinet on 26 March, one area excluded from the forecast figures detailed in Appendix 1 is the additional income generated in 2014/15 from the recovery of Council Tax Summons and Liability Orders. The previous forecast estimated an increase in income of around £100,000 in 2014/15. Raising these charges is no guarantee that these costs will actually be recovered and an allowance will need to be made for non-payment. It is unclear at this stage as to the level of recovery as this can take place over a number of years. As a result, the Council approved that the surplus income in 2014/15 is set aside to offset any future increased liability in bad debts as a result of these charges. The final surplus income figure is £116k and this has been transferred to reserves to mitigate any future liability in bad debts.

### **COMMITTED ITEMS/SLIPPAGE REQUESTS**

35. Each year the Council commits itself to expenditure that may not always be incurred in the financial year. It is customary to allow directorates that have a budget underspend to carry forward these resources to pay for specific items in the following year. This is an important part of the budget management process as it allows officers to commit earmarked resources to specific projects particularly towards the end of the financial year.
36. A full schedule of the budget carry forward (slippage) requests for 2014/15 is outlined in Appendix 2.
37. One area that warrants specific mention in respect of slippage is for Customer & ICT Services as the requests for this service makes up £288k of the total slippage requested of £424k. The principle aim of the continued investment in digital services is to deliver services for less cost. The modernisation of the council's technical infrastructure in 2010 is now reaching end of life and needs further investment. The council will need to continue future proofing digital services to capitalise on improving productivity leading to better performance and resource management. Greater service efficiency and the potential for improvements in infrastructure will reduce waste and operational costs in the longer term.
38. Every effort is made within the service to reduce the need for external borrowing. It is therefore prudent to use the savings from 2014/15 within the Customer & ICT Services budget, which in the main have been realised as a result of external grant funding, vacant posts across the service following the last restructure, and contract savings in ICT. The savings will carry forward to 2015/16 and will be used to fund:
- Additional resources to continue with changes in business process within the Single Front Office.
  - Specialist expertise for a refresh in the councils technical infrastructure
  - Additional hardware requirements to continue supporting the roll out of digital services
  - Support commercial agreements for software contract refresh and procurement
39. It is essential to increase the take-up of Council digital services so more users can benefit from improved government services. Increased take-up will also make it possible for assisted digital support to be focused on those who are currently unable to use them.

**MARKET WALK**

40. The budgeted net rental income from Market Walk in 2014/15 was £559k. This is a decrease of £10k from the net budget reported at March Executive Cabinet due to an additional £10k budget provision being made available for the design and feasibility project for the extension to Market Walk.
41. The approved budget made provision for a £50k transfer to reserve to fund asset maintenance costs outside of the service charge agreement and a £50k transfer to an equalisation account to build up a reserve to fund any future reduction to income levels. These transfers have been actioned and following that net income to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 is £836k, this exceeds the budgeted estimate by £277k.
42. Of the additional net income around £102k relates to unspent budget provision made for the Market Walk extension project. This has been transferred to a reserve to allow the project to continue in 2015/16.
43. The final outturn position is therefore a net income position of £175k. It is proposed that this additional income is transferred to reserves, allocated on the 80:20 split between the Market Walk income equalisation reserve and the change management reserve. This is in line with the allocation made in 2013/14 and as proposed in the budget monitoring reports presented to Members throughout 2014/15.
44. The forecast outturn as reported in March 2015 was £142k; the improved position of £175k is largely due to the Council reducing the costs of financing the acquisition. This has been achieved by the fact that some borrowing has been financed with internal cash balances that alternatively would have been invested and only realised a very small rate of return.
45. The statement below summarises the outturn position.

**Table 2: Market Walk Outturn 2014/15**

	2014/15 Budget	2014/15 Outturn	2014/15 Variance
<b><i>Income Budget</i></b>			
<b>Gross Income</b>	<b>(1,759,830)</b>	<b>(1,792,366)</b>	<b>(32,536)</b>
<b><i>Expenditure Budget</i></b>			
Operational costs and financing as reported March 2015	1,189,630	845,943	(343,687)
Add: Additional budget provision for Market Walk extension project	9,960	9,960	0
Less: Transfer to Town Centre Grants Programme	(100,000)	0	100,000
Add: Smaller budget variations	1,200	0	(1,200)
<b>Gross Expenditure</b>	<b>1,100,790</b>	<b>855,903</b>	<b>(244,887)</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>(659,040)</b>	<b>(936,463)</b>	<b>(277,423)</b>
<b><i>Transfer to reserve as per 2014/15 Budget Report</i></b>			
Equalisation Reserve (annual contribution)	50,000	50,000	0
Asset Management re Market Walk	50,000	50,000	0
<b><i>Transfer to reserve</i></b>			
Market Walk extension project - carry budget forward to 2015/16	0	101,780	101,780
<b>Revised Net Income</b>	<b>(559,040)</b>	<b>(734,683)</b>	<b>(175,643)</b>
<b><i>Transfer surplus to reserves</i></b>			
Change Management Reserve		140,515	<b>140,515</b>
Market Walk Equalisation Reserve		35,129	<b>35,129</b>
<b>2014/15 Outturn</b>	<b>(559,040)</b>	<b>(559,040)</b>	<b>0</b>

**2014/15 INVESTMENT AREAS**

46. The budget for 2014/15 saw the introduction of a budgeted investment package funded from available surplus of New Homes Bonus. The new revenue investment programme totalled £660k and the progress to date with regard to spend is detailed in Appendix 3.
47. Due to the scale of the investment, delivery of these projects will be made over more than one year and any unspent balances at the end of the 2014/15 financial year will be transferred to specific project reserves. The reserves will be matched to expenditure as it is incurred during 2015/16.

**GENERAL FUND RESOURCES AND BALANCES**

48. With regard to working balances, and as per Appendix 1, we started the year with a balance of £2.189m. The approved MTFs proposed that working balances are to be no lower than £2.0m given the budgetary challenges facing the Council. The provisional outturn position (after taking requests for slippage into account) shows that the General Fund closing balance will be around £2.288m as detailed in the table below.

**Table 3 – Movement in General Fund Balance**

<b>General Balances</b>	<b>£m</b>
Opening Balance 2014/15	2.189
Additional resources approved for Single Front Office	(0.040)
Provisional revenue budget underspend	0.139
<b>Closing General Fund Balance 2014/15</b>	<b>2.288</b>

49. Appendix 4 provides further information about the specific earmarked reserves and provisions used throughout 2014/15, and those that would be available for use in 2015/16 if the recommendations of this report are approved.

**RETAINED BUSINESS RATES**

50. The Business Rates Retention (BRR) system of resource allocation was introduced in April 2013, so 2014/15 was the second year of operation. Under BRR there is a direct link between growth or decline in net business rates income and the amount of money the council has available to spend on service provision. The council's share of net rates income is influenced not only by each year's Local Government Finance Settlement (which confirms the Baseline Funding Level and Tariff – used to estimate the Levy payable to Central Government), but also growth or decline in gross rates, take-up of reliefs by businesses, potential bad debts, and the level of appeals that may be successful. Together these introduce an element of volatility into resource allocation under BRR, which means that use of a Business Rates Retention Reserve to smooth resource availability between years is advisable.
51. Appendix 5 presents a comparison of the provisional outturn for net business rates income (plus Government S31 Grants paid to the council to compensate for loss of income as a result of the extension of Small Business Rates Relief and Autumn Statement reliefs) with the approved budget for 2014/15 and the forecast outturn presented in budget monitoring. The Council's share of retained rates is 40% of the net rates income after deducting mandatory and discretionary reliefs, and movements in the provisions for bad debts and appeals. Actual income transferred to the General Fund is as estimated before the start of

the financial year in the NNDR1 return, but the Levy and S31 Grants are recalculated according to outturn figures in the NNDR3 return.

52. Performance of the business rates element of the Collection Fund was better than estimated, with the result that the council is due £199,860 of the surplus. The surplus was achieved by a combination of income growth, reduced take-up of reliefs, and decisions that contributions to the provisions for bad debts and appeals need not be as large as estimated. The provision required for appeals against the valuation of premises was based on the year-end list produced by the Valuation Office Agency, and took account of the probability of success of appeals and the potential reduction in rateable values. Many council's found that a large number of possibly speculative appeals were submitted late in the financial year, perhaps making the judgement as to the provision required more difficult than before. Should successful appeals in 2015/16 or later exceed the provision, BRR-related resources would be reduced.
53. As a result of the reduction in relevant reliefs, entitlement to S31 Grant has reduced by £106,552. In addition, the increase in net rates income also requires an increase in the accrued Levy payable to Central Government. The immediate effect of the improvement in the Collection Fund is a reduction in total BRR-related resources. This has been offset by reducing the transfer into the BRR Reserve so that overall BRR-related resources are broadly as budgeted. The balance on the reserve available to smooth resource variances in future years is £383,601.
54. The Council gets the benefit of the improved performance in subsequent years. Part of the improvement was reflected in the budget for 2015/16; and the balance will feed into the 2016/17 budget.

## **SECTION B: CURRENT FORECAST POSITION – CAPITAL**

55. Amendments to the capital programme 2014/15 to 2016/17 have been reported to Executive Cabinet through the quarterly in-year monitoring reports.
56. The Capital budget Report to Special Council in March 2015 contained the new capital programme 2015/16 to 2017/18 as well as the latest forecast of expenditure in 2014/15. The capital programme as reported to Council was as follows:
  - 2014/15: £5.368m
  - 2015/16: £9.214m
  - 2016/17: £3.991m
  - 2017/18: £2.232m
57. Capital expenditure in 2014/15 was £3.655m. Appendix 6 sets out a breakdown of the capital schemes undertaken.
58. A summary of the schemes undertaken during 2014/15 is set out below:

### *Asset Management, regeneration and governance - £0.207m*

59. The refurbishment of the White Hart Public House was completed during 2013/14. Resurfacing of the car park along with associated infrastructure costs were completed during 2014/15, this completes the work required to bring a prominent town centre site back into full use.

60. A Changing Places toilet facility has been installed at the Town Hall as a joint venture with Lancashire County Council who provided the funding. This brings an important facility into the Town Centre where previously none were publically available.
61. The refurbishment of 98-102 Market Street was completed during 2014/15. Two of the units have been let with an agreement in place to let a third.
62. During 2014/15 the Cabinet Office issued an additional grant to support further work to get people on the electoral register before the May 2015 election. This was used in part to buy equipment to support this aim.
63. Initial work on the 2015/16 investment project to split the Bengal Street depot into two areas allowing one of the areas to be leased to Recycling Lives and the remaining area to be retained by the council as an operational depot commenced during 2014/15.

*Housing - £1.570m*

64. The Council contributed £405k in 2014/15, funded from government grant and contributions from registered providers, to the disabled facilities programme for work to adapt homes for disabled occupants.
65. The improvement works at Cotswold House, aimed at improving the housing offer and accommodation was completed during 2014/15. The opportunity to upgrade the electrical works following health and safety recommendations and minimising future disruption was also taken.
66. The programme of affordable housing approved in 2013/14 was completed during 2014/15. This included contribution to works at St George's Street, Halliwell Street, Beaconsfield Terrace and Chapel Lane in Coppull.
67. The vacant property located at 2 Thirlmere road was purchased and demolished to provide a cleared site to be transferred to Chorley Community Housing for redevelopment both providing affordable housing and improving the local area.

*People and Places - £1.736m*

68. The Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) at Clayton Green Sports Centre has been replaced; the majority of this was funded by a contribution from Places for People.
69. A fan motor within the Air Handling Unit for the pool hall at All Season's Leisure Centre was replaced.
70. The provision of waste and recycling bins has cost less £10k than forecast; however, the budget had been accelerated from 2015/16 so this will be re-phased back into the 2015/16 provision.
71. The Section 106 project to improve landscaping, recreation and play provision at Eaves Green commenced during 2014/15 and works are due to be completed during 2015/16.
72. Delivery of the Section 106 funded improvements at Rangletts's Recreation Ground commenced in 2013/14 with site remediation works. Phase 1 works, which include land drainage works, footpaths, railings/gates, allotments, lighting, overflow parking and a grass football pitch. Phase 2 (play area, multi-use games area and associated works) and Phase 3 (skate park) contracts were awarded during 2014/15 with work to commence and complete in 2015/16.



73. The planned programme of resurfacing and improvement works to the Portland Street, Fleet Street short stay and Flat Iron car parks were all completed during 2014/15.
74. Works to deliver and support the “Astley 2020” development plan were undertaken during 2014/15 with the remaining work scheduled to be completed during 2015/16. These include:
- Completion of the restoration work on the Memorial Arch including lighting.
  - Provision of a fountain at Astley Lodge to help improve water quality and reduce the future need to dredge/clear the lodge,
  - Work to the destination play area, a concept designed play area themed on the ruins of a 17<sup>th</sup> century castle. The play area is now open.
  - Preliminary works on the events car parking off Southport Road were started and due for completion during 2015/16.
  - Restoration works to some of the footpaths and steps leading through the park as well as the sensory garden were undertaken.
  - Conservation and maintenance work at Astley Hall.
  - Refurbishment work at Astley Hall Farmhouse to provide a new exhibition space.
75. Purchase of 5 vans for the Neighbourhood Team, fitted with dog cages, replacing neighbourhood vans that had come to the end of their lease term and were due for replacement.
76. The scheme of improvement and upgrading of facilities at Jubilee Recreation Ground in Adlington, comprising of a new skate park, ball court resurfacing, fencing, landscaping and a new play area were completed during 2014/15.
77. The delivery of a Youth Zone in Chorley is a key investment area in the 2015/16 budget. The purchase of the Leigh Arms Public House took place during 2014/15. The site, along with land held by the Arts Partnership, will be the preferred site for the Youth Zone.
78. Section106 funded works to improve and equip the existing trim trail at Carr Brook commenced during 2014/15 scheduled to be completed during 2015/16.

*Planning - £0.142m*

79. The regeneration works to implement a shared surface scheme to the southern end of Market Street, as part of the ASDA redevelopment were successfully completed.
80. Payment of a Section 106 commuted sum towards the provision of a cycle network in Buckshaw Village was made to Lancashire County Council.

**CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2015/16 ADDITIONS AND RE-PHASING**

81. The capital outturn of £3.655m was a reduction of £1.728m compared to the last reported forecast estimate of £5.383m reported to Council in April 2015.
82. Of the £1.728m variance £0.870m relates to the Market Street redevelopment scheme. Budget of £1m was set for the full scheme of works, of which £0.800m was due to be funded by Lancashire County Council. Instead of the funding being passed to Chorley

Council the work has been carried out and financed directly by Lancashire County Council. It is therefore not an under spend but a change in the assumed delivery of the project.

83. The remaining variance of £0.928m is not an underspend but due to the requirement to re-phase a number of budgets in-line with revised timescales of delivery outlined in further detail below.
84. Phases two and three of the Ranglett's Recreation Ground project delivering the play area and skate park are scheduled to commence in 2015/16. The remaining budget, funded from Section 106 contributions, of £0.455m has been re-profiled in line with the timescale for delivery.
85. Section 106 funding has been identified to deliver various schemes under the Play, open Space and Pitch strategy including play facilities on Coronation recreation ground, improvements to the pitches on Westway, play areas in Withnell and Eccleston, as well as a general provision for playing pitches in the borough. The schemes will be re-profiled into 2015/16 accordingly, with budget provision of £0.188m.
86. Planning permission has been approved to extend the community centre at Eaves Green together with landscaping work and improvements to the football pitch. This work is scheduled for completion in 2015. The remaining budget of £0.106m will be re-profiled into 2015/16 accordingly.
87. The programme of works in Astley Hall and Park is ongoing with good progress made to date; an element of the budget already agreed will be carried forward for continued use in completing the scheduled programme of works. The remaining budget of £0.102m will be carried forward into 2015/16 for works on Astley Hall; green stage in the walled garden; events car parking; woodland paths and footsteps and footpath lighting. This work will also use the budget that has already been re-profiled and the £0.218m investment budget already approved for next year.
88. The redevelopment works to Market Street have been completed, however Lancashire County Council have been unable to clarify if all the costs that Chorley are liable for have been accounted for. Therefore the remaining budget of £0.070m will be re-phased as a contingency.
89. The green play area scheme at Buttermere, financed by Section 106 receipts and a Lancashire County Council contribution with a total budget of £0.034m will be re-phased into 2015/16.
90. Works at the Big Wood Reservoir were dependent on Section 106 receipts that have not yet been received. As the work is season dependent, requiring vegetation to have died back. The works will therefore be rescheduled to Autumn 2015, and the £0.012m budget which is already within the capital programme will be re-profiled accordingly.
91. The £0.022m budget held in reserves for ICT projects and £0.007m budget for climate change grants will be re-phased for use in 2015/16.
92. The 2015/16 budget for recycling receptacles was brought forward into 2014/15 by £0.045m to cover the forecast requirement. Only £0.035m was needed so the remaining £0.010m will be transferred back for use in 2015/16.
93. Agreement has already been given at Special Council in April to carry forward budgets for Cotswold House Improvements and Leisure Centre Improvements into 2015/16 in line with

the forecast delivery of the projects. Expenditure was slightly higher than forecast in 2014/15 (£4k and £6k respectively) so it is recommended that the 2015/16 is reduced to reflect actual delivery.

94. The 2015/16 investment project to split the Bengal Street depot into two areas allowing one of the areas to be leased to Recycling Lives and the remaining area to be retained by the council as an operational depot commenced during 2014/15 with a small value expenditure of £5k. It is recommended that the 2015/16 is reduced to reflect the early commencement date on this project.
95. Small year-end variations on the Adlington Jubilee Recreation facility (£4k); Carr Brook Trim Trail (£6k -Section 106 funded); and Electoral Management System (£4k – Government Grant funded) will be carried forward into 2015/16.
96. A total value of £0.075m additional expenditure was incurred during 2014/15. The majority of this (£0.048m) was on the purchase of 5 Neighbourhood vans. The upgrade was required as the fleet was unreliable and had come to the end of their lease term. An exercise to determine the best way to finance the vehicles, for example, through leasing will be carried out during 2015/16.
97. Of the remaining additional expenditure £0.010m was for additional works required on the White Hart car park. These were required above and beyond the original scope as the area was identified as unsafe due to the location of a drain. The area has now been made safe.

#### **CAPITAL PROGRAMME FINANCING 2014/15**

98. The financing of capital expenditure in 2014/15 is summarised in the table below:

**Table 4 – Capital Financing**

<b><i>Financed by:</i></b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>%</b>
Government Grants	294	8%
External Contributions	1,496	41%
Revenue Financing	907	25%
Capital Receipts	163	4%
Borrowing	795	22%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,655</b>	<b>100%</b>

99. **Government Grants** – The grants applied were used to fund the programme of disabled adaptations and the electoral management equipment. In 2014/15 we received £0.286m of Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG). A Cabinet Office grant of £0.012m had been carried forward, of which, £0.008m was used during 2014/15.
100. **External Contributions:**
  - a. £0.018m from Registered Providers and £0.100m from the Regional Housing Pot were used to contribute to disabled adaptations.
  - b. £0.852m Section 106 contributions were used to fund affordable housing and play and recreation projects.
  - c. £0.046m contribution from Lancashire County Council was used for the Changing Places toilet facility;
  - d. £0.092m from the Regional Housing Pot towards affordable housing schemes and £0.360 towards the Cotswold House Improvements;
  - e. £0.014m contribution from Places for People towards the Clayton Green Sports Centre MUGA;

- f. £0.009m grant from Chorley Community Housing towards the play area at Ranglett's Recreation Ground;
- g. £0.005m contribution received from Adlington Parish Council towards the play facilities at Jubilee Recreation Ground.

**101. Revenue Financing:**

- a. £0.026m VAT shelter income was used to fund schemes at the Leisure Centres, Cotswold House and Thirlmere Road (affordable housing);
- b. New Homes Bonus of £0.446m was used, of this £0.100m was for asset improvement and regeneration projects and £0.346m for the work at Astley Park to support the Astley 2020 plan;
- c. £0.008m of the buildings maintenance earmarked reserve was used to fund the works at Astley Hall Farmhouse;
- d. Performance Reward Grant of £0.049m was used towards the improvement works at Cotswold House;
- e. The remaining spend of £0.011m on the acquisition and demolition of Thirlmere Road is funded from an earmarked revenue reserve;
- f. £0.185m was used to fund the purchase of new bins through the use of the Section 31 grant;
- g. £0.136m has been used towards resurfacing works on the Town Centre car parks funded from the Town Centre Reserve;
- h. Revenue budget of £0.042m has been reallocated to capital towards the delivery of the scheme at Jubilee Recreation Ground;
- i. £0.004m held in an earmarked revenue reserve for the work at Clayton Brook Village Hall was also used.

**102. Capital Receipts** – capital receipts brought forward totalled £0.325m with an additional £0.368m received in-year. Of this £0.163m was used on the following schemes:

- a. £0.040m towards the refurbishment of 98-102 Market Street;
- b. £0.005m towards the preliminary work for splitting the Bengal Street depot;
- c. £0.066m towards resurfacing the town centre car parks;
- d. £0.049m towards the work at Astley Park to support the Astley 2020 plan;
- e. £0.002m towards work at Yarrow Valley reservoir.

**103. Prudential Borrowing** – capital expenditure of £0.795m was financed from external borrowing compared to an original funding estimate of £0.834m. The reduction in the 2014/15 borrowing requirement is due to the re-profiling of schemes to 2015/16 (£0.096m) and additional borrowing for the Neighbourhood vans (£0.048m). An exercise to determine the best funding approach between borrowing and leasing for the additional vehicles will be undertaken during 2015/16. In order to best plan for the future use of the Council's own resources, long term investment for the Youth Zone site (£0.183m), Market Street redevelopment (£0.130m), car park resurfacing (£0.222m), and Cotswold House improvements (£0.213m) has been financed from borrowing which allows capital receipts to be retained to fund short term assets, which would be more costly to finance through borrowing, in future years.

**IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT**

**104.** 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		Policy and Communications	

**COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER**

105. The financial implications are detailed in the body of the report.

**COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER**

106. The Monitoring Officer has no comments.

GARY HALL  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Dave Bond/Hanne Harland	5488/5028	04/06/15	Provisional Revenue and Capital Outturn 2014-15.doc

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<b>General Fund Revenue Budget Monitoring Provisional Outturn 2014/15</b>	<b>Original Cash Budget</b>	<b>Impact of Council Restructure</b>	<b>Agreed Changes (Directorates)</b>	<b>Agreed Changes (Other)</b>	<b>Amended Cash Budget</b>	<b>Contribution to Corp. Savings (Staffing)</b>	<b>Contribution to Corp. Savings (Other)</b>	<b>Current Cash Budget</b>	<b>Provisional Outturn</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Variance</b>
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	%
Chief Executive	5,715,980	(1,063,130)	(4,440)	(52,760)	4,595,650	(80,000)		4,515,650	4,386,866	(128,784)	-2.9%
Customer & Advice Services	1,048,820	985,900	66,460	358,480	2,459,660	(30,000)		2,429,660	2,144,934	(284,726)	-11.7%
Public Protection, Streetscene & Community	6,459,780	77,230	(35,020)	(81,120)	6,420,870	(20,000)		6,400,870	6,402,369	1,499	0.0%
<b>Directorate Total</b>	<b>13,224,580</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>27,000</b>	<b>224,600</b>	<b>13,476,180</b>	<b>(130,000)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>13,346,180</b>	<b>12,934,169</b>	<b>(412,011)</b>	<b>-3.1%</b>
Budgets Excluded from Directorate Monitoring:											
Pensions Account	244,380				244,380			244,380	230,607	(13,773)	-5.6%
Pensions Deficit Recovery (Fixed Rate)	709,600				709,600			709,600	709,600	-	-
Benefit Payments	91,040				91,040			91,040	(68,621)	(159,661)	-175.4%
Market Walk	(542,000)		(27,000)	(90,040)	(659,040)			(659,040)	(659,040)	-	-
<b>Corporate Savings Targets</b>											
Management of Establishment	-			(130,000)	(130,000)	130,000		-	-	-	-
Efficiency/Other Savings	-			-	-			-	0	-	-
<b>Total Service Expenditure</b>	<b>13,727,600</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4,560</b>	<b>13,732,160</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>13,732,160</b>	<b>13,146,715</b>	<b>(585,445)</b>	<b>-4.3%</b>
<b>Non Service Expenditure</b>											
Contingency Fund	-				-			-	0	-	-
Contingency - Management of Establishment	(130,000)			130,000	-			-	0	-	-
Efficiency/Other Savings	-				-			-	0	-	-
Revenue Contribution to Capital	424,000			662,740	1,086,740			1,086,740	907,242	(179,498)	
Net Financing Transactions	357,240			(23,750)	333,490			333,490	371,082	37,592	
Parish Precepts	564,710				564,710			564,710	564,713	3	
<b>Total Non Service Expenditure/Income</b>	<b>1,215,950</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>768,990</b>	<b>1,984,940</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,984,940</b>	<b>1,843,037</b>	<b>(141,903)</b>	
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>14,943,550</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>773,550</b>	<b>15,717,100</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>15,717,100</b>	<b>14,989,752</b>	<b>(727,348)</b>	<b>-4.6%</b>
<b>Financed By</b>											
Council Tax	(6,462,660)				(6,462,660)			(6,462,660)	(6,462,669)	(9)	
Grant for freezing Council Tax 2014/15	(66,250)				(66,250)			(66,250)	(66,138)	112	
Revenue Support Grant	(2,998,550)				(2,998,550)			(2,998,550)	(2,998,546)	4	
Retained Business Rates	(2,531,460)				(2,531,460)			(2,531,460)	(2,488,211)	43,249	
Government S31 Grants (Small Business Rate Relief)	(752,580)				(752,580)			(752,580)	(646,028)	106,552	
Business Rates Retention Reserve	502,940				502,940			502,940	353,134	(149,806)	
New Homes Bonus	(2,629,750)				(2,629,750)			(2,629,750)	(2,638,654)	(8,904)	
New Burdens Grant	(16,400)				(16,400)			(16,400)	(22,017)	(5,617)	
Collection Fund (Surplus)/Deficit	(35,840)				(35,840)			(35,840)	(35,848)	(8)	
Use of Earmarked Reserves - capital financing	-			(26,190)	(26,190)			(26,190)	153,308	179,498	
Use of Earmarked Reserves - revenue expenditure	47,000			(722,520)	(675,520)			(675,520)	(675,487)	33	
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)				(24,840)	(24,840)			(24,840)	(24,840)	-	
Other Misc. Balances	-				-			-	(397)	(397)	
Budgeted Contribution to General Balances	-				-			-	-	-	
<b>Total Financing</b>	<b>(14,943,550)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(773,550)</b>	<b>(15,717,100)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(15,717,100)</b>	<b>(15,552,393)</b>	<b>164,707</b>	<b>-1.0%</b>
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(562,641)</b>	<b>(562,641)</b>	
<b>General Balances Summary Position</b>				<b>Target</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Less slippage to 2015/16</b>			<b>423,900</b>		
				<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>						
<b>General Fund Balance at 1 April 2014</b>				2,000,000	2,188,920	<b>Provisional Outturn 2014/15</b>			<b>(138,741)</b>		
Budgeted Contribution to General Balances					0						
<b>Funding set aside for additional resources in Single Front Office</b>					<b>(40,000)</b>						
<b>Provisional (Over)/Under Spend</b>					<b>138,741</b>						
<b>Forecast General Fund Balance at 31 March 2015</b>				<b>2,000,000</b>	<b>2,287,661</b>						

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**Slippage Requests to 2015/16**

Directorate/Service	Name	Details of Request	Amount £
<b>Chief Executive</b>			
Chief Executives Office	Susan Halton	Reward & recognition budget to fund initiatives in 2015/16	23,670
Governance	Carol Russell	Core Funding - balance of Councillor Community Grants funding to be carried forward for use in 2015/16	4,900
Governance	Chris Moister	Commitment to pay a contribution toward repair and maintenance work undertaken by St Mary's Church.	7,000
Human Resources	Jane McDonnell	Training & Development budget required to fund the committed corporate and personal safety training in 2015/16.	13,100
Policy & Performance	R.Huddleston/S.James	Core Funding (Commissioned Services) - balance of funding to be carried forward for use in 2015/16	18,660
Policy & Performance	R.Huddleston/S.James	Temporary staffing requirements in 2015/16 to support increasing the visitor economy, campaigns & corporate events sponsorship	23,000
Economic Development	Cath Burns	Markets Fixtures Fittings - additional CCTV cameras.	2,070
Shared Financial Services	S Guinness	Consultancy, staff development & professional training.	15,000
<b>Customer &amp; Advice Services</b>			
Customer & ICT Services	Asim Khan	Staffing savings and DWP grant in 14/15 to fund temporary Single Front Office staffing requirements in 2015/16	81,000
Customer & ICT Services	Asim Khan	Staffing savings in 14/15 to fund ICT Consultancy requirements in 2015/16	9,000
Customer & ICT Services	Asim Khan	ICT contract savings in 14/15 to fund additional tablet devices and scanners, and desktop updates.	41,000
Customer & ICT Services	Asim Khan	Staffing savings in 14/15 to fund ICT Software upgrade/renewal requirements in 2015/16	156,000
Customer & ICT Services	Asim Khan	Uniforms	1,000
Housing	Zoe Whiteside	For Abris implementation of the rent recovery module/training, and upgrades to the choice based lettings system.	10,000
<b>Public Protection, Streetscene &amp; Community</b>			
Streetscene & Leisure Contracts	Carol Gore	Surplus from Tatton Community Centre coming in-house to be used for Clayton Brook Village Hall extension	9,000
Health, Environment & Neighbourhoods	Simon Clark	Additional Schools income in 14/15 to fund an additional staffing resource in 15/16 to help promote the schools coaching programme	9,500
<b>Total</b>			<b>423,900</b>

**Transfers to Specific Reserves**

Directorate/Service	Name	Details of Request	Amount £
Market Walk	Rebecca Huddleston	Market Walk - balance of feasibility/design budget for Market Walk Extension to reserve for use in 2015/16	101,780
Market Walk	Gary Hall	Transfer of revenue - split 80:20 between the Change Management Reserve and Market Walk Equalisation Account.	175,643
<b>Total</b>			<b>277,423</b>



## Budget Growth Projects 2014/15

Project	Investment 2013/14	Recurring investment	New Investment 14/15	Total Investment 2014/15	Spend 2014/15	Transfer to Reserves	Key Outcomes
<b>Involving residents in their local area and equality of access for all</b>							
Deliver agreed neighbourhood priorities	99,260		50,000	149,260	95,906	53,354	This project delivers priorities established through the neighbourhood group meetings and agreed by Executive Cabinet. The budget investment provides additional funding to support works over and above business as usual. Approved budget carried forward of £54,500 has been transferred to this project.
Chorley in Bloom			10,000	10,000	10,000	0	In October 2013, Chorley was awarded a Gold Medal Award in the best Small City Category and for the first time was nominated to represent the North West finalists in the national In Bloom finals. A capital budget of £15,858 was raised for the project, £10,000 funding from Council and £5858 funding through sponsorship from local business. Actual expenditure as at project close, 5th August 2014, is £15,230, leaving a balance of £628. Judging took place on 6th August 2014, the National Judges advising that the improvements in Chorley for 2014 are the best they have ever seen, commenting on the excellent Community involvement. This reflects how the project has united partners in working together resulting in improved working with Schools, Friends Groups, Volunteers, Chamber of Commerce and Traders Alliance amongst many others. The project ran well with planned targets of improvement being met on time and within budget. The town centre was highlighted by the judges as an area of concern with the lack of quality planting, although the project has received considerable positive feedback from residents and visitors in Chorley.
Connecting Communities through food			12,000	12,000	1,740	10,260	The aim of this project was to review activity to alleviate social isolation following the findings from the successful 6 month meals on wheels pilot launched in November 2013. The aim of this project is to put in place interventions to support a reduction in the level of social isolation across the borough with initiatives such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop options and agree a way forward</li> <li>• Implement the way forward which may include extension and/or expansion of the current meals on wheels scheme (see project below)</li> <li>• Investigate alternative solutions such as casserole and luncheon clubs, community transport and community kitchens</li> <li>• Develop a number of initiatives such as Wheels 2 meals</li> <li>• Implement initiatives and monitor success.</li> </ul> £2,000 has been committed for food based initiatives in the Western Parishes
Meals on wheels service			30,000	30,000	5,904	0	After a successful pilot the Meals on Wheels service has now been launched across the whole of Chorley. We now have 86 new customers have signed up for the service, with most customers committing to 3 meals a week. Weekly numbers are steadily growing and currently stand at 326 meals per week being administered. The budget spend is ongoing with the contractor raising an invoice every 4 weeks. The development of an evening service was put on hold until the lunch time meals increased. Further development has included increasing the subsidy from 3 to 5 meals per week, and an introductory offer of ½ price meals for the first two weeks.
Expand the food bank			15,000	15,000	15,000	0	The focus of this project was to ensure the availability of short term food provision for individuals and families from across the borough in crisis situations. A budget of £15,000 was allocated to The Living Waters Storehouse who provide the main food bank facility in Chorley. This funding was provided to enable them to improve their existing facility and meet increasing local demand. 1143 food parcels were administered between December 2013 and September 2014. However it should be noted that overall performance for this project is not measured through the number of food parcels administered, as the overall aim of the project is to decrease the number of referrals into the Food Bank through preventive measures and this can be either into the council's employability and housing officers or external agencies. Numbers of referrals into the employability officer have been steadily increasing with just 5 referrals being made in April 2014 increasing to 20 referrals in August 2014. Review meetings are ongoing with all partners to improve the number of referrals and engagement with support services.
Community development and volunteering	28,230	70,000		98,230	72,701	25,529	Working with the social enterprise SPICE. 75 local government organisations/community groups using time credits involving 750 volunteers.
Support to the VCFS Network		15,000		15,000	15,000	0	This investment is paid to support the infrastructure of the VCFS network which supports the sector.

## Budget Growth Projects 2014/15

Project	Investment 2013/14	Recurring investment	New Investment 14/15	Total Investment 2014/15	Spend 2014/15	Transfer to Reserves	Key Outcomes
<b>A strong local economy</b>							
Inward Investment Delivery	253,600		100,000	353,600	109,092	244,508	This includes Market Street Shops refurbishment, inward investment events and Choose Chorley Grant funding. So far comprehensive visual improvements to Market Street have been completed with 27 shops taking part in the scheme. Whilst this work was underway several additional premises took the opportunity to improve without our help i.e. Argos, Outlet, Yorkshire Bank, DW Sports, Swinton Ins. 2 Choose Chorley grants have been awarded leveraging in £135,500 from the private sector and improving 870 sq.ft employment floor space with the potential to create an additional 40 jobs.
Support the expansion of local businesses	46,620		45,000	91,620	12,518	79,102	As part of the business support service for existing businesses a reward scheme was launched in April 2013 to support existing businesses in their expansion and growth plans. This scheme is called the Chorley Business Investment for Growth grant (Chorley BIG) and aims to support businesses that are creating or safeguarding jobs with capital investments or works. The scheme is delivered through a hybrid grant model with businesses undertaking to re-pay into the community for the funding they have received. 3 Chorley Business Investment for Growth grant applications have been approved with 21 jobs forecasted.
Business start-up scheme			66,500	66,500	16,818	49,682	The Starting Business Grant was introduced in September 2012 and has supported over 100 businesses to date. This project reviews the scheme in order to deliver a more sustainable support mechanism for business start-ups through moving away from a straight, non-repayable grant into a hybrid grant/loan scheme and provide a cost-effective means of continuing to financially support new start-up businesses in the borough. After reviewing the scheme the decision has been taken to no longer fund the loans through the council but to provide loans through the Credit Union. This provides a more cost effective means and provides savings for the council. So far 10 loans have been authorised by the Credit Union at a total cost of £910. Action - Discussions have taken place with Cath around carrying forward the budget next year to fund grant.
Town Centre and Steeley Lane pilot action plans			100,000	100,000	16,350	83,650	This is part of a two year programme of local area projects within the town centre and Steeley Lane areas of Chorley. Spend has been delayed, however to date 80k has been identified for CCTV, new pavements and public realm which are to be implemented this financial year.
Town Centre campaign			20,000	20,000	20,000	0	The focus of the campaign has been around communicating the change in the town centre, putting on more activities to give people more reason to visit, drawing the Market Walk brand into the offer and developing the appeal to coach parties. A full review of this work setting out what has been delivered and what outcomes have been achieved has been carried out.
Promoting the council's assets campaign							The overall aim of this campaign is to increase the number of people coming to visit and/or using the council's assets while simultaneously increasing the income generated by those assets. For example more events have been arranged at Astley such as Little Boo and Astley Illuminated which has resulted in over 6,000 more visitors than the previous year. An Astley Hall, Coach House and Park Facebook page has been created and the council has taken over the Astley Hall trip advisor pages. This has resulted in a 4.5 out of 5 rating; a 96 per cent thumbs, a certificate of excellence for 2014 and Astley Hall is now ranked number one out of 24 things to do in Chorley. Also a new brand identity has been created for the Lancastrian to appeal to a wider audience and make the venue stand out and there has been an increase in bookings and income in the last year. Again a full review of this campaign setting out what has been delivered and what outcomes have been achieved has been carried out.
Town Centre master plan			35,000	35,000	0	35,000	The budget was also earmarked for the creation of a detailed master plan for Fleet St investment opportunity. This has now been prepared in house and details usage for residential and extra care. The savings generated through using in house resources will be used for initial costs of the proposed extra care scheme at Fleet Street and earmarked for other town centre masterplanning.
Joint Employment Initiative with Runshaw College	29,370			29,370	22,500	6,870	Two year programme assisting employers through grant assistance to help overcome some of the obstacles in employing an Apprentice i.e. IT Equipment and office resources
<b>Clean, safe and healthy communities</b>							

## Budget Growth Projects 2014/15

Project	Investment 2013/14	Recurring investment	New Investment 14/15	Total Investment 2014/15	Spend 2014/15	Transfer to Reserves	Key Outcomes
Free Swimming			8,000	8,000	7,500	0	This project offers free swimming to 16 year olds and under during the summer school holiday period (Monday to Friday). There were 3,579 free swimming attendances during summer 2014. That's a 5% increase on last year's figures. Of these 1403 were children who on average attended the All Season Pool 2.2 times and the Brinscall Pool 4.5 times. The average age of the children participating where between 10 and 12 years old.
16/17 young person's drop in centre			21,000	21,000	19,000	2,000	The drop-in service is for 16/17 year olds only and operates two days a week on Tuesdays and Fridays from Lord Street in Chorley. It is the gateway (single point of access) for referrals of 16/17 year olds from the Chorley area that are at risk of becoming homeless. The drop in also provides mediation and support to 16/17 year olds at risk of homelessness. The service has been delivering outcomes since January 2012 and was developed following a one-off payment of £30k from the Department for Communities and Local Government. Funding of £21,000 has been allocated for the cost of the service to be delivered until March 2015. The funding will be used to pay for the two part time mediation/support workers, the hiring of the venue, equipment and some materials.
Street Furniture	6,340		35,000	41,340	37,390	3,950	In 2011 a replacement litter bin programme was implemented and investment over the last three years has totalled £130k to primarily invest in new combined litter bins. However the project has now been expanded to include cycle racks, further green litter bins and picnic benches in Astley Park as well as the purchase of further black litter bins with an investment of £35k for 2014/15. The following items have been purchased with delivery due towards the end of October 2014. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eight cycle racks that will be installed at Tatton Rec, Coronation Rec, Harpers Rec, King Georges (double near changing rooms), Astley Park near walled garden and bowling hut, Jubilee Rec and Rangletts.</li> <li>• Twenty green litter bins for Astley Park.</li> <li>• Fifteen green picnic benches for Astley Park</li> <li>• One hundred black litter bins – to replace town centre car park bins, additional bins for the top end of Market Street when work completed and replacement of other old bins throughout the borough.</li> </ul> <p>Installation of the items will then be scheduled into Streetscene work taking into consideration that installation in development areas will take place after the work has been completed. Because of this some installations will not be completed until 2015.</p> <p>The project enhances our areas and through awareness campaigns encourages people to use the bins helping to keep our areas litter free and meet our corporate priorities.</p>
Provide a mediation service for ASB case resolution (Mediation service for anti social behaviour disputes)			7,000	7,000	0	7,000	The aim of the project is to procure an external mediation service which can be used by the Intervention and Prevention Officers together with partner agencies to resolve antisocial behaviour and neighbour disputes where it is deemed appropriate.
Play and Open Play Strategy	100,000	100,000	50,000	250,000	13,070	10,930	The Play, Open Space and Playing Pitch Strategy builds upon the Opens Spaces Study undertaken in 2011-12 and covers three key areas, open spaces, playing pitches and play areas. Following approval at Executive Cabinet in August 2014 the strategy and associated action plan will be implemented from 2014-19, year 1 of the strategy will therefore now commence 2014/15. The budget has been transferred to the Capital Budget to best reflect project delivery.
British Cycling tour of Lancashire			20,000	20,000	18,562	0	This project supports the development and delivery of a cycling and sporting programme of activities and events in Chorley in partnership with British Cycling. Many actions have been completed including a cycling festival held in March and the launch of Sky Ride Local which has developed routes for community rides that impact on all neighbourhood areas. The project culminates with the promotion and delivery of a weekend long sporting event planned in April 2015; this event will help raise the profile of Chorley not just within the sporting community but also on a wider scale in terms of economic development and inward investment.
<b>An ambitious Council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area</b>							

## Budget Growth Projects 2014/15

Project	Investment 2013/14	Recurring investment	New Investment 14/15	Total Investment 2014/15	Spend 2014/15	Transfer to Reserves	Key Outcomes
Chorley Council Energy advice switching service			15,000	15,000	0	15,000	The Energy Switching Support contractor has provided services at Civic Offices on a weekly basis since Monday 2nd June and the service has been promoted to partner agencies including Help Direct, Age UK and Parish Councils.
Develop the offer at Chorley's Credit Union	9,000	50,000		59,000	50,000	9,000	This is a three year recurring budget from 2013/14 and contributes to rent and staffing costs of the Credit Union in the Town Centre
Private Property Improvement Scheme	48,030			48,030	9,800	38,230	This budget is being used to fund a new Empty Homes Officer post within HEN for a period of 18 months. Around 60 properties have been identified within the borough that have fallen into disrepair, the officer will work closely with owners to improve the appearance of the properties and bring them back into use. During the 18 months the work will be monitored assessing impact and reviewing how we have engaged with owners to improve properties and bring them back into use.
Employee health scheme			20,000	20,000	20,000	0	The Health Care Cash plan scheme proved to be very successful in its first year and this project sees the scheme extended for a further 12 months. The investment enables the council to pay a fixed contribution per employee, allowing employees to claim back costs of health related treatments. Claims for the period 1st January to date are at £15,192 with 392 claims being made. This is up from the same period last year when £14,123 was paid with 360 claims made, reflecting that the scheme is well used by staff.
	<b>620,450</b>	<b>235,000</b>	<b>659,500</b>	<b>1,514,950</b>	<b>588,851</b>	<b>674,065</b>	

**Analysis of Reserves and Provisions 2014/15**

Reserve or Provision	Purpose	Opening Balance 01/04/14 £	Other Transfers 2014/15 £	Use in 2014/15 £	Closing Balance 31/03/15 £	Notes
<b>RESERVES</b>						
<b>General Fund Balance</b>						
		<b>2,188,920</b>	<b>98,740</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,287,660</b>	(1)
Change Management Reserve	Unused balance from 2012/13	6,600	(6,600)		0	
Change Management Reserve	From Market Walk net income 2013/14	260,950	147,110	(25,290)	382,770	
VAT Shelter Income	Capital/revenue financing	121,340		(29,830)	91,510	
Provision for Pension Liabilities	Payment to Lancashire Pension Fund	1,750,000			1,750,000	
Non-Recurring Expenditure	Revenue resources for capital financing 2015/16	0	179,500		179,500	
Market Walk	Income Equalisation Reserve	65,240	85,130		150,370	
Market Walk	Asset Management	0	50,000		50,000	
Market Walk	Extension feasibility and planning	0	101,780		101,780	
S31 Grant	Empty property/small business rate relief	331,770		(185,100)	146,670	
Business Rates Retention	Surplus on levy payment	30,470	353,130		383,600	
<b>Non-Directorate Reserves</b>		<b>2,566,370</b>	<b>910,050</b>	<b>(240,220)</b>	<b>3,236,200</b>	
<b>Chief Executive</b>						
	Slippage from 2013/14	24,000		(24,000)	0	
	Slippage from 2014/15	0	23,670		23,670	(2)
<b>Chief Executive's Office</b>						
		24,000	23,670	(24,000)	23,670	
	Slippage from 2013/14	9,000		(9,000)	0	
	Slippage from 2014/15	0	41,660		41,660	(2)
	PRG - capital financing	48,860		(48,860)	0	
	PRG - uncommitted	29,350			29,350	
	Public Service Reform funding	0	36,430		36,430	
	2013/14 New Investment Projects	9,000			9,000	(3)
	2014/15 New Investment Projects	0	10,260		10,260	(3)
<b>Policy &amp; Performance</b>						
		96,210	88,350	(57,860)	126,700	
	Town Centre Grants	92,900	100,000	(104,650)	88,250	
	Town Centre Reserve (Capital)	135,620		(135,620)	0	
	Town Centre Reserve (Revenue)	22,680		0	22,680	
	2013/14 New Investment Projects	329,590	346,500	(177,290)	498,800	(3)
	Slippage from 2014/15	0	2,070		2,070	(2)
<b>Economic Development</b>						
		580,790	448,570	(417,560)	611,800	
	Legal Case Mgt System	1,520			1,520	
	Town Hall Roof Safety Boards	16,000	(16,000)		0	
	Union Street Roof Safety Boards	10,000	(10,000)		0	
	Capital financing	73,760		(4,380)	69,380	
	2013/14 New Investment Projects	48,030		(9,800)	38,230	(3)
	Slippage from 2013/14	26,140		(26,140)	0	
	New Burdens Funding	0	32,500		32,500	
	Slippage from 2014/15	0	11,900		11,900	(2)
	Buildings Fund	176,680	114,070	(66,230)	224,520	
	Elections	85,000		(27,000)	58,000	
<b>Governance</b>						
		437,130	132,470	(133,550)	436,050	
	Slippage from 2013/14	5,000		(5,000)	0	
	Slippage from 2014/15	0	15,000		15,000	(2)
<b>Shared Financial Services</b>						
		5,000	15,000	(5,000)	15,000	
	Slippage from 2013/14	13,640		(13,640)	0	
	Slippage from 2014/15	0	13,100		13,100	(2)
	HR Reserve for maternity cover	20,000		0	20,000	
	Impact of 2014/15 Pay Policy	0	10,000	0	10,000	
	Additional external NEETs (Econ Dev)	44,330		(5,330)	39,000	
<b>Human Resources &amp; OD</b>						
		77,970	23,100	(18,970)	82,100	
<b>Chief Executive</b>						
		1,221,100	731,160	(656,940)	1,295,320	
<b>Customer &amp; Advice Services</b>						
	Slippage from 2013/14	10,610		(10,610)	0	
	Slippage from 2014/15	0	10,000		10,000	(2)
	Government Grants (Housing)	542,820	7,050	(335,500)	214,370	
	Handyperson Scheme	45,870		(2,000)	43,870	
	Employability Officer Funding	0	30,000		30,000	
	2014/15 Investments	0	17,000		17,000	(3)
	Capital financing	7,920	3,170	(11,090)	0	
<b>Housing</b>						
		607,220	67,220	(359,200)	315,240	
	ICT Projects	211,390	45,830	(110,340)	146,880	
	ICT Reserve from 2013/14 underspends	25,000	(25,000)	0	0	
	Slippage from 2013/14	116,270	(20,830)	(68,900)	26,540	
	Slippage from 2014/15	0	288,000		288,000	(2)
	Single Front Office	0	40,000		40,000	
	Council Tax Summons/Liability Order Bad Debts	0	116,000		116,000	
	Capital financing	8,450		0	8,450	
<b>ICT Services</b>						
		361,110	444,000	(179,240)	625,870	
<b>Customer &amp; Advice Services</b>						
		968,330	511,220	(538,440)	941,110	

**Analysis of Reserves and Provisions 2014/15**

Reserve or Provision	Purpose	Opening Balance 01/04/14 £	Other Transfers 2014/15 £	Use in 2014/15 £	Closing Balance 31/03/15 £	Notes
<b>Public Protection, Streetscene &amp; Community</b>						
	Environmental clean-ups/grot spots.	56,500		(56,500)	0	
	Buckshaw Youth Development Grants	0	15,310	(13,940)	1,370	
	Neighbourhood Working (pump priming)	71,270		0	71,270	
	2013/14 New Investment Projects	72,990		(72,990)	0	
	Slippage from 2013/14	7,600		(7,600)	0	
	2014/15 New Investment Projects	0	85,880		85,880	(3)
	Disability Shortbreaks Funding	0	10,580		10,580	
	Slippage from 2014/15	0	18,500		18,500	(2)
	S106 Contribution re: Carr Brook Trim Trail	0	15,000		15,000	
	<b>Health, Environment &amp; Neighbourhoods</b>	<b>208,360</b>	<b>145,270</b>	<b>(151,030)</b>	<b>202,600</b>	
	Play area improvements - 2013/14 Investment	100,000		(100,000)	0	
	2013/14 New Investment Projects	6,340		(6,340)	0	
	2014/15 New Investment Projects	0	14,880		14,880	(3)
	Slippage from 2013/14	45,010		(45,010)	0	
	North West in Bloom	0	40,000		40,000	
	Redrow Funding for Gas Cowsls at Gillibrands	0	16,830		16,830	
	Astley Hall Works of Art	5,840	40		5,880	
	Allotment Development	10,830		(10,830)	0	
	Maintenance of Grounds	62,200	10,000		72,200	
	<b>Streetscene &amp; Leisure Contracts</b>	<b>230,220</b>	<b>81,750</b>	<b>(162,180)</b>	<b>149,790</b>	
	Planning Appeal Costs	47,830		(8,700)	39,130	
	Government Grants (Personal Searches)	34,350		(34,350)	0	
	Local Development Framework	0			0	
	<b>Planning</b>	<b>82,180</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(43,050)</b>	<b>39,130</b>	
	<b>Public Protection, Streetscene &amp; Community</b>	<b>520,760</b>	<b>227,020</b>	<b>(356,260)</b>	<b>391,520</b>	
	<b>Directorate Reserves</b>	<b>2,710,190</b>	<b>1,469,400</b>	<b>(1,551,640)</b>	<b>2,627,950</b>	
	<b>Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>5,276,560</b>	<b>2,379,450</b>	<b>(1,791,860)</b>	<b>5,864,150</b>	
	<b>Total Reserves - General and Earmarked</b>	<b>7,465,480</b>	<b>2,478,190</b>	<b>(1,791,860)</b>	<b>8,151,810</b>	
<b>Provisions</b>						
Insurance Provision	Potential MMI clawback	20,780	7,010	(8,250)	19,540	
Other Provisions	Asda re: land at Bolton Street	10,000		0	10,000	
	<b>Total Provisions</b>	<b>30,780</b>	<b>7,010</b>	<b>(8,250)</b>	<b>29,540</b>	

**Notes:**

- (1) Closing General Fund Balance as at 31 March 2015.
- (2) Slippage from 2014/15 total £423,900. Please see Appendix 2 for itemised list.
- (3) New Investment Projects total £674,060 and listed in Appendix 3.



**Business Rates Retention 2014/158 - comparison of provisional outturn to budget and forecast outturn**

Line	Description	Budget 2014/15 £	Forecast Outturn £	Provisional Outturn £	Variance from Budget £	Comments
1.	Chorley Council share of net rates income (before Tariff and Levy deductions)	10,796,680	10,880,900	10,996,540	199,860	Net rates income greater than estimated; and contributions to bad debts and appeals provisions lower than estimated.
2.	Actual transfer to General Fund	10,796,680	10,796,680	10,796,679	(1)	
	<b>Chorley share of (Surplus)/Deficit</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(84,220)</b>	<b>(199,861)</b>	<b>(199,861)</b>	
	<b><u>Postings to General Fund 2014/15</u></b>					
3.	Chorley retained rates from above	10,796,680	10,796,680	10,796,679	(1)	
4.	Less Tariff to Central Government	(7,645,640)	(7,645,640)	(7,645,636)	4	
5.	Sub Total	3,151,040	3,151,040	3,151,043	3	
6.	Less levy payment to Central Government	(619,580)	(626,350)	(662,832)	(43,252)	Levy increases because of increased net rates compared to budget.
7.	Add S31 Grant for SBRR/Autumn Statement reliefs	752,580	630,750	646,028	(106,552)	Grant entitlement reduced because of lower than estimated relevant reliefs.
8.	Budgeted share of deficit from 2013/14	(66,050)	(66,050)	(66,046)	4	
9.	<b>Total BRR-related resources 2014/15</b>	<b>3,217,990</b>	<b>3,089,390</b>	<b>3,068,193</b>	<b>(149,797)</b>	
10.	Transfer to Business Rates Retention Reserve	(502,940)	(374,340)	(353,134)	149,806	Transfer to BRR Reserve reduced to offset increase in levy and reduction in S31 Grants.
11.	<b>Resources after transfer to BRR Reserve</b>	<b>2,715,050</b>	<b>2,715,050</b>	<b>2,715,059</b>	<b>9</b>	

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**Capital Programme 2014/15 - 2017/18**

	2014/15 Q3 Forecast	2014/15 Outturn	2014/15 Variance	2015/16 Q3 Forecast	2015/16 Current Forecast	2015/16 Variance	2016/17 Q3 Forecast	2016/17 Current Forecast	2016/17 Variance	2017/18 Q3 Forecast	2017/18 Current Forecast	2017/18 Variance	2014/15 to 2017/18 Current Forecast	2014/15 to 2017/18 Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Regeneration Programme</b>														
Market Street Redevelopment	1,000	130	(870)	0	70	70	0	0	0	0	0	0	200	(800)
Other Regeneration Projects	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Car Park Resurfacing	411	424	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	424	13
Market Street Refurbishment (98-102)	55	68	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	68	13
Asset Improvement Programme	115	126	11	196	196	0	200	200	0	200	200	0	722	11
Bengal Street Grant	0	0	0	40	40	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	40	0
Chorley Youth Zone	182	182	0	118	118	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	300	0
Chorley East Health Centre	0	0	0	1,759	1,759	0	4,988	3,518	(1,470)	1,759	1,759	0	7,036	(1,470)
HR Management System	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chorley Market Gazebos	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Electoral Registration	12	8	(4)	0	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	(0)
<b>Affordable Housing Projects</b>														
St George's Street	272	272	(0)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	272	(0)
Halliwel Street	77	77	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	77	0
Beaconsfield Terrace	27	28	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	28	1
Chapel Lane	9	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0
Housing Renewal - Acquisition of 2 Thirlmere Road	100	97	(3)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	97	(3)
Disabled Facilities Grant	405	405	(0)	420	420	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	825	(0)
Cotswold House Improvements	678	684	6	31	25	(6)	0	0	0	0	0	0	709	0
Bengal Street Depot Accommodation	0	0	0	75	75	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	75	0
Home Energy Repair Grants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Climate Change Pot	7	0	(7)	0	7	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0
IT projects	22	0	(22)	0	22	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	22	0
Unified Intelligent Desktop	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Astley Hall & Park Development - New Investment	505	395	(110)	574	676	102	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,072	(8)
Adlington Play Facilities (s106)	215	211	(4)	0	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	215	0
Big Wood Reservoir	12	0	(12)	0	12	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	0
Clayton Brook Village Hall Extension	3	4	1	127	127	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	131	1
Eaves Green Play Development (s106)	180	74	(106)	0	106	106	0	0	0	0	0	0	180	(0)
Leisure Centres Improvements	17	21	4	275	271	(4)	75	75	0	75	75	0	442	0
Play Areas - 2013/14 Investment (Years 2 and 3)	0	0	0	200	200	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	200	0
Play Area and Playing Pitch S106	188	0	(188)	0	188	188	0	0	0	0	0	0	188	0
Play & Recreation Fund (s106) [BUTTERMERE]	34	0	(34)	0	34	34	0	0	0	0	0	0	34	0
Rangleys Recreation Ground (s106)	635	180	(455)	0	455	455	0	0	0	0	0	0	635	(0)
Recycling receptacles (bin replacement)	195	185	(10)	75	85	10	115	115	0	115	115	0	500	(0)
Buckshaw Village Cycle Network (s106)	11	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	0
Buckshaw Village Rail Station (s106)	0	0	0	726	726	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	726	0
Eaves Green Link Road - contbn to LCC - (s106)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Highway Improvements Pilling Lane Area (s106)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Puffin Crossing Collingwood Letchworth (s106)	0	0	0	48	48	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	48	0
Yarrow Valley Country Park Reservoir Work	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Croston Flood Prevention Scheme	0	0	0	1,100	1,100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,100	0
Delivery of CCTV provision	0	0	0	84	84	0	0	83	83	83	83	0	250	83
People & Places Vehicles (Neighbourhood Vans)	0	48	48	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	48	48
Carr Brook Trim Trail	15	9	(6)	20	26	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	35	(0)
Union Street Play Area (S106)	0	0	0	10	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	0
Coronation Recreation Ground (s106)	0	0	0	12	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	0
<b>New Investment</b>														
Buckshaw Community Centre	0	0	0	600	600	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	600	0
Recycling Lives - Depot split	0	5	5	120	115	(5)	0	0	0	0	0	0	120	0
Yarrow Valley Car Park	0	0	0	225	225	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	225	0
Deliver Improvement to Market Street	0	0	0	1,000	1,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,000	0
Contribution to Youth Zone	0	0	0	1,000	1,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,000	0
Recreational Strategy	0	0	0	170	170	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	170	0
Land Assembly	0	0	0	250	250	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	250	0
<b>Total Capital Programme</b>	<b>5,383</b>	<b>3,655</b>	<b>(1,728)</b>	<b>9,255</b>	<b>10,258</b>	<b>1,003</b>	<b>5,378</b>	<b>3,991</b>	<b>(1,387)</b>	<b>2,232</b>	<b>2,232</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20,135</b>	<b>(2,112)</b>

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Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Public Protection, Streetscene and Community (Introduced by the Executive Member for Resources)	Executive Cabinet	25 June 2015

## CUERDEN VALLEY COUNTRY PARK VISITORS CENTRE

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To consider providing £65,000 financial support to Cuerden Valley Country Park towards their new visitor centre.

### RECOMMENDATION(S)

- Executive Cabinet agree to provide a grant of £65,000 to Cuerden Valley Country Park towards their visitor centre.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

- The report recommends a grant of £65,000 to Cuerden Valley Country Park to deliver a visitor centre. The centre will help with their viability and safeguard the park's future. The scheme addresses an action in the Play, Open Space and Playing Pitch Strategy.

<b>Confidential report</b> Please bold as appropriate	Yes	<b>No</b>
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<b>Key Decision?</b> Please bold as appropriate	Yes	<b>No</b>
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### REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

#### (If the recommendations are accepted)

- To support Cuerden Valley Country Park deliver a visitor centre, support their sustainability and safeguard the park.

### ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- Not to provide any financial support. This would put added financial pressure on the Trust; something we are looking to alleviate.

### CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all	✓	A strong local economy	
Clean, safe and healthy communities	✓	An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	

**BACKGROUND**

7. Cuerden Valley Park is a 650acre country park that is owned and managed by Cuerden Valley Park Trust (CVPT), a Registered Charity, with the objective of “providing for the education and recreation for the public”. It is funded by the income from an endowment and fundraising by the Trust and its “Friends” group of supporters. The Trust’s office is currently housed within The Barn, the Lancashire Wildlife Trust’s headquarters building, which also provides limited facilities for visitors to the Park. The constraints imposed by the shared use of the Barn severely restrict the Trust’s ability to either manage efficiently or provide an effective service to the public.
8. The Trustees believe that a country park of the size and nature of Cuerden Valley merits the provision of a dedicated Visitor Centre and that such a facility, under the full control of the Trust, would:
  - Enable Trust staff to operate more efficiently and effectively
  - Provide improved facilities for visitors to the Park
  - Enable the Trust to properly manage its public image
  - Enable a more extensive environmental education programme
  - Provide a focal point for volunteer recruitment and involvement
  - Attract more visitors and encourage repeat visits
  - Provide improved fundraising opportunities
9. From recent experience of operating a limited Tea Shop facility within the existing Barn on a Sunday it is envisaged that incorporating a café within a Visitor Centre would enhance the visitor experience for the public and provide a positive cash flow to the Trust.
10. The Business Plan shows that a new centre would lead to savings of £5,600 pa in running costs over our current rental fee and £44,000 surplus from activities within the Centre and Café that will go towards the running costs of the Park.
11. The proposed visitor centre will be 236 sq metres in area and essentially single storey. It will accommodate:
  - Trust office
  - Reception/information area
  - Classroom/function room
  - Public toilets
  - Café
  - Display facilities
12. It is intended that the building will be an environmentally friendly and sustainable building in keeping with the Park’s ethos, surroundings and environmental objectives. The building construction proposed involves eco-friendly methods and materials, consisting mainly of straw bales with a shingle roof, utilising timber from the park as part of the construction and with foundations incorporating recycled materials.
13. Community involvement in the construction process will be encouraged. The Trust will look to work with current park volunteers and visiting volunteers with appropriate skills or undergoing training. Because of the valuable experience to be gained in using the eco-friendly materials and innovative building techniques, it is intended that training opportunities will be offered throughout the project.
14. The Trust are looking to register the Visitor Centre for the Living Building Challenge and become the first building in the UK to achieve this status. The Living Building Challenge is an international sustainable building certification system that promotes the most advanced measurement of sustainability in the built environment.

15. Although the site lies within the Greenbelt the Trust gained planning permission under the exemption for essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation in November 2014. A number of conditions were imposed on the Trust including agreeing exterior colour schemes and materials with the council and widening Berkeley Drive in places.
16. The building will cost £415,932; made up as follows:

<b>Preliminaries &amp; fees</b>	£23,112
Construction costs (materials)	£198,712
Fitting Out	£22,656
Training (Straw Works)	£14,000
Other site costs	£83,250
Marketing Costs (see below)	£9,060
Contingency	£10,890
Total (Net of vat)	£361,680
Non Recoverable VAT (75% assumed)	£54,252
<b>Total</b>	<b>£415,932</b>

17. This will be funded via:

Greenbank Trust	Contract signed	£50,000
Lancs Environmental Trust	Contract signed	£30,000
Veolia Trust	Contract signed	£100,000
Bernard Sunley	Offer received	£30,000
Awards for All	Application made	£7,500
Chorley Borough Council	Application made	£65,000
South Ribble Borough Council	Awaiting reply	£20,000
Public Donations	Received (20 <sup>th</sup> May)	£10,700
Cuerden Valley Park Trust		£102,732
<b>Total</b>		<b>£415,932</b>

Members will note that a smaller amount has been requested of South Ribble Borough Council. The different amounts reflect the area of the park in each borough.

18. The Friends of Cuerden Valley Park have also donated £18,538 to provide the 10% contributions to the landfill tax operators in order to release their funds.
19. If the outstanding applications are not approved then CVPT will provide the funding to finish the project from its endowment. This will however reduce future income received from the endowment that goes towards park management.
20. It is well documented that the Trust's environment is reducing and, if other sources of income are not delivered, there is a risk that the Trust would be forced to dissolve and close the Park. This is recognised in the Council's Play, Open Space and Playing Pitch Strategy and there is an action to work with the Trust to address their sustainability. This funding will make a significant contribution.
21. The Executive Member for Communities, Cllr Bev Murray, has been consulted and is in agreement with the recommendation.

**IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT**

22. 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		Policy and Communications	

**COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER**

23. Member approved £170,000 of capital funding to support external projects that progressed the Play, Open Space and Playing Pitch Strategy. The £65,000 will come from this budget.

**COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER**

24. Nothing to add to the report.

JAMIE CARSON  
 DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROTECTION, STREETSCENE & COMMUNITY





Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Customer and Advice Services (Introduced by the Executive Member for Resources)	Executive Cabinet	25 June 2015

## **SINGLE FRONT OFFICE POLICIES REVIEW**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To gain approval for the following revised and updated policies:
  - a. Discretionary Housing Payments Policy
  - b. Council Tax Discretionary Hardship Policy
  - c. Sanction and Prosecution Policy
  - d. Debt Management Policy
2. To summarise the main principles, funding arrangements and notable changes affecting the policies.

### **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

3. Members are recommended to:
  - a. Approve consultation on the policies by other precepting authorities, interested parties and the wider community.
  - b. Approve the adoption of the policies under delegated powers by the Executive Member for Resources, following a successful consultation outcome.
  - c. Delegate authority to the council's Chief Financial Officer/Executive Member for Resources to approve changes to the policies which are within the approved budget.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT**

4. As part of the implementation of the single front office, a review of policies within the service has been carried out to ensure that they are up-to-date and consistent with both the aims of the service and the council's corporate priorities.
5. The report provides a summary of each of the policies, outlining the legislative background, the general principles within each policy and the funding arrangements where applicable.
6. The policies provide transparency for customers in terms of the council's approach. In addition staff will follow operational procedures and guidance on a day-to-day basis.
7. The report also highlights any changes to the individual policies as a result of the review.

<b>Confidential report</b> Please bold as appropriate	Yes	<b>No</b>
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<b>Key Decision?</b> Please bold as appropriate	Yes	<b>No</b>
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### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

#### **(If the recommendations are accepted)**

8. The changes to the policies bring up-to-date a number of existing policies administered in Customer Services.

- 9. The policies are in line with the most recent government legislation, guidance and good practice.
- 10. The Discretionary Housing Payments Policy and the Council Tax Discretionary Hardship Policy provide a consistent and transparent approach to the consideration of applications for discretionary housing payments and hardship relief.
- 11. The Sanction and Prosecution Policy now reflects the position of the council following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud investigation to the DWP's Single Fraud Investigation Service.

**ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

- 12. None.

**CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

- 13. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all		A strong local economy	
Clean, safe and healthy communities		An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	√

**DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS (DHP) POLICY**

**Background**

- 14. The Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001 make provision for the awarding of DHPs.
- 15. The Department of Works and Pensions DHP Guidance Manual and good practice guide set out the framework for the scheme.
- 16. This revised DHP policy achieves three things:
  - a. Updates the policy in respect of the latest DWP advice regarding key welfare reforms of the benefit cap, reductions in local housing allowance and the removal of the spare room subsidy in the social rented sector.
  - b. Clarifies the qualifying criteria, priority considerations and other factors considered when assessing an application for a DHP and brings them in line with DWP guidance.
  - c. Updates the information regarding what types of income and expenditure will be disregarded for the purposes of a DHP.
- 17. The policy applies to customers in receipt of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit. Awards in relation to Council Tax Support (CTS) are covered by the council's CTS Discretionary Hardship Policy.
- 18. The purpose of a DHP is to provide customers suffering financial hardship with further financial assistance towards housing costs.
- 19. The application process will be based upon the eligibility criteria detailed in the policy and an application form will be available online.

**General Principles**

- 20. In deciding whether to award a discretionary housing payment the council will have the following objectives:
  - a. Preventing homelessness
  - b. Preventing families and young people from living in temporary accommodation
  - c. Supporting vulnerable or elderly people in the community
  - d. Encouraging and sustaining people in employment
  - e. Keeping families together
  - f. Supporting young people in the transition to adult life
  - g. Sustaining a tenancy whilst other solutions are put in place

- h. Helping those who are taking steps to help themselves
- i. Supporting claimants affected by key welfare reforms of the benefit cap, reductions in local housing allowance and removal of the spare room subsidy in the social rented sector (including disabled people, adoptive parents and foster carers).

### **Funding of DHPs**

- 21. An amount of funding for the scheme is provided on an annual basis by the DWP. The DHP fund for 2014-15 was £132,369.00 and the council spent £104,527. The allocation for 2015-16 is £114,869.00.
- 22. The council can also award up to two and a half times this amount from it's General Fund. There is no current budget provision for such additional awards, but the risk of having no provision is currently low.
- 23. The cash limit for the awarding of DHPs is made up of the combination of the two amounts. The council cannot make awards when this amount has been spent.

### **Notable changes to the DHP policy**

- 24. The DHP policy has been updated in light of the welfare reforms including the benefit cap, reductions in local housing allowance, and removal of the spare room subsidy.
- 25. The eligibility criteria have been clarified to ease consistency in considering payment awards.
- 26. The income and expenditure which will be taken into account has been clarified in the light of recent case law.
- 27. Conditions are often attached to an award, such as the customer undertaking debt, housing or benefit advice, and this has been clarified in the policy.

### **Risks**

- 28. There is a risk that the value of applications may exceed the funding available. In order to mitigate this risk the allocation of payments is closely monitored on a monthly basis.
- 29. To ensure adequate funding is available for those customers most in need, the policy gives priority to those in certain defined circumstances such as at risk of homelessness, affected by the benefit cap or fleeing violence.
- 30. To reduce the likelihood of multiple awards to the same applicant, customers are asked to take action to try to improve their circumstances as a condition of the award. This could include actively searching for alternative accommodation, debt counselling or engaging with the council's Housing Options team to maximise housing advice.

## **COUNCIL TAX DISCRETIONARY HARDSHIP POLICY**

### **Background**

- 31. The Local Government Finance Act 1992 (Section 13A (1) (c)) and the Local Government Act 2003 Section 76 give local authorities the discretion to reduce a part or all of the council tax liability where it is satisfied that the council tax payer would suffer hardship if it did not do so.
- 32. The purpose of the Council Tax Discretionary Hardship Policy is to set out the guidelines and criteria which the council will consider when administering requests for relief from paying council tax from customers experiencing severe financial hardship.

### **General principles**

- 33. There is no statutory definition of hardship and the granting of relief is wholly discretionary.
- 34. Each case will be considered on its own merits and the granting of relief will only be considered in the most exceptional cases.
- 35. The council will consider the interests of council taxpayers and the impact of granting relief if it was to go against the authority's wider objectives for the local area.

### **Funding of hardship relief**

36. The cost of granting council tax discretionary relief is 100% funded by the council from the General Fund. There is no current budget provision for such awards but the risk having no provision is low.

#### **Notable changes to the Council Tax Discretionary Hardship Policy**

37. The policy has been renamed from the Council Tax Exceptional Hardship Policy to bring it in line with the hardship policies for National Non Domestic Rates and Council Tax Support.
38. The policy has been updated to include clarification of the period for which awards may be made.
39. The eligibility criteria have been clarified to ensure consistency.
40. The legislation allows for the council to specify a class of hardship case where several people who pay council tax fall into a group because their circumstances are similar. The policy has been updated to include this.

#### **Risks**

41. As hardship relief is funded in full by the council there will be obvious budget implications as a result of any awards. These are mitigated by the discretionary nature of the policy and firm criteria which denote that relief will only be available in exceptional circumstances.

### **SANCTION AND PROSECUTION POLICY**

#### **Background**

42. Legislation makes provision for the application of sanctions and for prosecution in cases of fraud or provision of misinformation in relation to housing benefit, council tax support and council tax.
43. This legislation includes The Local Government Finance Act 1992, Welfare Reform Act 2012, Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, Social Security Administration Act 1992 and The Council Tax Reduction Scheme (Detection of Fraud and Enforcement) (England) Regulations 2013.
44. The purpose of the Sanction and Prosecution Policy is to set out the action which the council may take in cases of fraud or misinformation which result in incorrect payment of housing benefit or council tax support and incorrect billing of council tax.
45. The policy also clarifies which areas of fraud investigation work are the responsibility of the DWP.

#### **General Principles**

27. In deciding what action to take the council will consider the following:
  - a. Each case will be considered on its own merits.
  - b. There must be sufficient, reliable evidence to justify the action taken, and
  - c. The action taken must be in the public interest.
  - d. Any mitigating circumstances.
  - e. The decision to prosecute an individual is a serious step and has serious implications for all involved. Decisions to prosecute should always be fair and consistent.
  - f. In exceptional circumstances, an alternative to prosecution (caution or administrative penalty) may be considered without regard to the amount of the overpayment.

#### **Notable changes to the Sanction and Prosecution Policy**

46. The Sanction and Prosecution Policy has been updated in light of the transfer on 1 May of Housing Benefit fraud investigation to the Single Fraud Investigation Service (SFIS) at the DWP.
47. The option to impose civil penalties has been introduced. In the event that information is negligently supplied or there is a failure to supply information that affects the amount of housing benefit or council tax support paid or council tax billed a financial penalty may be applied.

48. The policy has been simplified and made more accessible to customers by the removal of information relating to operational procedures.

### **Transfer to Single Fraud Investigation Service**

49. Following the transfer to SFIS from 1 May 2015, the council no longer investigates housing benefit fraud although it retains its delegated powers as decision maker regarding administrative penalties for housing benefit.
50. The council will still make enquiries in cases where there is no evidence of fraud and the overpayment of housing benefit is less than £2,000.
51. The council has retained its power to investigate Council Tax Support fraud up to prosecution stage if appropriate.

### **Available Sanctions**

52. There are three formal sanctions which are considered where there is evidence of fraud:
- a. Local Authority Caution: an oral warning where a CTS overpayment is up to £2,000
  - b. Administrative Penalty: a financial penalty for overpayments of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support in circumstances not deemed serious enough for prosecution
  - c. Prosecution: will be considered in serious circumstances such as where the Housing Benefit fraud was deliberate or involved other people or was not a first offence.
53. A civil penalty may be applied where a customer has negligently supplied information but there is no evidence of fraud.

### **Risks**

54. The council needs to ensure that, despite the transfer of criminal investigation into housing benefit fraud to the DWP, it still has a robust approach to protecting public funds and minimising overpayments. The policy provides the framework to achieve this.
55. The decision to prosecute is a particularly serious step and has implications for all those concerned. The Sanction and Prosecution Policy provides a detailed list of factors to be taken into account when prosecution action is being considered.
56. Other guidance will also be considered including both public and evidential interest tests and the Code for Crown Prosecutors.

## **DEBT MANAGEMENT POLICY**

### **Background**

57. The Council has a responsibility to collect the income due to it. This helps the council to pay for the services it delivers. This is the council's statement on how it will work with customers and partners to raise and collect debt. It outlines what the council will do to help those who are in debt.
58. The policy will apply to the collection of money owed to the council, primarily:
- a. Council Tax
  - b. National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR)
  - c. Housing Benefit overpayments
  - d. Miscellaneous invoices
  - e. Fixed penalty notices for parking and environmental crime
  - f. Income from planning application and building regulation fees and land charges
59. The purpose of the Debt Management Policy is to set out the council's approach to the management and collection of debt and also to identify the support and practical help which will be available to customers.

### **1. General Principles**

60. The council's approach to income collection will be guided by some general principles:
- a. A professional, consistent and timely approach to collecting debt.
  - b. Collection will be in line with legislation

- c. Cost-effective collection of all monies owed to the council.
- d. A co-ordinated approach towards sharing information and managing multiple debts owed to the council.
- e. Where appropriate, the council will refer debtors to advice agencies
- f. Ensuring that the interests of all council tax payers are protected
- g. Opportunities for the collection of income in advance are maximised
- h. Management of debts in accordance with legislative provisions and best practice
- i. The effective use of online capability wherever possible.
- j. Collection of income will be by the most efficient means eg, direct debit, via the website or the automated payment line.
- k. All Council bills and invoices will be raised as soon as practicable and will include clear, relevant and full information as to:
  - i. What the bill is for
  - i. When payment is due
  - ii. How to pay
  - iii. How to contact us if there is a query
- l. A pro-active approach to collection of debt will be maintained where this will maximise income collection.
- m. Recovery action will be mindful of the council’s duty to protect its finances and collect all outstanding debts.
- n. Recovery action will be proportionate to the amount of the debt outstanding.
- o. Ability to pay will be considered. The policy promotes positive actions in assisting those who may be unable to pay.

**Notable Changes to the Debt Management Policy**

- 61. Payment in advance of services being delivered is a key objective for the council and will help to maximise efficiencies.
- 62. Specific references to operational procedures have been removed. Such guidance is more suited to internal documents for use by officers.
- 63. The removal of specific procedures, timescales and values provides greater flexibility to take appropriate recovery action depending on circumstances.
- 64. The policy has been updated to include Charging Orders and Bankruptcy or Liquidation proceedings as options for recovery action. These may be considered as an alternative to committal to prison as legislative changes have limited the powers that enforcement agents and the police have to bring non-payers to court. There has also been an increase in costs incurred by the council for unsuccessful committal cases.

**Risks**

- 65. Charging Orders and Bankruptcy/Liquidation proceedings may be particularly sensitive areas. The council needs to ensure that cases are carefully considered on an individual basis before such action is taken.
- 66. Formal action in respect of bankruptcy and liquidation proceedings will be authorised by the council’s Chief Financial Officer.

**IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT**

- 67. 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		Policy and Communications	√

**COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER**

68. There are two areas of financial risk highlighted in this report.
69. The first is in respect of Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs). Funds are available to fund 40% of the maximum limit that may be awarded before the cap is reached. Although expenditure is demand led, past experience tells us that this level of provision is adequate and the chance of exceeding it is low. Nevertheless, to mitigate against this risk, a robust monitoring process is in place to ensure that any forecasted potential overspend is identified and addressed appropriately.
70. The second is in respect of the Council Tax Discretionary Hardship Policy. This cost type is also demand led and therefore by nature poses an element of financial risk. That said, past experience informs us that this risk is low and does not merit the diversion of current base funding from existing resources to provide a dedicated budget provision.

**COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER**

71. The policies as proposed comply with the Council's obligations under the relevant legislation.

**COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF POLICY**

72. Integrated Impact Assessments (IIA's) should be completed for each of the policies being updated and presented with the consultation findings as part of the Executive Member approval of the policies. IIA's should be carried out when changes are being made to a service, policy or procedure. This is to assess the impact that the changes to the policy will have on different groups within Chorley. The assessment includes consideration of how the changes would impact the equality strands, health, sustainability and the council's reputation and ability to deliver our priorities.

LESLEY-ANN FENTON  
DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER AND ADVICE SERVICES

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Asim Khan/Helen Sutton	5448	4 June 2015	***



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# Discretionary Housing Payments Policy



## DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS POLICY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This policy sets out the council's approach to the awarding of Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs). It has been revised in the light of welfare reform changes and recent case law relating to the award of such payments. The policy will allow flexibility and consistency to be applied to the decision making process.

### 2. BACKGROUND

The Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001 make provision for the awarding of DHPs. The Department of Works and Pensions DHP Guidance Manual April 2014 and accompanying good practice guide set out the framework for the scheme. This framework includes the criteria which may be considered, the circumstances under which Local Authorities may consider awarding a payment and also the application process and the administration of the scheme.

This policy sets out the council's approach within these guidelines and will be applied in conjunction with the relevant legislation and guidance. This policy applies to awards to customers in receipt of Housing Benefit and Universal Credit. Any awards in relation to Council Tax Support are covered by the council's Discretionary Hardship Policy.

This policy has been agreed by the council's Executive Cabinet and will be reviewed every two years or as required in response to changes in legislation or Department of Communities and Local Government guidance.

### 3. PURPOSE

**The purpose of the DHP scheme is to provide customers suffering financial hardship with further financial assistance towards certain housing costs.**

The scheme is discretionary and each case is considered on its own merits. DHP awards are to help customers when they most need it and may be a short term or one-off payment. The level of payment may cover all or part of a shortfall in rent or assist with the cost of taking up a tenancy.

### 4. POLICY OBJECTIVES

In deciding when to make a DHP award, the council will consider the following objectives:

- a) Preventing homelessness
- b) Preventing families and young people from living in temporary accommodation
- c) Supporting vulnerable or elderly people in the community
- d) Encouraging and sustaining people in employment
- e) Keeping families together
- f) Supporting young people in the transition to adult life
- g) Sustaining a tenancy whilst other solutions are put in place
- h) Helping those who are taking steps to help themselves
- i) Supporting claimants affected by key welfare reforms of the benefit cap, reductions in local housing allowance and removal of the spare room subsidy in the social rented sector (including disabled people, adoptive parents and foster carers).

## 5. QUALIFYING CRITERIA

Each application will be dealt with individually and a decision made based on the customer's circumstances. The council may request the customer to provide information and evidence in support of an application and any decision to make a DHP.

To be considered for a DHP, applicants must fulfil the following criteria:

- a) Be in receipt of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit including the housing element (including for any backdated period)
- b) Have a liability to pay rent
- c) Require further assistance with housing costs

DHPs may be awarded for:

- a. Rent in advance
- b. Deposits
- c. Lump sum costs associated with housing
- d. Shortfall in rental liability (except ineligible housing costs)

DHPs cannot be awarded for:

- a. Ineligible service charges
- b. Increases in rent due to rent arrears
- c. To cover any sanctions or reductions in benefit
- d. Council Tax
- e. If Housing Benefit payments are suspended
- f. If applicants only receive Council Tax Support or Second Adult Rebate
- g. Shortfalls caused by housing benefit overpayment recovery

## 6. PRIORITY CONSIDERATIONS

Any customer who meets the qualifying criteria may apply for a DHP. However, priority will be given to those customers in any of the following circumstances:

- a. Families at risk of losing their home
- b. Where there are dependent children
- c. The applicant has been affected by the benefit cap or the size criteria in the social rented sector
- d. Where there is a threat of homelessness as a result of an emergency such as fire or flood
- e. Where support is required for those who are vulnerable due to any of the following:
  - Drug or alcohol issues
  - Mental health issues
  - Fleeing actual or threatened violence
  - Learning difficulties
  - Leaving the Armed Forces
  - As a result of having been imprisoned
  - Young people leaving care
  - Old age, disability or medical circumstances

## 7. OTHER FACTORS CONSIDERED

In deciding whether or not to award a DHP the council will consider the following:

- a. The shortfall between the amount of Housing Benefit in payment (or housing element of Universal Credit) and the eligible rent payable
- b. Any non-dependant deductions which DHPs can cover

- c. Any steps taken by the customer to reduce the rental liability, for example whether the customer has tried to find cheaper accommodation
- d. Whether the customer is taking long term action to help their problems in meeting housing costs
- e. Where affected by the social sector size criteria rules, whether the customer has approached their landlord requesting accommodation with fewer bedrooms, considered taking in a lodger to help with housing costs or tried to find cheaper more suitable accommodation
- f. Whether the customer made enquiries regarding the Local Housing Allowance before moving into the property and what steps they put in place to meet the shortfall
- g. Rent arrears may be paid where there is evidence that the customer is taking steps to improve their financial circumstances or move to a better situation such as alternative accommodation or into employment
- h. The financial circumstances of the customer. When considering income, disregarded income for benefit purposes can be taken into account. Expenditure above basic living requirements can affect the amount of an award. A DHP is not intended to enhance a customer's lifestyle
- i. The council will decide which income and expenditure is to be taken into account when deciding if it is appropriate to award a DHP, taking into account relevant legislation and case law.
- j. Access to any savings or capital held by the customer or their family or household
- k. Other financial support which has been explored such as rent deposit schemes and local emergency support
- l. The medical circumstances of the customer and members of the household
- m. Any special reasons that make it necessary for the customer or the household to live in a particular property or area
- n. Any special or exceptional circumstances declared by the customer

## **8. APPLICATIONS**

Applications must be made by completing the council's application form.

Applications may be made in advance.

The council may require further supporting evidence and information and will place a time limit on providing it.

## **9. APPEALS**

There are no rights of appeal regarding a DHP decision. However, a customer may request that the decision is reviewed once by the council. This request must be made within a calendar month of the original written decision notice. This review decision is final and there is no further right of appeal.

## **10. PERIOD OF AWARD**

DHP awards are not intended to support customers indefinitely but are to provide short-term financial support to allow the alternative solutions to be found. There is no limit on the length of an award period. This will be decided on a case by case basis and will be dependent upon the customer's circumstances and the time needed to resolve the problem. Awards will only be backdated where there has been an entitlement to Housing Benefit or Universal Credit for that period.

## **11. CONDITIONS OF AN AWARD**

The following conditions apply to the awarding of a DHP:

- a. The customer must notify the council of any change in circumstances during the period of the award. A failure to do so may result in further action being taken and may include prosecution.
- b. In many cases the council will insist that any award is conditional upon the customer undertaking debt, housing or benefit maximisation advice.

- c. The customer must take proactive steps to improve their circumstances and conditions upon which each award is made will be detailed in the award letter.

#### **12. PAYMENT OF AWARDS**

A DHP can be paid to someone other than the customer if the council considers it reasonable to do so. Payment will normally be made to the landlord where it is a one-off payment or housing benefit is paid direct to the landlord. Payment will be made by electronic bank transfer.

#### **13. OVERPAYMENT AND WITHDRAWAL OF AWARDS**

When deciding whether or not to recover an overpayment of a DHP, the council will consider the reasons for the overpayment. The council can choose to recover in full, in part, or not at all.

The council may decide to withdraw an award in some circumstances, for example where there is a change in circumstances that means that the customer no longer qualifies for a DHP.

#### **14. FUNDING**

Funding for the scheme is provided on an annual basis by the Government and is cash limited. The awarding of DHPs is subject to available funding and the Council will not make awards when this funding has been fully allocated.

#### **15. PUBLICITY FOR THE SCHEME**

The Council promotes the scheme in the following ways:

- a. Advice to customers on the scheme and how it can help them
- b. Information to external organisations that give advice such as Welfare Rights
- c. Making landlords aware of the scheme
- d. Information on the Council's website
- e. Through the Council's Housing Options advice and personal budgeting advice

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# Council Tax Discretionary Hardship Policy



## COUNCIL TAX DISCRETIONARY HARDSHIP POLICY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This policy sets out the council's approach to the awarding of discretionary hardship relief in respect of council tax liability. It has been revised during a review of other policies relating to reliefs and discretionary payments to ensure consistency in the decision making process.

### 2. BACKGROUND

The Local Government Finance Act 1992 (Section 13A (1) (c)) and the Local Government Act 2003 Section 76 give local authorities the discretion to reduce a part or all of the council tax liability where it is satisfied that the council tax payer would suffer hardship if it did not do so.

This policy has been agreed by the council's Executive Cabinet and will be reviewed on an annual basis as required in response to changes in legislation or the corporate priorities of the council.

### 3. PURPOSE

**The purpose of the Council Tax Discretionary Hardship Policy is to set out the guidelines and criteria which the council will consider when assessing applications for relief from paying council tax from customers experiencing severe financial hardship.**

This policy enables the council to show that it is fair and consistent in its approach and sufficiently flexible to consider individual circumstances.

### 4. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

There is no statutory definition of hardship and the granting of relief is wholly discretionary. Each case will be considered on its own merits and the granting of relief will only be considered in the most exceptional cases. The council will consider the interests of council taxpayers and the impact of granting relief if it was to go against the authority's wider objectives for the local area.

The legislation allows the council to grant relief on a case by case basis or to specify a class of case. A class of case is where several people who pay council tax fall into a group because their circumstances are similar.

### 5. ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for relief, the council tax payer must fulfil each of the following criteria:

- a. The tax payer is able to satisfy the council that they are not able to meet their full council tax liability or part of their liability.
- b. The tax payer is able to demonstrate that all reasonable steps have been taken to meet their full council tax liability prior to their application
- c. The tax payer can prove that the current circumstances are unlikely to improve in the following twelve months making payment of the council tax impossible
- d. There must be evidence of exceptional hardship or exceptional personal circumstances that justifies a reduction in council tax liability
- e. The tax payer has no assets that could be realised and used to pay council tax
- f. All other reliefs, discounts, exemptions, discretionary payments and valuation office appeals have been considered.

Relief will not be granted:

- a. Where the amount outstanding is as a result of wilful refusal or culpable neglect
- b. To prevent recovery action by the council or to stop bankruptcy or committal proceedings by the council or any other body
- c. Where there is insufficient evidence for an informed decision to be made.

#### **6. APPLICATIONS**

Requests for hardship relief must be made in writing by the council tax payer, their appointee or a recognised third party acting on their behalf. The request must set out the exceptional circumstances which have led to the application for relief. Relevant evidence of hardship will be required including details of the applicant's financial circumstances. The council may request any other information it considers necessary to assess the application. No costs will be borne by the council in the provision of this evidence.

The council tax will remain due to be paid whilst an application is pending and recovery action may continue if payments are not made as required.

The application will be considered by the council's Chief Financial Officer.

#### **7. REVIEW OF DECISION**

A council tax payer can ask for a review of the decision where:

- a. There is additional relevant information not available at the time of the original decision, or
- b. There is good reason to believe the application or supporting information was not interpreted correctly when the original decision was made

A request for a review must be made in writing within four weeks of the original decision and give the reasons why a review is being requested. Reviews will be considered by the council's Chief Financial Officer.

#### **8. PERIOD OF AWARD**

Hardship relief will normally be awarded for a short, fixed period depending on the nature and likely duration of the hardship. All awards shall cease at the end of the financial year if not ceased at an earlier date. The period of an award will be considered on case by case basis.

#### **9. FUNDING**

The cost of granting hardship relief is met 100% by the council.

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# Sanction and Prosecution Policy



## SANCTION AND PROSECUTION POLICY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The council is committed to the detection of fraud and has a responsibility to ensure that housing benefit and council tax support are paid correctly and that council tax is billed correctly. This policy sets out the council's approach to prosecution and other sanctions in cases of fraud or misinformation in respect of council tax support, council tax and housing benefit. It has been revised in the light of the transfer of housing benefit fraud investigation to the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) Single Fraud Investigation Service (SFIS) from 1st May 2015.

This policy does not include National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) as there are no powers within NNDR legislation to apply sanctions or financial penalties.

### 2. BACKGROUND

This policy is governed by legislation and DWP guidance including The Local Government Finance Act 1992, Welfare Reform Act 2012, Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, Social Security Administration Act 1992 and The Council Tax Reduction Scheme (Detection of Fraud and Enforcement) (England) Regulations 2013.

This policy has been agreed by the council's Executive Cabinet and will be reviewed as required and in response to changes in legislation or Department of Communities and Local Government Guidance.

### 3. PURPOSE

**The purpose of the Sanction and Prosecution Policy is to set out the action which the council may take in cases of fraud or misinformation which result in incorrect payment of housing benefit or council tax support and incorrect billing of council tax.**

It gives the guidelines that will be followed in certain circumstances and clarifies which areas are the responsibilities of SFIS.

### 4. AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

From 1st May 2015 responsibility for investigation and the application of sanctions lies as follows:

- a. Housing Benefit (where overpayment over £2,000 or evidence of fraud) and Council Tax Benefit:
  - Investigation is the responsibility of SFIS.
  - Cautions no longer apply to these cases
  - The Council has retained the delegated power to offer an administrative penalty following a recommendation from SFIS.
  - Prosecution of cases is the responsibility of SFIS
- b. Housing Benefit (where overpayment under £2,000 and no evidence of fraud):
  - The council will make enquiries in respect of cases of misinformation or error made by the customer where the value of any overpayment is less than £2,000.
  - A civil penalty of may be applied.
  - Cases where there is evidence of fraud will be referred to SFIS.
- c. Council Tax Support: The council still has the responsibility to investigate and sanction council tax support cases.
- d. Council Tax: The council still has the responsibility for applying civil penalties in respect of council tax.

## 5. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

In deciding what action to take the Council will consider the following:

- a. Each case will be considered on its own merits
- b. There must be sufficient, reliable evidence to justify the action taken, and
- c. The action taken must be in the public interest
- d. Any mitigating circumstances
- e. The decision to prosecute an individual is a serious step and has serious implications for all involved. Decisions to prosecute should always be fair and consistent.
- f. In exceptional circumstances, an alternative to prosecution (caution or administrative penalty) may be considered without regard to the amount of the overpayment.

## 6. SANCTIONS AVAILABLE

The three formal sanctions available are a Caution, an Administrative Penalty and Prosecution. The council will only apply a formal sanction where there is sufficient evidence that an offence has been committed.

To ensure consistency in the council's sanction and prosecution process and to remain in line with the policy adopted by the DWP, the following guidelines will apply:

### **Local Authority Caution**

A caution is an oral warning given in certain, less serious circumstances as an alternative to prosecution to a person who has committed an offence. It is intended to be a meaningful penalty and deterrent where other actions are not appropriate. If a person declines the offer of a caution the case will be recommended for prosecution.

A caution will be considered where the amount of the overpayment is up to £2,000 where the evidence indicates that:

- a. It was a first offence, or
- b. There was no planning involved, or
- c. There was no other person involved in the fraud, and
- d. The person's circumstances and demeanour towards the offence indicates that a caution would be the most appropriate action.

In these circumstances the council may issue an official Local Authority Caution and require full repayment of the overpayment.

### **Administrative penalty**

An Administrative Penalty is a financial penalty offered as an alternative to prosecution, usually in circumstances not deemed serious enough for prosecution. However, there must be sufficient evidence to justify prosecution. If a person refuses an Administrative Penalty the case will be recommended for prosecution.

An administrative penalty will be considered where the evidence indicates that:

- a. It was a first offence, or
- b. The person has previously been cautioned within the last 5 years for a similar offence but the offence was minor and the current offence is also minor; and
- c. There was no planning involved, or
- d. There was no other person involved, and



- e. The person's circumstances and demeanour towards the offence indicates that an administrative penalty would be the most appropriate action.

In these circumstances the Council may make an offer of an Administrative Penalty in addition to requiring full repayment of the overpayment. There is no minimum or maximum overpayment. The penalty will be a minimum of £100, or 50% of the recoverable amount of overpaid council tax support up to a maximum of £1,000.

### Prosecution

Prosecution proceedings will usually be instigated only after the evidential and public interest tests are satisfied as detailed in the Code for Crown Prosecutors.

Prosecution will be considered where:

- a. It was not a first offence, or
- b. The fraud has been deliberate and calculated, or
- c. The fraud had continued over a long period; or
- d. The person has failed to attend an interview under caution; or
- e. There were other persons involved in the fraud, or
- f. The person has declined the offer of an Administrative Penalty or withdrawn agreement to pay and Administrative Penalty; or
- g. The person has declined the offer of an official caution

In these circumstances the council may prosecute. There will be no requirement to repay the overpayment. The council may prosecute using our own legal service, the police or other agency solicitors who will all adhere to The Code for Crown Prosecutors.

The decision to prosecute is a serious step and has implications for all concerned. The council will ensure that decisions to prosecute are made in a fair, consistent and equitable manner. In exceptional circumstances an alternative to prosecution may be considered. Other factors will be taken into consideration before prosecution is recommended.

- a. **Duration of the Offence:** An offence committed over a long period of time should be a factor towards prosecution. There may have been an opportunity to declare the correct information when the claim was renewed.
- b. **Previous Offences:** The council will make enquiries about any previous offences of a similar nature committed. Where there has already been a caution for deception, a second caution issued by the Council may not be appropriate.
- c. **Trust:** Consideration will be given to whether or not the person was in a position of trust, for example a member of staff or a Councillor.
- d. **Collusion:** The case may have arisen through collusion, for example with landlords, managing agents or employers. This type of case is considered to amount to serious fraud and will be recommended for prosecution where possible irrespective of the amount of overpayment involved.
- e. **Offenders Physical and Mental Condition:** It would be inadvisable to prosecute in the following cases: -
  - o Where the offender is seriously ill
  - o Where the offender is mentally ill
  - o Where the offender is a heavily pregnant (within 3 months of confinement)
  - o Where the offender is over 75 years of age or bedridden
  - o Where the offender is deaf or visually impaired

- Where the health of the offender’s partner may suffer.
  
- f. **Social Factors:** Consideration must be given to social factors when deciding whether or not to recommend prosecution. Instances in which prosecution may be considered inappropriate include cases where: -
  - The Court would set against the offence such personal or mitigating factors that would make prosecution inappropriate e.g. the person was driven to the offence by a tragedy or domestic situation such as bereavement or sickness.
  - The offender has already served a prison sentence for benefit fraud and an earlier offence has subsequently been discovered (it is the Court’s view that people come out of prison with a ‘clean sheet’)
  - The claimant is young (under 21), immature and would appear to the Court as someone who could have been dealt with effectively without proceeding. Youth does not automatically exclude the possibility of prosecution. Prosecution may be desirable where the offender already has a criminal record.
  - It is known that a prosecution would have a damaging effect upon the defendant’s career or employment i.e. the offender would not only lose their job but would not be able to get similar employment if prosecuted successfully by the Local Authority.
  
- g. **Voluntary Disclosure:** Voluntary disclosure is where a claimant of his or her own free will reveals a fraud. In this case prosecution would not be appropriate. However, a disclosure is not voluntary if: -
  - The admission is not a complete disclosure of the fraud
  - It was apparently prompted by the expectation that the fraud would be discovered e.g. they knew the Council was making enquiries of their employer etc
  - The claimant admits all the facts as soon as they are challenged
  - The claimant discloses the fraud as a result of being required to complete a review form.
  
- h. **Procedural Difficulties/Delays/Failures in the Investigation/Administrative Process:** Closure of the case, without prosecution will be the only course of action where: -
  - The investigation has been deficient and has failed to obtain all the evidence available
  - Internal checks which should have revealed the offence did not do so e.g. benefit paid on incomplete or inadequate information, failure to observe flaws in a statement or document.

**7. CIVIL PENALTIES**

A civil penalty is a financial penalty that that can be imposed where a person has negligently supplied incorrect information or failed to supply information that affects the amount of housing benefit or council tax support paid or council tax billed.

Table of Civil Penalties			
Service	Penalty Amount	Criteria	Appeal Method
Housing Benefit	£50	Negligently or carelessly giving incorrect information, or Failing to provide without reasonable excuse, information in respect of a claim or payment of benefit, or Failing to notify, without reasonable excuse, a relevant change in circumstances (reasonable	Chorley Council
Council Tax Support	£70		Chorley Council

		excuse = ill health, significant stress)	
Council Tax	£70	Failing to supply information following a request from the Council, or Supplied information about a liable person that is materially inaccurate, or Failing, without reasonable excuse, to notify the Council that a dwelling is no longer exempt, or Failing, without reasonable excuse, to notify the Council that a level of discount no longer applies (reasonable excuse = ill health, significant stress)	Valuation Tribunal

**8. RECOMMENDATIONS OF SANCTIONS**

The recommendation to apply any sanction will be made in the first instance by the investigating officer after consultation with the service manager.

Recommendations for sanctions will be referred to the Head of Service

Recommendations for prosecutions will be referred to the Chief Executive.

# Debt Management Policy



## DEBT MANAGEMENT POLICY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The council has a responsibility to collect the income due to it. This helps the council to pay for the services it delivers. This policy is the council's statement on how it will work with customers and partners to raise and collect debt. It outlines what the council will do to help those who are in debt. The policy recognises that it is good practice to maintain a consistent and efficient approach to managing debt. Payment in advance of services being delivered is a key objective for the council. This will help to maximise the collection of income which is vital in providing resources to deliver services.

The policy will apply to the collection of money owed to the council, primarily:

- a. Council Tax
- b. National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR)
- c. Housing Benefit overpayments
- d. Miscellaneous invoices
- e. Fixed penalty notices for parking and environmental crime
- f. Income from planning application and building regulation fees and land charges

### 2. BACKGROUND

The council has a legal duty to ensure cost-effective billing, collection and recovery of all sums due. This policy is in addition to existing legislation.

Council Tax recovery procedures are outlined in The Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992 and subsequent amendments.

National Non-Domestic Rates recovery procedures are outlined in The Non-Domestic Rating (Collection and Enforcement) (Local Lists) Regulations 1989 and subsequent regulations and amendments.

Housing Benefit overpayments are reclaimed in accordance with Regulations 99 -107 of The Housing Benefit Regulations 2006 and subsequent amendments. Where Housing Benefit has been overpaid and is no longer in payment the primary legislation governing recovery is obtained from the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992 and the Social Security Administration Act 1992.

Miscellaneous invoices and other payments due are collected in accordance with financial regulations relevant to the type of debt. Where a debt is not covered by legislation, action can be taken in the County Court. For example, parking penalty charges are governed by the Traffic Management Act 2004.

The council may appoint enforcement agents and debt collection agencies where appropriate. Only certificated enforcement agents can be used to remove goods for council tax and NNDR and the fees charged to the debtor are governed by legislation.

The policy has been approved by the council's Executive Cabinet and will be reviewed as required and in response to any relevant changes in legislation or guidance.

### 3. PURPOSE

**The purpose of the Debt Management Policy is to set out the council's approach to the management and collection of debt and also to identify the support and practical help which will be available to customers.**

The policy provides an overarching framework which will be incorporated into individual service procedures and practices. It also enables a consistent and sensitive approach to collecting debt whilst

at the same time ensuring that the Council continues to meet its responsibility to collect outstanding amounts.

#### 4. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The council's approach to income collection will be guided by some general principles:

- a. A professional, consistent and timely approach to collecting debt.
- b. Collection will be in line with legislation
- c. Cost-effective collection of all monies owed to the council.
- d. A co-ordinated approach towards sharing information and managing multiple debts owed to the council.
- e. Where appropriate, the council will refer debtors to advice agencies.
- f. Ensuring that the interests of all council tax payers are protected.
- g. Opportunities for the collection of income in advance are maximised.
- h. Management of debts in accordance with legislative provisions and best practice.
- i. The effective use of online capability wherever possible.
- j. Collection of income will be by the most efficient means e.g., direct debit, via the website or the automated payment line.
- k. All Council bills and invoices will be raised as soon as practicable and will include clear, relevant and full information as to:
  - i. What the bill is for
  - ii. When payment is due
  - iii. How to pay
  - iv. How to contact us if there is a query
- l. A pro-active approach to collection of debt will be maintained where this will maximise income collection.
- m. Recovery action will be mindful of the council's duty to protect its finances and collect all outstanding debts.
- n. Recovery action will be proportionate to the amount of the debt outstanding.
- o. Ability to pay will be considered. The policy promotes positive actions in assisting those who may be unable to pay.

#### 5. HELP AND ADVICE FOR CUSTOMERS

The council will offer help and advice to all customers including those experiencing financial difficulties as it wants to help its customers meet their financial commitments. At the same time the council has a duty to ensure that bills are paid as quickly as possible.

To achieve these objectives the council will:

- a. Make it easier for customers to pay by making sure they know how and where they can pay. This information is included in correspondence with customers and is on the Council's website [chorley.gov.uk](http://chorley.gov.uk)
- b. Refer customers to advice agencies for help with money management and debt if appropriate.
- c. Require the outstanding amount to be cleared as quickly as the customers circumstances will allow.
- d. Encourage customers to make contact immediately if they are unable to make a payment or if their circumstances change that affect ability to pay.
- e. Assist customers where there are multiple debts outstanding.
- f. Where relevant, ask customers to provide information regarding their finances in order to agree an arrangement
- g. Request payment in advance for services where appropriate

## 6. THE RECOVERY OF DEBTS

The council will advise debtors of the amounts and the due dates of outstanding payments. The council will also advise debtors what the next action is likely to be if payment is not made as requested.

For some types of debts the timescales for recovery are governed by legislation. The timing of recovery action will be managed in line with legislation and best practice.

The council will always reserve the right to continue with legal action. This is to protect the council's interests and prevent the debt from becoming statute barred and irrecoverable. During the later stages of recovery, the individual circumstances of cases will be considered when a decision about the most appropriate course of action is taken.

There are a number of steps which the council can take to recover unpaid debt and overdue payments.

### **Reminder**

The council will send a reminder where a payment or an instalment becomes overdue. This reminder will give the debtor a fixed number of days in which to make payment. The council may send more than one reminder in some circumstances.

### **Final notice**

A final notice may be sent where payments are brought up to date but fall behind again. The final notice informs the debtor of the legal enforcement action that may be taken if payments are not received nor a payment arrangement agreed.

### **Payment Arrangement**

The council will offer debtors an arrangement to pay where appropriate. As well as the debtor's ability to pay, the arrangement will depend on factors such as the amount outstanding, the age of the debt and whether there is any ongoing liability. Payment arrangements will be regularly monitored and reviewed. It may not be in the debtor's best interests to have a long term arrangement when liability is continuous, since the level of debt will increase as time goes by and the debtor's situation deteriorate rather than improve

### **Summons**

For some debts, failure to make payments as required may result in a summons being issued by the Magistrate's Court. This will incur further costs payable by the debtor. If payment is made in full before the court hearing date the council will not ask for a liability order which means that no further action will be taken.

Where a debtor cannot pay in full they can pay according to an arrangement as offered by the council. In these cases the council will still ask the court to grant a liability order to secure the debt.

### **Liability Order**

Where the Magistrate's Court grant the council a liability order this will incur further costs payable by the debtor. Where a liability Order is granted the council will take appropriate enforcement action as soon as possible unless a satisfactory payment arrangement is made. If a payment arrangement is not kept to, action can be taken without further notice.

### **Attachment of Earnings or Benefit**

If a debtor is working an Attachment of Earnings Order may be sent to their employer who will be required to make deductions from wages until the debt is cleared. Where a debtor is claiming certain benefits, a request may be sent to the Department of Works and Pensions for deductions to be made from benefit.

**Enforcement Agents**

Enforcement agent is the new name for bailiffs. Enforcement agents will issue an enforcement notice which will incur further costs payable by the debtor. If payment in full is not received nor a payment arrangement agreed the case will pass to an enforcement agent. Further costs payable by the debtor are added at this stage. The enforcement agent can visit the debtor's home and seize goods to the value of the debt. This action will also incur further costs payable by the debtor. The council may also use an in-house enforcement officer.

**Home visits**

It may be considered appropriate to carry out a visit to a debtor's home or place of business in order to secure payment of an outstanding amount.

**Debt Collection**

Some debts may be referred to a debt collection agency. The agency may contact a debtor by telephone or in writing to request payment of a debt.

**Tracing**

If a debtor leaves their last known address without providing a forwarding address we will use various methods to trace them. This may include professional external agencies as well as council records.

**County Court**

County Court action may be taken to recover some types of debt. This will involve the issuing of a County Court Claim Form and may result in the debtor incurring court costs and fees as decided by the court.

**Bankruptcy and Liquidation**

The council may take action to make a person bankrupt or to liquidate a company. A bankruptcy petition is an application to the court for a person's assets to be taken and sold to pay their debts. Bankruptcy proceedings may be instigated when a debtor owes more than £750.00.

**Charging Order**

This is an order of the court placing a charge on a debtor's property such as their home, a piece of land or stocks and shares. A charging order can be applied for if the council still holds another court order (such as a liability order) against a person and the total amount owing is more than £1,000.

**Committal to prison**

The council may make an application to the court for a committal to prison. The Magistrates have five options available for cases presented to them:

- a. Commit the defaulter to prison for a period of up to three months
- b. Suspend a prison sentence on the understanding agreed amounts are made
- c. Remit all or part of the debt
- d. Adjourn for a period of time if requested by the LA. The Magistrates may also adjourn the case if they feel they do not have enough evidence to make a decision
- e. Dismiss the case



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Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Public Protection Streetscene and Community (Introduced by the Executive Member for Community Services)	Executive Cabinet	25 June 2015

## **EXECUTIVE CABINET RESPONSE TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TASK GROUP REVIEW OF NEIGHBOURHOOD WORKING**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To provide the Executive Cabinets response to the O&S Task Group Review of Neighbourhood Working undertaken in late 2014 and reported to Executive Cabinet in February 2015.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

2. It is recommended that Members accept the recommendations made by the O&S Task Group Review of Neighbourhood Working as outlined in the table contained in the main body of the report.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT**

3. The Councils Overview and Scrutiny Committee established a task group in October 2014 to review neighbourhood working and determine what improvements could be recommended in order to further develop neighbourhood working in Chorley.
4. The Task Group reported its findings and recommendations to the Councils Executive Cabinet in January 2015 and this report provides the Executive response to those recommendations.
5. In summary all the recommendations are accepted, apart from one (Recommendation 4) relating to the provision of a single point of contact on neighbourhood matters for parish councils and community groups.

<b>Confidential report</b> Please bold as appropriate	Yes	<b>No</b>
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<b>Key Decision?</b> Please bold as appropriate	<b>Yes</b>	No
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<b>Reason</b> Please bold as appropriate	1, a change in service provision that impacts upon the service revenue budget by £100,000 or more	2, a contract worth £100,000 or more
	3, a new or unprogrammed capital scheme of £100,000 or more	<b>4, Significant impact in environmental, social or physical terms in two or more wards</b>

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**(If the recommendations are accepted)**

- 6. To provide a response to the recommendations made by the O&S Task Group Review of Neighbourhood Working.

**ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

- 7. None

**CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

- 8. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all	√	A strong local economy	
Clean, safe and healthy communities	√	An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	√

**BACKGROUND**

- 9. In October 2014 an Overview and Scrutiny Committee Task Group was established to review neighbourhood working. This followed an Executive Member review of neighbourhood working in 2012 and the establishment of neighbourhood working as a service delivery model in 2007.
- 10. The O&S Task Group took evidence from a number of officers, partner agencies and voluntary organisations and the final task group report can be found at:  
<https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/documents/s51008/Draft%20Final%20Report%20-%20Neighbourhood%20Working%20%2029012015%20Overview%20and%20Scrutiny%20Committee.pdf>

**RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 11. The table below details the Executive Cabinet response to each of the recommendations made by the Task Group

<b>O&amp;S Task Group Recommendation</b>	<b>Executive Cabinet Response</b>
1. To develop a liaison mechanism between the eight Chairs of the Neighbourhood Area Meetings through an informal meeting that could take place prior to a Chorley 3 Tier Liaison meeting as any issues (of a strategic nature and involving all three tiers of Local Government) can be raised at that meeting.	Agreed – a mechanism can be established linked to the timing of our 3 Tier Liaison meetings where all eight neighbourhood group chairs can meet to discuss and propose strategic issues that are common to neighbourhoods for discussion and the Liaison meeting. It may be possible to do this electronically and this will be explored in the first instance
2. Provide training to borough and parish councillors on effective tools to engage and connect people in their own area.	Agreed – Executive Cabinet believes there is a role here for Parish Councils to identify suitable training and engagement tools that can be deliver at a local level perhaps through PC events to parish councillors and

O&S Task Group Recommendation	Executive Cabinet Response
	ward councillors. In addition the 3 Tier Forum might provide an opportunity to share best practice in this area.
3. That the Neighbourhood Priorities are renamed as Preferred Projects to reflect that, over time, issues and aspirations change.	Agreed
4. To have a single point of contact at the Council for community groups and parish council's to raise matters relating to neighbourhood working.  Reporting of day to day environmental issues to use existing channels, for example My Account	Whilst it would be beneficial to have a single point of contact the variety of issues that impact on neighbourhoods and the generic roles of a number of officers across the Council would make this recommendation unworkable. It is felt that the implementation of the other recommendations will establish the appropriate communication networks for all groups involved in neighbourhood working. In addition the use of 'My Account' to channel contacts into the Council would ensure the matter being raised reaches the most appropriate person in the first instance. The Council would be willing to provide some initial training to parish councillors and community groups on its use.  Executive Cabinet encourages all contact on day to day service requests and issues to be channelled 'My Account'
5. To improve communication between officers, councillors and stakeholders about the outcomes of priorities to community groups and the public, to include monthly updates on progress and delivery to be provided by the lead officer through use of IntheKnow, IntheBoro, Facebook and Twitter.	Agreed – timely and effective communication is key to the neighbourhood working process. In terms of the three 'Preferred Projects' for each neighbourhood area the lead officers are now tasked with providing a monthly communication with the group representatives on progress of the project delivery. Wider communication issues will be picked up and actioned by the Councils communications team.
6. Where appropriate, the neighbourhood working process should be used to encourage greater financial contributions from parish council funds for the delivery of neighbourhood priorities. It is envisaged that robust debate at neighbourhood area meetings should be the forum to challenge greater contributions from parish councils who may be reluctant to make those contributions.	Agreed – the neighbourhood groups are encouraged to challenge all representation within the group as well as wider agencies and community groups to make contributions (financial and 'in kind') to the successful delivery neighbourhood priorities and other neighbourhood working aspirations.

<b>O&amp;S Task Group Recommendation</b>	<b>Executive Cabinet Response</b>
<p>7. The Council to explore with the Voluntary and Community Faith Sector (VCFS) how the use of current resources provided by the Council to the VCFS, can be used by the VCFS to improve networking across the VCFS sector in Chorley. This could include the facilitation of an Annual Forum on a dedicated topic, for example health initiatives, to help shape future key projects and encourage greater involvement at all levels.</p>	<p>Agreed – The Councils Partnerships Manager to explore with the VCFS network how this can be facilitated.</p>
<p>8. The civic pride campaign be fully integrated into neighbourhood working and members informed or engaged in all aspects of civic pride delivery.</p>	<p>Agreed – Improved communication with Members about civic pride will be undertaken and we will seek to integrate the aspirations and workings of Civic Pride into neighbourhood working. The Policy and Communications team will pick this up.</p>
<p>9. The Overview and Scrutiny Panel are supportive of the Corporate Strategy project to introduce Community Action Plans in parts of the Borough and recommend consideration is given to a wider roll out depending on the implementation and outcomes achieved from the initial plans.</p>	<p>Agreed – Executive Cabinet welcomes O&amp;S support for the Community Action Plan project and will give consideration to a wider roll out subject to the outcomes and impact of the current project.</p>
<p>10. The use of local neighbourhood forums may be considered as appropriate by the Neighbourhood Area meetings as a means to engage and understand community needs. Such forums could be facilitated or hosted jointly with the neighbourhood representatives.</p>	<p>Agreed – the model of using forums to better engage with localities can be beneficial and could be considered by each neighbourhood area. However there are two specific issues to note:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Neighbourhood areas in Chorley cover a large footprint and using forums to engage on that footprint may not drill down to the appropriate level of engagement.</li> <li>2. The use of forums can become extremely resource intensive and as the recommendation notes, individual neighbourhood area groups should determine themselves if an occasional forum type meeting is appropriate and should then utilise representatives, partner agencies and voluntary groups in their areas to resource them.</li> </ol>

**IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT**

12. 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		Policy and Communications	

**COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER**

13. There are no financial implications for the Council's budget with regard to the recommendation above.

**COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER**

14. No comments

JAMIE CARSON  
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROTECTION STREETSCENE AND COMMUNITY

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Simon Clark	5732	26 May 2015	O&SNhoodReview

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Report of	Meeting	Date
Chief Executive (Introduced by the Executive Member for Community Services)	Executive Cabinet	25 June 2015

## **VCFS COMMISSIONING 2014/15 – 2016/17; END OF YEAR ONE**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. This report is provided to update the Executive on the performance of the commissioned VCFS providers during 2014/15 (year one).

### **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2. That the report be noted.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT**

3. Overall performance of all of the commissioned providers is excellent; all of the organisations have met or exceeded all the aims as set out in their Contract.

<b>Confidential report</b> Please bold as appropriate	Yes	<b>No</b>
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<b>Key Decision?</b> Please bold as appropriate	Yes	<b>No</b>
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### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**(If the recommendations are accepted)**

4. To ensure effective monitoring of the council's commissioned providers.

### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

5. No alternative options considered.

### **CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

6. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all	X	A strong local economy	X
Clean, safe and healthy communities	X	An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	X



**BACKGROUND**

7. Chorley Council is committed to supporting its communities and to ensuring that the voluntary, community and faith sector (vcf) are enabled to play their part in our communities. In December 2013 a review of the Core Funding process was undertaken.
8. Based on the conclusions within the review, it was recommended and approved that we move towards a commissioning model. The commissioning model enabled Members to decide which are the areas of greatest need within Chorley, and prepare invites to tender for organisations to deliver services to meet these needs. This was supplemented by support for small organisations through a small community funding process. The benefit of this approach was to direct funding towards services that meet the needs of the community, whilst continuing to support the whole of the vcf sector. This is done both through the combination of commissioning and small community funding, and through the Council's on-going commitment to support the VCFS Network.
9. An Executive Member Decision undertaken in January 2014 approved the procurement process for the commissioning model. This included an open advertisement through The Chest (the Council's e-procurement portal), asking for tenders from providers who can deliver the services as set out in the specifications. Also agreed was the evaluation criteria of 80% quality and 20% cost. The quality criteria were to be assessed using the information that tenderers provided in their method statements.
10. In March 2014 Executive Cabinet approved the providers for the contracts procured through the VCFS commissioning process. It was agreed that all contracts would be 1 +1 +1; this would mean that the contract would be for 1 year with the option to extend on an annual basis for up to a further two years subject to contract review, with a maximum contract length of 3 years.

<b>Name of tender</b>	<b>Approved provider</b>
Delivery of Advice Services	Lancashire West CAB
Delivery of a family support service	Home-Start Central Lancashire
Delivery of a service to support vulnerable adults (women)	Chorley Women's Centre
Delivery of volunteering provision to support older people	Age UK Lancashire
Delivery of a community safety support service	Chorley Street Pastors
Delivery of an arts and employability programme for young people	The Arts Partnership

**END OF YEAR ONE PERFORMANCE**

11. Contract reviews have been undertaken with each of the providers, and an update on each of the contracts is provided within this report at Appendix A.
12. This report recognises the valuable work being undertaken within our communities by voluntary, community and faith groups. Each of the organisations commissioned have expressed that they can see no risks to the future delivery of their service, and that their service is on track to achieve year two and three targets. Following the successful contract reviews it was agreed that in line with the contract, the Agreement would be extended for a further term of one year (1 April 2015 – 31 March 2016).

**IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT**

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

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

**COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER**

14. The commissioned services, as outlined in this report, will be contained within the approved budget

**COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER**

15. The Executive Decision to award the contracts allowed for a maximum contract term of 3 years. On the basis that performance is satisfactory there is no requirement for an Executive Decision to continue the contracts although it is correct to report for noting that the contracts are to continue.

GARY HALL  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Louise Wingfield	5061	1 June 2015	Chorley Commissioning end of year 2014/15

**Appendix A: Performance of Commissioned providers during year one (2014/15)**

**Delivery of Advice Services**

The approved provider is Lancashire West Citizens Advice Bureaux; the contract cost is £74,995.00 per annum.

**Overview**

This contract is to provide a free advice and information service for all residents of Chorley on a range of issues, mainly focusing on debt, legal, housing, money, welfare benefits, utilities, employment and consumer issues, although advice should be available on a full range of issues, which also includes education, finance, health, immigration, relationships, tax and travel. The service will be a pivotal mechanism in supporting Chorley residents through the current welfare reform changes with an important role to play in terms of early intervention and prevention.

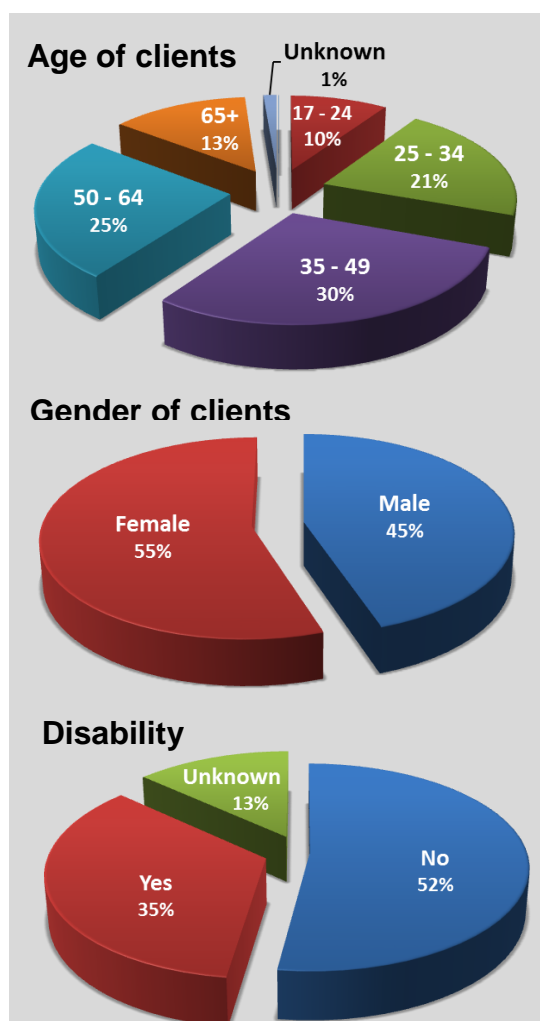
**Performance**

The organisation has met all the aims as set out in the Core Funding Contract as well as meeting the target client numbers. Chorley CAB has provided a holistic, free, independent, confidential and impartial advice service delivered by both staff and volunteers. The service is available Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm.

The total number of clients accessing the service in 2014/15 was 5647. The breakdown of issues by enquiry shows that the main issue is debt at 43.6%, followed by benefits and tax credits at 21.9%. The top four wards with the highest number of clients accessing the service also fall into the bottom 20% of areas in the country in terms of overall deprivation.

**Total Issues by Ward**

Chorley South West	13.1%
Chorley North East	10.5%
Chorley East	10.4%
Chorley South East	10.4%
Adlington and Anderton	7.4%
Clayton-le-Woods North	6.7%
Coppull	6.5%
Astley and Buckshaw	5.8%
Clayton le Woods & Whittle le Woods	5.1%
Chorley North West	4.6%
Wheelton and Withnell	3.2%
Clayton le Woods West & Cuerden	3.0%
Eccleston and Mawdesley	2.4%
Euxton South	2.4%
Euxton North	2.3%
Chisnall	2.1%
Lostock	1.4%
Heath Charnock and Rivington	1.3%
Pennine	0.7%
Brindle and Hoghton	0.6%



Gateway, general and specialist advice services have been provided via telephone and face to face. Clients start their journey with a simple interaction with a gateway assessor to see if they can

help themselves with or without support, thus ensuring services have been targeted at those in most need and in order to manage demand. Where further support was needed client appointments were made for in-house CAB services ensuring they went straight to the correct adviser or caseworker appropriate to their enquiry. Throughout 2014/15 Welfare Benefits and Debt have remained the top enquiry areas. Through the provision of in-house welfare benefits and debt caseworkers, Chorley residents have once again had the benefit of specialist advice which is critical in enabling clients to access their benefit entitlements, manage the changes brought about by Welfare Reform and stabilise their financial situation.

Chorley CAB has provided volunteer opportunities for over 100 people throughout 2014/15, and the learning opportunities provided to volunteers through dedicated CAB training enhanced skills has resulted in many gaining employment outside of their CAB role.

## Delivery of a Family Support Service

The approved provider is Home-Start Central Lancashire; the contract cost is £22,000.00 per annum.

### Overview

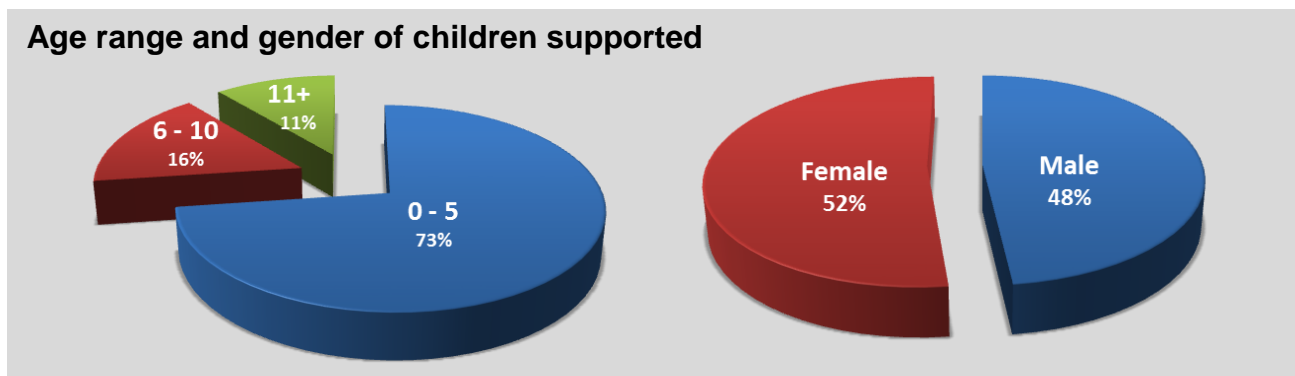
The purpose of the service is to help parents who may need additional support to achieve better lives for their children. The contract is to deliver a service that should offer practical help, support and friendship to families who have children between the ages of 0 -11 years. A range of delivery formats will be used to achieve improved outcomes for the families including increased skills, knowledge, motivation and stronger support networks along with a better physical health and sense of wellbeing.

### Performance

The organisation has met all the aims as set out in the Core Funding Contract as well as exceeding their targets during 2014/15. Over the last 12 months 140 families have been supported in the Chorley area, this includes 291 children. Home-Start has also trained 15 new volunteers this year, and currently has 59 volunteers, with a training course planned for April 2015 for a further 17 volunteers.

Home-Start provides practical help, support and friendship to families (parents, carers and grandparents) who have children aged 0 -11years and who may need support for a variety of difficulties. This might include issues such as isolation, illness, disability, post-natal illness, partner in prison, domestic abuse, debt, housing or relationships issues. Support is provided through home visiting and group support.

Home visits are provided by a supervised volunteer visiting for three hours each week supporting the family with needs identified through an Action Plan. Volunteers work alongside a parent identifying and building upon strengths, helping to build confidence, skills and knowledge through befriending. Support networks are also developed by looking at what is available within the family's local community and encouraging the family to take part in other activities. Two Family Support Groups are held; one in Clayton Brook on Mondays from 1pm to 3pm and one in Chorley Town Centre on Wednesdays from 1pm to 3pm.



This year has also seen the opening of the Hub@Home-Start and the Children's outside play area, which is also an added boost to the service and shows that Home-Start is continually reviewing and adapting its services to meet local demand.

In September 2015 Home-Start will come to the end of a Lottery Reaching Communities 5yr funding grant, however an application has been made to the Lottery for continuation funding and has been successful in the 1st stage application process, the 2nd stage application has been developed which will be submitted in the next couple of months.

**Delivery of a service to support vulnerable adults (women)**

The approved provider is Chorley Women's Centre; the contract cost is £14,995.50 per annum.

The contract is to provide support for women's physical and mental health and wellbeing. It should provide a safe and secure place for vulnerable women to access self help and support as well as free domestic violence counselling provision. The provider will need to work with a range of partners, ensuring the best service for clients which includes working in partnership with equivalent services for men, and linking into organisations who can support the needs of the children of any clients.

**Performance**

The organisation has met all the aims as set out in the Contract for support for vulnerable adults (women) as well as achieving their targets during 2014/15.

Chorley Women's Centre has supported some of the most vulnerable women in Chorley and indirectly their families. The Women's Centre has opened 3 days a week for drop in, Tuesday, Friday and Saturday, offering support both in a group social setting or one to one. They have also offered self-help groups, courses and weekly relaxation sessions. These groups promote self-awareness, self-esteem and coping skills/ strategies. Free counselling has been offered to women, plus specialist counselling (Release) to those (including men) who have been raped and/or sexually abused.

At the Women's Centre there have been a total of 575 clients attending a total of 799 counselling sessions over the year; the main issues are stress, depression and anxiety, emotional crisis and self-esteem related issues, and relationship breakdown.

Circle Counselling offer confidential person centred counselling, sign posting and free legal advice for those who may be experiencing domestic violence or abuse. They have provided counselling and advocacy for 122 clients (including one male).

A total of 107 clients were referred to other agencies for further advice or support. The largest percentage of these was to specialised health related support which includes carer support, cancer support, and eating disorder services, followed by the food bank, the Crisis team or other mental health support services, alcohol and drug services, and the GP.

The centre also provides a range of personal development courses, workshops, treatments and sessions in a range of areas including; LGBT, singing for fun, assertiveness and self-esteem, meditation workshops, singing/drumming, relaxation, legal advice, healing, pregnancy / chlamydia testing, and LWSAR programme.

There is also a library at the Women's Centre with a wide variety of books and tapes on offer including; relationships, assertiveness, alternative therapies, depression, stress and relaxation, pregnancy, children and parents, grief, eating disorders, as well as HRT and the menopause.

The Women's Centre currently has 10 volunteers who are fully trained and supported by the organisation.

## Delivery of volunteering provision to support older people

The approved provider is Age UK Lancashire; the contract cost is £9,996.48 per annum.

### Overview

The contract is to provide a volunteering provision to support older people (defined as age 50+ for the purposes of this service) in Chorley. This volunteering will deliver a range of provision including activities, community groups, and befriending, enabling people to remain independently in their own homes and help to reduce social isolation. The service will also encourage older people to take up volunteering opportunities themselves.

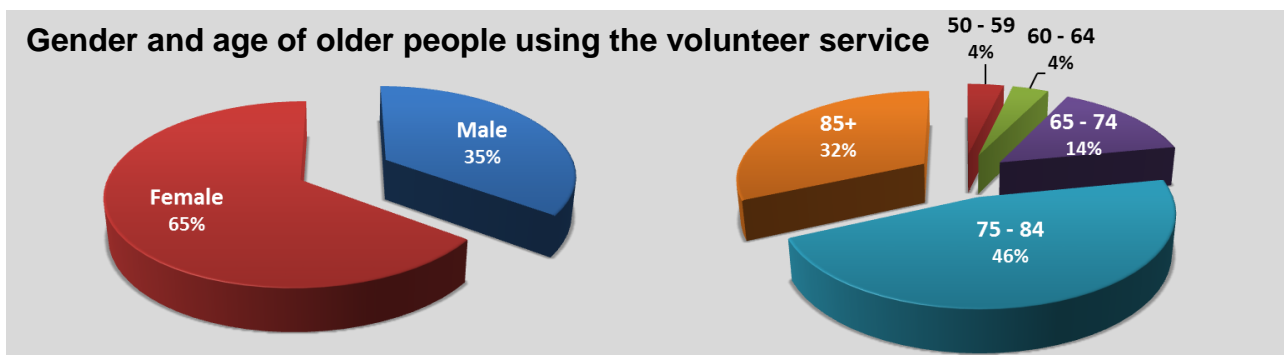
### Performance

The organisation has met all the aims as set out in the Contract for volunteering provision to support older people as well as exceeding their targets during 2014/15. There are currently 56 volunteers, and in 2014/15 more than 1,800 older people used the service.

The Age UK Community Engagement Manager and Personal Adviser have established contact with older people's groups across the district and developed relationships. During the year they have visited in excess of 30 Older People's groups to provide information on services, governance and campaigns including winter resilience, care in crisis and dementia awareness. They have responded to a wide variety of referrals as a result of these visits as well as requests for additional groups.

Role descriptions and role adverts have been completed for all volunteering roles as well as a review of recruitment and training processes. A peer support group for volunteers in the area has been established following two training courses which included Dementia Friends, data protection and safeguarding, with further meetings arranged on a quarterly basis until the end of 2015.

This funding has enabled Age UK to undertake essential work to support groups of older people in Chorley Borough to become sustainable and to ensure that the volunteers leading these groups are fully informed and supported in their role. An Engagement Agreement has been introduced which allows groups to formalise their relationship with Age UK Lancashire and receive long arm support. Work has included local church and community groups to support the establishment of new activities and groups; this has included the new dementia café in Chorley and exercise groups across the district in association with Lancashire Adult Learning.



During the year the engagement activity undertaken by Age UK in Chorley has had an impact on the governance, sustainability and resources of local groups which were previously unsupported. The Village Agent model has been developed which helps to ensure that there are key members within each group and community supported by Age UK, who can champion their own community and have an impact on accessibility and support for individuals.

**Delivery of a community safety support service**

The approved provider is Street Pastors; the contract cost is £7,998.92 per annum.

**Overview**

The purpose of the service is to support local agencies in tackling community safety issues in Chorley, helping to reduce crime and the perception of crime. This contract is to deliver a service that will be a volunteer led provision that responds to local concerns. The service will help people who may be vulnerable and posing a risk to themselves or others, on the streets or in night-time venues by providing assistance, advice and practical support to promote healthier lifestyle choices.

**Performance**

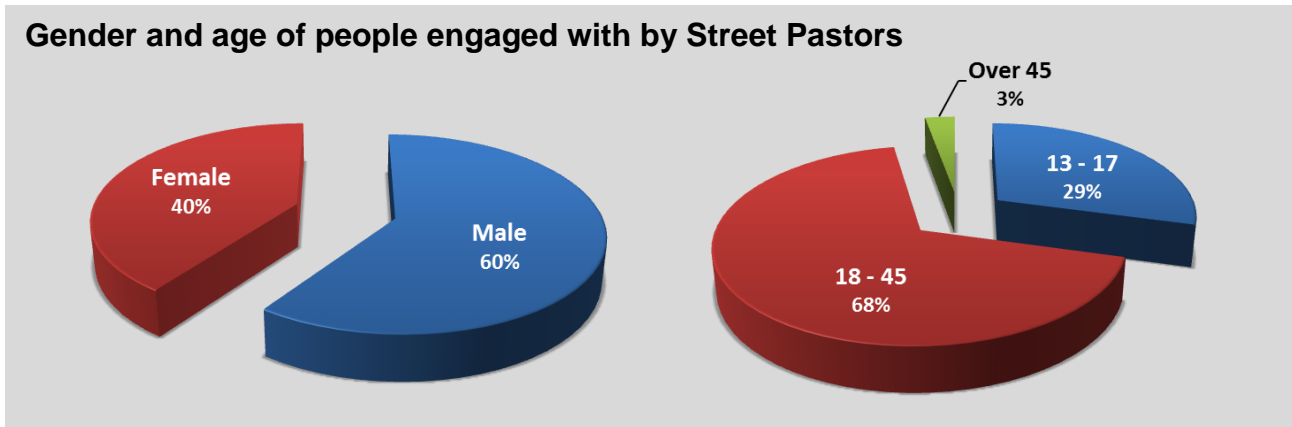
The organisation has met all the aims as set out in the Contract for community safety support services as well as exceeding their targets during 2014/15.

Over the year the Street Pastors have engaged with more than 4500 individuals. Numbers of Street Pastors have been maintained throughout 2014/15, with a new cohort of 8 volunteers trained, as well as a further three to five people currently being considered for training.

The Chorley Street Pastor teams have continued to regularly patrol; Chorley Town Centre plus various housing estates and outlying villages including Coppull, Clayton Brook, Clayton Green and Adlington, the recreation areas in Adlington, Buttermere and Devonshire Road as well as the skate park in Euxton.

A regular presence of Street Pastor patrols has been provided each weekend with early and late patrols each Friday night as well as late patrols on alternate Saturday nights. Regular meetings are held between a representative from the Police and the Street Pastors coordinator to keep up to date with Police protocols. Meetings are also held with the Council in order to keep informed about current Council community initiatives and concerns.

Street Pastors provide support when necessary to vulnerable people ensuring they get home safely, accompanying them to hospital, calming situations etc in Chorley town centre, Clayton Brook, Coppull and Buttermere. They engage with the public in a positive way resulting in conversations with individuals about their hopes and fears relating to their daily lives, work and relationships, as well as providing when necessary; basic first aid to cuts and bruises, water bottles to combat dehydration, lollipops as ‘ice breakers’ and to raise blood sugar levels, flip flops when stilettos are impractical as well as ‘space blankets’ to combat hyperthermia.





## Delivery of an arts and employability programme for young people

The approved provider is the Arts Partnership; the contract cost is £10,000.00 per annum.

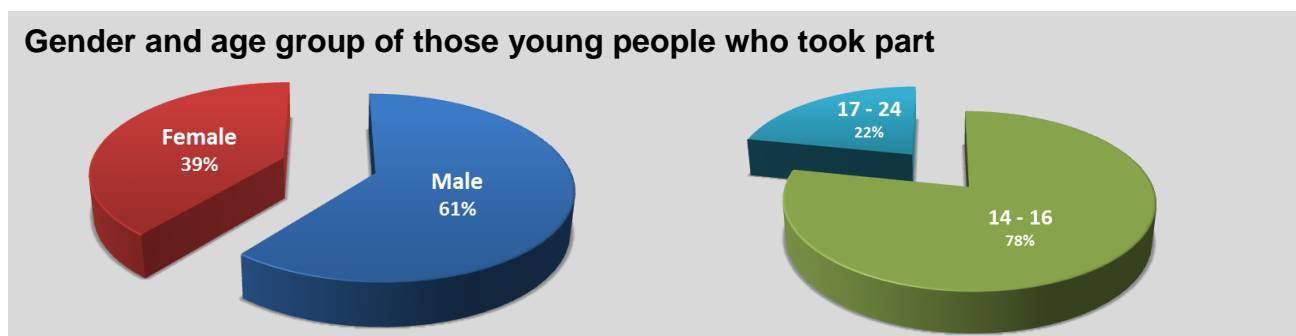
The contract is to design, develop and deliver a programme for young people (aged up to 25) which will allow them to develop essential employability skills such as confidence, time keeping, social and management skills through arts based activities, complemented with opportunities to gain work related skills as part of a series of work placements or workshops to achieve qualifications.

### Performance

The organisation has met all the aims as set out in the Contract for an arts and employability programme for young people as well as exceeding their targets during 2014/15.

46 young people took part on the introduction to radio/interview skills programme, this was a short introduction to Media using Chorley FM Community radio station, and young people worked on basic radio skills and an introduction to interview technique. All of the young people who took part achieved entry level and/or level 1 AQA awards.

The young people developed new skills around how radio works, what community radio is and what it involves, which included interview techniques and recording sessions. This also helped to build their confidence and gave them a sense of achievement and pride in themselves, as well as helping them to realise the benefits of team working, allowing them to develop essential employability skills.



As a direct result of the programme Albany Academy are providing weekly interviews and updates to Chorley FM which are played both live and as podcasts. Mayfield School have also taken part on the programme and would like further work to encourage students to volunteer in the community.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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