

MINUTES OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE PANEL

MEETING DATE Monday, 22 June 2015

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor John Walker (Chair), Councillor Hasina Khan (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Paul Clark, June Molyneaux, Alistair Morwood and Debra Platt

OFFICERS: Jamie Carson (Director of Public Protection, Streetscene and Community), Victoria Willett (Policy and Partnership Officer) and Dianne Scambler (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

APOLOGIES: None

OTHER MEMBERS: Councillor Beverley Murray (Executive Member (Community Services))

15.OSP.1 Declarations of Any Interests

There were no declarations of interests.

15.OSP.2 Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel held on 12 March 2015 be confirmed as a correct record for signing by the Chair.

15.OSP.3 Performance Focus: 1. Time Credits; 2. Delivery of the Play, Open Space and Playing Pitch Strategy

The Chair welcomed Councillor Beverley Murray, Executive Member for Community Services to the meeting who was attending to answer questions on the scrutiny performance focus topics that had been identified for further discussion by the Chair and Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Panel received a report on the Time Credit project and the progress of the Play, Open spaces and Playing Pitch Strategy.

Time Credits:

Councillor Murray gave an overview of the scheme and explained that Time Credits was a three year programme funded by the Council as a positive and proactive means of encouraging and developing volunteering effort to benefit local communities. Work undertaken in year one had focussed on existing groups to build up the service and encourage already established organisations to sign up, year two was concentrating

on embedding the process into service delivery and encouraging new organisations and volunteers to engage. The programme has generated positive outcomes for users and although growth has slowed in the second year performance has been consistently good and exceeded targets, particularly in comparison to the national scheme with Chorley being notably higher, with 72% of Chorley Time Credit volunteers giving their time at least once a week.

Time Credits has opened many opportunities for people to get involved in new activities and people now regularly do things that they didn't do before. The scheme has incentivised its members to start new community groups and it helps people to adopt healthier lifestyles and improves physical and mental wellbeing.

Councillor Murray explained that it is difficult to put checks in place to stop abuse of the system and that there has to be an element of trust; however, the Council do make regular checks of the hours that volunteers claim to have worked with organisations. The Council also monitors the spend uptake.

The Panel requested more information on the spend opportunities and commented that sometimes the booklets made available were out of date, a booklet is available on the website <http://chorley.gov.uk/Documents/lancs%20brochure%202015%20FINAL.pdf> but has it was difficult to keep up to date the Council were exploring ways to improve upon this information by using new technology to deliver a mobile platform.

The Time Credits Facilitator, Angela Barrago spends most of her time out in the community promoting the scheme and encouraging people to get involved. Councillor Murray explained that part of the work being undertaken in year two was to engage the wider community and the Council had recently engaged with a Polish mum's group and the LGBT. The Panel requested further information on how the schools across Chorley were engaging in the process and Councillor Hasina Khan offered to provide contacts for BME groups across the borough.

The Panel felt that all Elected Members of the Council should be encouraged to be actively involved with the scheme, to help promote engagement within their neighbourhoods and recommended that a Member Learning Session be delivered on the Time Credits scheme.

RESOLVED

That the information on Time Credits be noted.

That details on how the schools are engaged in Time Credits be provided.

That the Panel be provided with the timescales for the introduction of the mobile platform.

That a Member Learning Session on Time Credits be delivered.

Play, Open Spaces and Playing Pitch Strategy:

The Play, Open Space and Playing Pitch strategy 2013 – 2018 had been approved and formally adopted by the Executive Cabinet in September 2014. The Strategy provides a five year action plan to protect, manage, enhance and secure sites and identifies deficiencies and future priorities.

The first year of delivery was now complete and it was considered appropriate to review the progress of actions and outcomes to date. The Panel were provided with a

list of actions that had commenced in October 2014 and were updated on the details and progress made. Some works, for example the Westway playing pitches had been identified within the strategy but were planned to commence later and some timescales for delivery had been revised compared to the dates originally identified in the strategy.

The new Astley Park destination play area had now been completed and had been delivered within budget. Members commented on how well received this play area had been and it was reported that visitor numbers to the park had increased despite inclement weather. There had been some initial issues with older children congregating on the play area but measures had now been implemented to address this and would continue to be monitored over the coming months. Although difficult to quantify, the success of the play area is currently being investigated and an update report will be brought to Cabinet later in the year.

It was reported that S106 money that had already been identified to support the Strategy was nearer to £1M but that the majority of this funded was allocated to specific projects. The strategy highlights sites which are low quality and low value. Housing developers are asked to allocate S106 to the nearest lowest scoring site to the development. Much of the strategy will be funded via future development in the Borough as well as Council funds and external funding. Around £170K of current funding was money that would have previously funded the play and recreation fund that parish councils could bid for, however, as the planning laws on how this money was to be received and spent in the future had changed, the Council were exploring how best to allocate this money against the remainder of works that had been prioritised in the Strategy. A report outlining the options would be considered at a future Executive Cabinet meeting.

Members felt that the absence of bowling green provision was a major oversight in the Strategy and asked if the Council had assessed the need for demand across the borough. Some of the existing provision had either closed or was under threat of closure and members felt that this could be something that the Council could help to support. Bowling greens had not been included within the strategy as they are mainly privately owned but there was an acceptance that the Council could do more and it was agreed that the Council would undertake a register of bowling facilities and work with existing clubs to prevent closure. The Councils neighbourhoods teams and PCSO's were working together to combat vandalism issues on the Tatton and Coronation Recreational grounds bowling greens.

The Panel also discussed allotment provision across the borough. A lot of work had been undertaken to try to address demand and Chorley is one of the top performing providers in Lancashire. The waiting list has been refreshed to ensure it is up to date and the terms and conditions of the leases are more strenuously enforced. Some sites that had been identified have been found to be unsuitable; however two new sites, Rangleys Recreational Ground in Chorley and St. Oswald's in Coppull have recently been developed. Councillor Murray explained that the Council are willing to undertake any investigatory grounds work to assess suitability on any suggested sites. The Panel asked if the old Yarrow Depot had been considered and Councillor Platt mentioned that Euxton Parish Council had put forward a couple of sites but that they had not heard anything further and officers promised to look into the progress of these sites and report back.

Other questions included clarification on the amount of funding available for projects through the neighbourhood priorities the works undertaken to support football clubs achieving FA Charter Standard grounds and the remaining improvement works at Astley Park.

The Chair thanked Councillor Murray for attending the meeting.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

That a register of bowling facilities be undertaken across the borough.

That an update on the suitability for the old Yarrow Depot and suggested Euxton sites be provided.

15.OSP.4 Organisational Plan 2015/16

The Panel received the single organisational business plan for 2015/16 that reviewed the programme of projects that would be delivered over the coming year. The Plan pulled all the Council's key activity into a single programme that focused on the administrations strategic priorities, encouraging ownership and accountability, increasing viability and promoting cross cutting working.

All the projects within the 2013/14 organisational plan had been reviewed and were either complete or a revised completion date had been identified. A small number of projects had been carried forward into 2015/16 due to the scale or complexity of work that included:

- Single Front Office
- Astley 20:20
- Friday Street Health Centre
- Youth Zone
- Play, Open Space and Playing Pitch Strategy (specific actions)

There are a total of 58 projects in the organisational plan for 2015/16, 18 are corporate strategy projects, of which 10 have attached budget investment, 23 are budget investment work streams and 15 business improvement projects. A brief overview of each project was provided within the plan.

The SharePoint based MyProjects system has now been adopted across the organisation as the primary tool for the day to day management and monitoring of all actions and projects and Members were urged to log into the system to monitor the detailed milestones and timescales. Not all members are aware of this system and how it can be accessed so the Chair proposed a member learning session be considered.

A revised list of local performance measures have also been developed to support the delivery of the plan and indicators selected to give an accurate picture of the organisations performance whilst ensuring ease of reporting.

Councillor Platt asked if it would be appropriate to capture the works being undertaken to the town hall on the organisational plan due to the significance of the building for the town. It was explained that the town hall works were programmed maintenance that were captured in the Governance and Property Services business plan rather than contributing to the overall corporate strategy of the Council.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

That a Member Learning Session be delivered on MyProjects.

Chair

Date