

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

THURSDAY, 7TH JULY 2016, 6.30 PM

COMMITTEE ROOM 1, TOWN HALL, CHORLEY

### **AGENDA**

#### **APOLOGIES**

##### **1 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.

##### **2 LCC HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE : A & E SERVICES AT CHORLEY HOSPITAL**

County Councillor Steve Holgate will attend the meeting as Chair of LCC Health Scrutiny Committee to talk about that Committee's role in scrutinising the recent temporary closure of Accident and Emergency Services at Chorley Hospital.

##### **3 MINUTES**

###### **A MINUTES OF MEETING THURSDAY, 31 MARCH 2016 OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

(Pages 3 - 10)

To approve the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 31 March 2016.

###### **B MINUTES OF THE MEETING THURSDAY, 16 JUNE OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE PANEL**

(Pages 11 - 14)

To note the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel held on 16 June 2016.

#### 4 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

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

#### 5 **SCRUTINY OF THE EXECUTIVE CABINET**

##### **A MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE CABINET MEETINGS**

(Pages 15 - 20)

To consider the minutes of the Executive Cabinet meeting held on 17 March 2016 (enclosed).

##### **B NOTICE OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS**

To view the notice of Executive decisions published on 21 June 2016 click [here](#).

#### 6 **SCRUTINY REPORTING BACK - ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16**

(Pages 21 - 30)

To consider the annual report of the work undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2015/16 (enclosed).

#### 7 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

(Pages 31 - 32)

To note the updated Work Programme for 2016/17 (enclosed).

The next Task Group topic has been agreed as Child Sexual Exploitation and the first meeting takes place on 2 August 2016.

#### 8 **ANY URGENT BUSINESS PREVIOUSLY AGREED WITH THE CHAIR**

GARY HALL  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Electronic agendas sent to Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Councillor John Walker (Chair), Councillor Roy Lees (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Aaron Beaver, Paul Clark, Jane Fitzsimons, Mark Jarnell, Margaret Lees, Matthew Lynch, June Molyneaux, Greg Morgan, Alistair Morwood, Mark Perks, Debra Platt and Kim Snape.

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)

To view the procedure for public questions/ speaking click here <https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/documents/s60977/Appendix%203%20Standing%20Orders%20Jan%202016.pdf> and scroll to page 49

**MINUTES OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE****MEETING DATE Thursday, 31 March 2016****MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councillor John Walker (Chair), Councillor Hasina Khan (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Margaret France, Mark Jarnell, Margaret Lees, Matthew Lynch, June Molyneaux, Greg Morgan, Alistair Morwood and Debra Platt**OFFICERS:** Lesley-Ann Fenton (Director of Customer and Advice Services) and Simon Clark (Head of Health, Environment and Neighbourhoods)**APOLOGIES:** Councillor Aaron Beaver, Eric Bell, Paul Clark and Kim Snape**16.OS.36 Declarations of Any Interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

**16.OS.37 Overview and Scrutiny Committee****a Minutes of meeting Thursday, 28 January 2016 of Overview and Scrutiny Committee****AGREED - That the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 28 January 2016 be confirmed as a correct record for signature by the Chair.****b Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 2 March 2016 of Overview and Scrutiny Committee****AGREED - That the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 2 March 2016 be confirmed as a correct record for signature by the Chair.****16.OS.38 Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel****AGREED – That the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel held on 3 March 2016 be noted.****16.OS.39 Public Questions**

There were no questions from any members of the public.

**16.OS.40 Minutes of Executive Cabinet Meetings**

**AGREED – That the minutes of the Executive Cabinet held on 21 January and 18 February 2016 be noted.**

**16.OS.41 Notice of Executive Decisions**

Due to technical problems, members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were unable to access the hyperlink to the Notice of Executive Decisions. It was agreed that the hyperlink be circulated again and if there was any issues of concern on the Notice, to contact the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**16.OS.42 PCSO deployment in the neighbourhood policing arena**

The Chair welcomed Inspector Charlie Cox and Simon Clark, Head of Health Environment and Neighbourhoods, Public Protection, Streetscene and Community to the meeting.

Members of the Committee were reminded that this item was a continuation of the item first discussed at the Committee on 8 October 2015. Inspector Cox attended the meeting to answer questions on PCSOs deployment in the neighbourhood policing arena.

*What information and data can be made available on PCSO activity, particularly in neighbourhoods?*

Inspector Cox informed the Committee of the types of data which could be provided on PCSO activity -

- Intelligence reports – PCSOs were expected to seek out quality intelligence
- Number of Youth Referrals, in particular dealing with anti-social behaviour; the Early Action Team did a lot of work, the success of which could be gauged on the number of referrals being made
- Number and types of incidents attended
- Community engagement – the amount of contact made, particularly with harder to reach groups
- Problem solving initiatives; this would be difficult to measure depending on the vulnerability, as to how a person could be helped was difficult to quantify. It was suggested one measure could be tracked on the amount of calls made to emergency services, as a decrease in the amount of contact made would suggest that they were able to cope better
- Early Action Team initiatives; this would be difficult to measure as there was a series of long term interventions; it was a good opportunity to identify individuals and work with them and their families.

*Given that there are 8 PCSOs employed on Early Action what impact is this likely to have on neighbourhood and high visibility policing?*

It was acknowledged that there was presently 21 PCSOs in Chorley, following the restructure that figure was to be reduced to 19. It was expected that the reduction would be managed through natural movement.

The Committee were advised that following a restructure, eight PCSOs had been moved to early action intervention work. They were responsible for delivering the majority of the projects and initiatives including working with schools, working with vulnerable callers and the cadet system all of which was previously the responsibility of all the PCSOs. To have a dedicated team dealing with early intervention work allowed more consistency in approach while continuing to link in with neighbourhood officers. The change allowed the remaining PCSOs to concentrate on working in their neighbourhood and be more visible to the community.

In response to questions on how the number of PCSOs for each area was decided, Inspector Cox informed the Committee that each neighbourhood area was indexed on risk, threat, and vulnerability. Four PCSOs had been designated to the priority areas –

- Chorley East (1 PCSO)
- Chorley South East including the Town Centre (2 PCSOs)
- Chorley North West (1 PCSO)

The nine other areas, when indexed, shared PCSOs. However, it was noted that the Community Beat managers in those areas remained the same.

*How are deployment decisions made with regard to PCSO's (what factors do you take in to account) and is there any flexibility regarding that deployment?*

The majority of incidents were attended by PCSOs for that area. However, if the PCSO for that area was unavailable or depending on the situation, if it was felt that a different PCSO would be more appropriate they would be deployed accordingly.

It was acknowledged that from time to time resources may need to be increased in an area based on risk and threat. Although this meant taking some PCSOs away from their beat, it would not be for more than a day at a time.

*What influence can Chorley Council have on deployment decisions?*

The Police worked closely with Chorley Council and provided reports each year which detailed the number of days lost due to redeployment. Priorities needed to be made based on risk and vulnerability and it was inevitable that redeployment of officers would occur.

Members of the Committee asked a variety of questions which included –

- The reduction in the number of PACT meetings and the need for PCSOs to provide a designated day and time when they were available to meet residents?

Inspector Cox felt that in some areas the PACT meetings were not as effective as in other areas. However, members of the Committee were advised that if the meetings were effective, they would continue. It was also expected that the PCSOs would be proactive and talk to residents 'in the know' to pick up on issues that were happening in the neighbourhood area. It was suggested that the PCSOs attended other community meetings such as parish/town council meetings. This would allow members of the public to report matters of concern which they may not feel able to report to the Police more formally.

- Was the money from the residents in Chorley, being spent in Chorley or elsewhere?

Inspector Cox confirmed that all money provided by the residents of Chorley was being spent in Chorley.

The Head of Health Environment and Neighbourhoods, Public Protection Streetscene and Community confirmed that in previous years the number of days lost due to vacancies or staff sickness, the Council had either received a refund or a reduction for the following year for the difference. However, in the last two years, there had been no overall loss.

- *How quickly are vacancies filled?*

Members of the Committee were advised that each year there were two windows of opportunity to recruit and train PCSOs. Once trained the PCSOs would be deployed to fill any vacancies. However, once all PCSOs had been deployed, any vacancies would remain until the next tranche of recruitments had been trained.

**AGREED – That the officers of the Council continued to monitor the number of days lost due to vacancies or sickness, compared with any refund or reduction made by the Police.**

#### **16.OS.43 Final Monitoring Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group (CCTV Provision and Infrastructure)**

The Committee considered the final report from the Director of Public Protection, Streetscene and Community informing on the progress made against the recommendations of the Task Group review on CCTV Provision and Infrastructure.

In late 2014 Executive Cabinet agreed a significant capital investment in the Council's CCTV public space infrastructure following the scrutiny review into the service.

A procurement exercise was undertaken in 2015, to identify a contractor who could deliver the necessary upgrade to the CCTV equipment in terms of a new monitoring suite and state of the art CCTV cameras to replace old and obsolete cameras at existing sites. Members noted that the upgrade was not concerned with new sites provision for CCTV cameras.

In July 2015, the first monitoring report presented to the Committee demonstrated good progress had been made in the procurement process. Following a competitive tendering process in October 2015, Technology Solutions was awarded the contract and were in year one of a three year delivery plan.

Recent progress had been focussed on the relocation and equipping of the monitoring suite at Chorley Police Station, and by the end of 2016 it was envisaged that the majority of CCTV camera heads would have been replaced with upgrade units. In addition the upgrade was seeking to utilise low cost wi-fi camera communication and this has been achieved where sight lines and connectivity allowed.

The Committee was informed that the delivery of the infrastructure upgrade was a corporate capital project, and as such was subject to regular monitoring reports and budget control. It was anticipated that the full upgrade would be delivered earlier than anticipated and within budget.

Members of the Committee considered the report, and in response to questions posed to Inspector Cox, he advised that the CCTV provision was extremely important and was an invaluable tool used by the Police in both real time (proactively seeking out potential situations) and reactive (in the investigation of a crime).

The Chair thanked Inspector Cox for attending and contributing to the meeting.

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

#### **16.OS.44 First Monitoring Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group (Neighbouring Working)**

Members of the Committee received the first monitoring report from the Director of Public Protection, Streetscene and Community informing them on the progress made against the recommendations of the Task Group review in to Neighbourhood Working.

Neighbourhood working in Chorley had continued to be successful focussing activity on three agreed and defined projects within each neighbourhood area for delivery each financial year. Consequently 24 projects had recently been agreed by Executive Cabinet for delivery in 2016/17 and the good attendance and engagement at all neighbourhood meetings had been recorded.

The monitoring report detailed the Task Groups recommendation and the progress made. Most of the recommendations had either been implemented or were in the process of being implemented. However, the recommendation that the Council explore with the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) as to how the VCFS could use resources provided by the Council to improve networking needed to be progressed.

It had been noted that during the scrutiny review, members of the Task Group had been impressed with South Ribble Borough Council's approach to neighbourhood working and in particular the forums. Members of the Committee were informed that this approach was very resource intensive and would not necessarily be the best option for all the neighbourhoods. It was proposed that the matter be discussed at the next round of Neighbourhood Area meetings in June/July 2016.

Members of the Committee discussed various aspects of neighbourhood working, including encouraging parish/town to financially contribute towards the preferred projects in future.

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

#### **16.OS.45 Health Scrutiny**

Members of the Committee received Lancashire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee 2015/16 Work Plan which detailed the work undertaken by the Committee and the progress made.

Councillor France expressed her disappointment about the Urgent Care Unit at Chorley Hospital not being occupied, and wanted an update on what was happening. The Director of Customer and Advice Services advised that the matter could be

broached through the Public Services Reform Board by the Executive Leader of the Council.

**AGREED –**

- 1. that the report be noted**
- 2. the Performance Panel consider Lancashire County Council's Health Scrutiny Work Plan at its meetings**
- 3. that the Executive Leader of the Council be asked to seek an update on the progress of the occupation of the Urgent Care Unit through the Public Service Reform Board.**

**16.OS.46 Final report of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group (Staff Sickness Absence)**

Members of the Committee considered the final report of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group – Staff Sickness Absence. Councillor John Walker presented the groups findings and drew members' attention to the recommendations to be considered by the Executive Cabinet.

The Task Group felt that the recent increase in the level of sickness absence for 2015/16 did not suggest any underlying cause for concern. They also felt that the Council's current Sickness Absence Policy and approach to short and long term staff sickness absence was fair and proportionate to manage staff sickness effectively. They were pleased with the range of health and wellbeing initiatives and interventions available to employees to help maintain a healthy workforce.

It was acknowledged that a lot of work had taken place to reassure employees that the Sickness Absence Policy was to help and support employees suffering from short or long term sickness, and were also encouraged that those employees who have been through the processes generally felt supported.

The Task Group had felt it was important to have a consistent approach throughout the Council and agreed it was essential that managers receive refresher training on applying the policy and in particular how to support staff through the sickness absence procedures which would improve staff confidence in the Council being a caring and supportive employee.

**AGREED – That the finale report of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group – Staff Sickness Absence be submitted to the next meeting Executive Cabinet for consideration on 23 June 2016.**

**16.OS.47 Work Programme**

Members of the Committee noted the work programme which detailed the activities undertaken by members of the Committee over the last year.

As the next meeting of the Committee was scheduled for 7 July and to avoid potential delays to the work programme, the Chair proposed a short scrutiny review on the Counter Terrorism Act to take place following confirmation of the Committee's membership at the Annual Council meeting in May.



**AGREED – That the topic of the next Task Group be the Counter Terrorism Act. Members of the Committee will be contacted following their appointment to the Committee regarding membership.**

**16.OS.48 Any urgent business previously agreed with the Chair**

The Chair informed members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that this was the last meeting to take place before Lesley-Ann Fenton, Director of Customer and Advice Services, retired from the Council in April.

On behalf of members of the Committee, the Chair thanked Lesley-Ann for all her hard work and the commitment she had shown while supporting the Committee over the last two year and wished her well for her retirement.

The Chair also thanked members of the Committee for their contribution to the scrutiny process over the last municipal year.

Chair

Date

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**MINUTES OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE PANEL**

**MEETING DATE** Thursday, 16 June 2016

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councillor John Walker (Chair), Councillor Roy Lees (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Matthew Lynch, June Molyneaux, Alistair Morwood and Mark Perks

**OFFICERS:** Jamie Carson (Director (Early Intervention and Support)), Victoria Willett (Performance and Partnerships Manager), Kate Cronin (Policy Officer) and Cathryn Filbin (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

**OTHER MEMBERS:** Councillor Beverley Murray, Executive Member (Early Intervention)

**16.OSP.17 Minutes of meeting Thursday, 3 March 2016 of Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel**

**AGREED - That the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel meeting held on 3 March 2016 be confirmed as a correct record for signature by the Chair.**

**16.OSP.18 Declarations of Any Interests**

Councillor Matthew Lynch declared an interest in the Performance Focus: Community Plan due to his role as Member Responsible for Community Development. Councillor Lynch remained in the meeting and contributed to the discussion.

**16.OSP.19 Performance Focus: Community Development**

Members of the Panel received a report which provided contextual information in respect of community development delivery and future development.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Beverley Murray, Executive Member (Early Intervention) and Jamie Carson, Deputy Chief Executive/Director (Early Intervention and Support) to the meeting, who attended to answer questions in relation to Community Development.

Members of the Panel were provided with an update on the latest position on staffing following the Council's management structure which resulted in some minor changes to the team. The Health and Wellbeing team as it was now called; had an additional Community Development

Officer post. Get Up and Go sessions continued to attract positive levels of participation with a total of 26,642 young people attending sessions in 2015/16, which was an increase of over 20% on 2014/15.

The team continued to support local clubs and groups with 155 groups supported in 2015/16 which vary from luncheon clubs through to larger organisations such as the Prince's Trust. The total number of groups supported was lower than the same time last year (200 in 14/15) which reflected a more targeted approach and also additional support was available from within the sector, for example from the VCFS Network.

Members of the Panel discussed many aspects of the report which included:

**Targeted Activities;** and questioned why few activities were being arranged for those residents in the middle age group. It was explained that programme sessions were identified based on evidence available both locally and nationally. Latest figures suggested that those residents in the middle age group would already undertake some kind of regular activity. There was evidence to suggest both younger and older residents were more likely not take part in regular activities and these groups were classed as some of the most vulnerable groups in society. It was therefore important to try to engage with these groups to prevent the feeling of isolation and encourage a more active lifestyle.

**Working in Schools;** and how the Council engaged with them. The Panel was informed that the Council worked closely with some schools, but not others. Schools were not required to buy in services from the Chorley Council; they can choose which service provider they want to work with, even if that was a neighbouring authority. However, when it came to borough wide activities such as the Chorley Grand Prix, all schools within the borough were invited to take part.

**Chorley Time Credits;** was hailed a great success. The Time Credits programme had delivered successful outcomes in terms of increased volunteering and benefits for communities in Chorley. It was acknowledged that Chorley Time Credits was a positive and proactive means of encouraging and growing volunteering effort, supporting and strengthening links between existing volunteering groups in Chorley as well as encouraging and providing opportunities for new groups to get established.

The Panel was reassured that management arrangement of Chorley Time Credits had been put in place for when the Health and Wellbeing Team took ownership of the scheme.

Members of the Panel called for better communications around the success of the Time Credits and that up to date information on the number of organisations for where Time Credits can be spent locally be well publicised.

The Chair thanked both Executive Member (Early Intervention) and Deputy Chief Executive/Director (Early Intervention and Support) for attending the meeting and their contribution to the discussions.

## 16.OSP.20 The Organisational Plan 2016/17

Members of the Panel received a report by the Director of Policy and Governance the purpose of which was to present the single organisational business plan for 2016/17 and to review the programme of projects which had been planned for delivery over the coming financial year.

All projects within the 2015/16 organisational plan had been received and were either complete or to be carried forward with a future date for completion identified. The plan included a significant number of large and capital investment items along with projects phased

over multiple years to deliver a sustained impact and therefore 20 items were taken forward in 2016/17.

The plan included 55 projects which had been approved through the Corporate Strategy process, identified for budget investment in 2016/17 or had been carried forward from 2015/16. In total, the 2016/17 plan incorporated 16 Corporate Strategy projects, 31 Budget Growth projects and 8 Business Improvement projects which comprised of –

- Development of a new Buckshaw Community Centre
- Yarrow Valley car park
- Play, Open Space and Playing Pitch Strategy
- Transport plan for Chorley
- Digital access and inclusion
- Delivery of Community Action Plans
- Reform public services in Chorley

Members of the Panel discussed various aspects of the report:

- The Yarrow Valley project; members of the Panel sought an update on the project in regards to the car park. The Performance and Partnerships Manager advised that she would call upon the relevant Project Manager to provide an update and circulate it as soon as possible.
- The management transfer of the new Buckshaw Village Community Centre, from the Council; it was reported that discussions were at an early stage and as yet nothing had been agreed. It had been envisaged that individual groups involved in the Community Centre would join together to create a management committee. However, if there was not enough interest expressed, the Council would consider appointing a sole management company to manage the centre. The management transition would be facilitated by the Council.
- School place projections project; members of the Panel raised concern about the lack of school places available at the moment, particularly high schools. The Panel sought reassurance that when predicting the number of primary and secondary school places required, that the project considered the amount of new housing developments in Chorley that had been built recently and those which had been granted planning permission. The Council's Performance and Partnership Manager advised that the Panel's concerns would be reported to the project manager and asked for this matter to be addressed in the project. The Panel was informed that the project, which was scheduled for completion later this year, would be evidence to support any decisions made in relation to school places in the future.
- Food banks; in response to enquiries made by members of the Panel the Council's Performance and Partnership Manager advised from the data collected by Living Waters, showed a slight decline in the number of people presenting themselves at the food bank over the last 12 to 18 months. It was explained that the Living Waters, in partnership with the Council, offered a different type of experience for its user which differed to other food banks, in that not only did Living Waters provide food to those in need, users were offered wider support, opportunities and advice. The aim of which was to develop the user's own skills and coping mechanisms to reduce the number of recurring visits.
- Friday Street; it was reported that the latest position on the project was that the funding criteria had changed and that the project would need to be referred back to the Clinical Commissioning Group for further consideration as part of the review.
- Market Walk Extension; members of the Panel were informed that the Council was close to its target of 75% of tenancies filled before work on the extension would begin. However, it was important that the tenants ran the sort of businesses that the Council

wanted to attract to Chorley, and careful consideration was given to any approach made.

**AGREED –**

- 1. That the Council's Performance and Partnership Manager inform the project manager for the School Place Projections of the Panel's concerns and ask that consideration be awarded to new and future housing developed being addressed in the project.**
- 2. Clarification on specific questions raised during the discussion to be circulated to the Panel in due course.**

Chair

Date

**MINUTES OF****EXECUTIVE CABINET****MEETING DATE****Thursday, 17 March 2016****MEMBERS PRESENT:**

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

**MEMBER RESPONSIBLE:**

Councillors Danny Gee, Matthew Lynch and Alistair Morwood

**COUNCIL CHAMPIONS:**

Councillors Julia Berry, Jean Cronshaw and Gordon France

**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 and Property Services), Simon Clark (Head of Health, Environment and Neighbourhoods), Rebecca Huddleston (Head of Policy and Communications), Jane McDonnell (Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development) and Dianne Scambler (Democratic and Member Services Officer) (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

**APOLOGIES:**

Councillor Beverley Murray

**OTHER MEMBERS:**

Councillors Charlie Bromilow, Margaret France, Tom Gray, Marion Lowe, June Molyneaux, Eric Bell, Greg Morgan, John Walker and Ralph Snape

**16.EC.200 Minutes**

The minutes of the Executive Cabinet meeting held on 18 February 2016 be confirmed as a correct record for signing by the Executive Leader.

**16.EC.201 Declarations of Any Interests**

There were no declarations of any interests.

**16.EC.202 Public Questions****16.EC.203 Neighbourhood Preferred Projects 2016/17**

The report of the Director of Public Protection, Streetscene and Community was presented by the Executive Leader. The report updated Members on the delivery of the 24 preferred projects in 2015/16 and sought approval for the new 24 preferred projects to be delivered in 2016/17.

Councillor Ralph Snape spoke in support of the preferred project proposals for the Chorley Town West Neighbourhood area.

The projects had been determined at the recent round of Neighbourhood Area meetings in January and February. The details of all the proposed projects was provided within the report and delegated authority was required for the Executive Member (Community) to approve finalised details and costs for each priority as they emerged from within the overall budget allocation for all eight areas of the borough.

It was recognised that there was a diverse range of preferred projects and that some would require further consultation to fully understand and determine community needs. Funding of their delivery would be through existing budgets, business as usual resources, leveraging in partner resources and approaching Parish Councils to release a proportion of their precept.

**Decision:**

- 1. Approval granted of the 24 preferred projects and actions identified at the Neighbourhood Area Meetings for delivery in 2016/17 as listed in Appendix 1 to the report.**
- 2. Delegated responsibility granted to the Executive Member (Community) to approve details and costs for each priority as they emerge but within the overall budget allocation for neighbourhood preferred projects.**
- 3. The successful delivery of neighbourhood preferred projects in 2015/16 as listed in Appendix 2 of the report was noted.**

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

To progress the preferred projects determined by the neighbourhood area representatives for the benefit of the communities within their respective neighbourhood areas during 2016/17.

**Alternative options considered and rejected**

None

**16.EC.204 Energy Efficiency Update**

The report of the Director of Customer and Advice Services was presented by the Executive Member for Customer and Advice Services and updated on the Council's involvement with various activities relating to Energy Efficiency and continued efforts to combat fuel poverty.

The Council are required to provide a HECA (Home Energy Conservation Act) update report every two years. The last report was in March 2015 and this report acted as an interim report in advance of the next, in March 2017.

The Council has a long standing commitment to combating Fuel Poverty, reflected in the Corporate Strategy. The Council's various Energy Efficiency initiatives therefore aim to deliver Affordable Warmth for customers and reduce the incidence of Fuel Poverty in the borough.



There are currently a number of Energy Efficiency initiatives either in progress or being developed and further details were provided about each of them in the report:

- Energy Switching Support Service
- Affordable Warmth Fund Interventions
- Cosy Homes in Lancashire (CHiL)
- GB Energy Partnership

It was reported that CHiL has yet to deliver for Chorley residents, thought mainly to be because of issues relating to its promotion and complex processes. Measures had now been taken to address this and the scheme was now being advertised on the Council's website.

GB Energy is a Lancashire company that offers a wide range of energy related services including competitive rates of Energy supply and the facilitation of Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funded measures for customers experiencing Fuel Poverty. The Council are exploring the possibility of working in partnership with GB on a variety of energy initiatives with the main aim of achieving financial savings for Chorley residents.

**Decision: The report was noted.**

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

The report is for noting and does not contain any specific recommendations.

**Alternative options considered and rejected**

None

## **16.EC.205Bus Services**

The report of the Chief Executive was presented by the Executive Leader and Executive Member (Economic Development and Partnerships) that informed Members and sought approval of a commitment made by the Executive Leader in respect of funding allocated to mitigate the impact of Lancashire County Council (LCC) budget reductions to support bus services in the borough.

In the Council most recent budget a sum of £500k had been set aside to help mitigate the impact on the Chorley area and residents of reduction in LCC budgets. The money is intended as short term financing to allow time to find other sustainable solutions. Decisions already taken by the County Council mean that from 3 April a number of bus services will be cut or reduced.

The report detailed the reasons for looking to continue the 24a and 109a bus services and set out a financing agreement based upon a 70/30% split of costs that had been agreed by both Councils.

There were further reports of other bus services that would also be under threat across the borough and the Cabinet were asked to consider ways of progressing these issues within a formal decision making process.

**Decision: Approval granted of the funding commitment given by the Executive Leader in respect of 24a and 109a bus services currently servicing the Chorley area**

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

To progress a set of options to mitigate the impact on local services of Lancashire County Council budget reductions.

**Alternative options considered and rejected.**

None.

**16.EC.206 Exclusion of the Public and Press**

To exclude the press and public for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve 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.

Councillor Peter Wilson, Executive Member (Resources) left the meeting at 6.40pm.

**16.EC.207 Land at Southport Road**

The report of the Chief Executive was presented by the Executive Member (Resources) and sought authority for the sale of Council owned land at Southport Road, Chorley.

**Decision: Approval that recommendations contained in the report are granted.**

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

A marketing exercise has been undertaken and the recommendation demonstrates best value has been obtained for the site.

**Alternative options considered and rejected**

Not to pursue the sale. This will not generate a capital receipt and will not enable the Council to deliver civic space proposed within the Town Centre Masterplan

**16.EC.208 Senior Management Review**

The report of the Chief Executive was presented by the Executive Leader and Executive Member (Economic Development and Partnerships) which responded to the feedback received to the consultation on the proposed restructure of senior management in the organisation and outlined any amendments made in light of comments received. The report also sought approval for the implementation of the new management structure for the Council.

**Decision:**

1. **Approval granted that the Directors posts salaries be increased to £70k including car to reflect more recent benchmarking of neighbouring Councils.**
2. **Approval granted that the Building Control Trainee post be deleted instead of a Building Control Officer post.**
3. **Approval granted for other changes to job descriptions and job titles to be made as listed in the report.**
4. **Approval granted that the senior management structure presented to Full Council on 19 January encompassing the changes above.**

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

This will deliver the objectives identified in the review and, when fully implemented, will realise cashable savings of £336K.

**Alternative options considered and rejected**

Retain recommendations of the original report.

**16.EC.209Cotswold Supported Housing**

The report of the Director of Customer and Advice Services was presented by the Executive Member (Customer and Advice Services) and outlined the proposed next steps for the refurbishment of Cotswold supported Housing following the outcome of the bid to the Homes and Communities Agency for Homeless Change Grant funding.

The report also sought delegated authority for the awarding of the contract of works by the Executive Member (Resources)

**Decision:**

1. **Approval granted that the Homes and Communities Contract for Homeless Change Programme funding is accepted along with the associated grant payments totalling £658,735.00.**
2. **Approval granted that the Council commences the procurement exercise to select a contractor to undertake the schedule of works to complete the final phase of modernisation of the building and its facilities for homeless people.**
3. **Approval granted that the decision to award the contract of works to the successful bidder be delegated to the Executive Member (Resources)**

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

1. The refurbishment of Cotswold Supported Housing will be complete and no further significant investment will be required.
2. The quality of the accommodation will be the same for all 25 flats and the facilities available for life skills, education and training on site will be much improved.

**Alternative options considered and rejected.**

None

Chair

Date

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# Scrutiny Reporting Back

Chorley Council's Annual Report on Overview and Scrutiny in 2015/16



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### 1. MEMBERSHIP OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2015/16



**Councillor John Walker**  
**Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2015/16**



**Councillor Hasina Khan**  
**Vice Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2015/16**

Councillors Aaron Beaver, Eric Bell, Paul Clark, Margaret France, Mark Jarnell, Margaret Lees, Matthew Lynch, June Molyneaux, Greg Morgan. Alistair Morwood, Debra Platt and Kim Snape

## 2 INTRODUCTION BY THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has had another busy year undertaking a varied and extensive Work Programme and two Task Group reviews. Councillor John Walker was appointed Chair of the Committee for another year and Councillor Hasina Khan was welcomed as Vice Chair. There were also several new members welcomed to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. As the year came to a close, the Committee said goodbye to Lesley-Ann Fenton, Director of Customer and Advice Services who retired in April 2016, she had taken a lead director role in the work of the Committee for a number of years. Other changes included Cathryn Filbin replacing Dianne Scambler, Democratic and Members Services Officer as support officer to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel, consisting of six members met quarterly to monitor the Council's Business Plan performance, along with a focus on a number of different service issues.

This year the Overview and Scrutiny Committee established Task Groups to undertake two reviews–

- The Single Front Office
- Staff Sickness Absence

The Committee continued to receive six monthly monitoring reports following the Executive's response on the implementation of outcomes and measure success from past scrutiny reviews:

**Select Move Review** - reducing the waiting list was a desired objective of the review and this had been achieved. The implementation of the majority of recommendations required the willingness and cooperation of partners, particularly the Registered Providers of Social Housing (RPs).

**Adoption of Estates** - the Committee was made aware of adoptions of estates which had been fully and partly complete. However, a number of factors resulted in progress not being made as anticipated against some recommendations which included internal staffing issues and Lancashire County Council not being able to provide pre-application and transport related advice. Members of the Committee had welcomed the progress made but raised concern about the length of time it was taking from some areas to be adopted. The Committee welcomed the fact that there was willingness from all parties involved to work together to progress adoptions of estates faster.

**CCTV Provision and Infrastructure** – following a procurement exercise undertaken in 2015 a contractor was appointed to carry out the necessary upgrade due to be delivered within three years. Recent progress had focussed on the relocation and equipping of the monitoring suite at Chorley Police Station, and by the end of 2016 it is envisaged that the majority of CCTV camera heads would have been replaced with upgrade units. In addition, the upgrade was seeking to utilise low cost wi-fi camera communication and this has been achieved where sight lines and connectivity allowed.

**Neighbourhood Working** – the majority of the recommendations had either been implemented or were in the process of being implemented. However, the recommendation that the Council explore with the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) as to how the VCFS could use resources provided by the Council to improve networking, needed to be progressed.

**Public Transport Issues in Chorley** – the Task Group presented the groups findings and drew the Overview and Scrutiny Committee attention to the 15 recommendations that would highlight to the Executive the importance of considering all transport needs for its residents when undertaking all relevant Council projects as good transport links were extremely important for both residents of the borough and visitors to Chorley.

### 3 CHALLENGING PERFORMANCE

The Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel focused on the performance elements of scrutiny, and considered all monitoring information. Scrutinising performance is a key role for scrutiny and one of the benefits to the dedicated resources was that a smaller number of members were able to drill down to the detail in key areas and adopt some consistency in approach.

The Performance Panel for 2015/16 consisted of the following membership -  
Councillor John Walker (Chair)  
Councillor Hasina Khan (Vice Chair)  
Councillor Paul Clark  
Councillor June Molyneux  
Councillor Alistair Morwood  
Councillor Debra Platt

The Panel met four times within the last twelve months, considering the Council's Corporate Strategy, key projects and monitoring, and the Council's Organisational Improvement Plan that captured all the directorate and service level business improvement plans.

Each meeting also considered an additional performance focus, where the Panel looked at particular areas of concern or poor performance, with the relevant Executive Member being invited to attend.

#### 3.1 TIME CREDITS

(Councillor Beverley Murray, Executive Member (Community Services) was in attendance)

Members of the Panel were reminded that the Time Credits initiative was a three year programme funded by the Council as a positive and proactive means of encouraging and developing a volunteer culture to benefit local communities.

In the first year the focus was on existing groups to build up the service and encourage already established organisations to sign up. Year two concentrated on embedding the process into service delivery, and encouraging new organisations and volunteers to engage. Although growth had slowed in the second year, performance had consistently been good and exceeded targets, particularly when compared to the national scheme with Chorley being notably higher. It was reported that 72% of Chorley Time Credit volunteers gave their time up at least once a week.

It was explained that there was an element of trust when awarding the Time Credits. However, checks had been put in place to stop abuse of the system, with the Council auditing the hours that volunteers claim to have worked with the organisations. In addition, the spend uptake was also monitored.

The Panel felt that all elected members should be encouraged to take an active part in the scheme, and to help promote engagement within their neighbourhoods. To this end a Member Learning Session was delivered the purpose of which was to inform members about Chorley Time Credits and the benefits to the community and those individuals taking part who not only were rewarded for their time but had also developed their own life skills.

#### 3.2 DELIVERY OF THE PLAY, OPEN SPACE AND PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

(Councillor Beverley Murray, Executive Member (Community Services) was in attendance)

The Executive Cabinet had approved and formally adopted the Play, Open Space and Playing Pitch Strategy 2013-2018 in September 2014. The Strategy detailed a five year action plan to protect, manage, enhance and secure sites as well as identifying where there were deficiencies and future priorities.



The Strategy highlighted sites that were both low quality and low value. It was reported that almost £1 million pounds collected from S106 payments had been identified to support the strategy although the majority of this fund had been allocated to specific projects. Most of the Strategy would be funded by future development in the borough as well as Council and external funding.

Through discussion about the absence of bowling-green provision, members of the Panel were informed that bowling greens had not been included with the strategy as they were mainly privately owned. However, there had been an acceptance for the Council to do more and officers would be asked to work with existing clubs to prevent closure and produce a register of bowling facilities.

Members of the Panel also discussed allotment provision across the borough and the amount of work that had been undertaken to address the demand. The Panel welcomed the fact that Chorley was one of the top performing providers of allotments in Lancashire.

### **3.3 PLANNING CONTEXT**

(Councillor Paul Walmsley, Executive Member (Public Protection) was in attendance at the meeting)

The Panel received a report on planning performance and an overview of the different types of planning applications that the Council processed. It was highlighted that the Scheme of Delegation with the Council's Constitution was a major factor in the amount of applications that had to be determined by the Development Control Committee. A few years ago, in response to the number of developments being built on garden land across the borough, the constitution was changed so that applications for developments of three houses above required approval by the Development Control Committee. This was in contrast to other authorities which dealt with those types of applications under delegated powers. However, there was a consensus between members and officer that there was scope for the 'Scheme of Delegation' to be reviewed. This would ease the large volume of applications referred to the Development Control Committee for determination; it would also result in a cost saving for the Council and increase efficiencies.

In addition, it had been reported that advice issued by the government within the National Planning Guidance on S106, had meant that delegated powers to officers to determine applications of one or two dwellings had been removed adding to the increase of applications being referred to Development Control Committee.

The performance of the Planning Service was also scrutinised, with members of the Panel being informed that statistics stated that at the end of 2014/15 figures, for 'major' applications were above target. For 'minor' and 'other' applications were off track but within threshold. This pattern continued into the first quarter of 2015/16 figures, for 'major' applications which remained excellent. However, the performance for 'minor' and 'other' applications were 5% off target. As a result, an action plan had been prepared setting out all the issues and action to be taken to improve performance.

### **3.4 WELFARE REFORMS**

(Councillor Graham Dunn, Executive Member (Customer and Advice Services) was in attendance)

It had been reported that the Council was in a good place for dealing with the continuing changes that the reform had brought. The work that the authority was undertaking went beyond any statutory requirements and had incurred some additional costs that the Council were committed to providing to ensure that the support work was being carried out was cost effective. It was expected that around 330 people would be affected by further welfare reform changes with average losses of £2,576 per annum. Those cuts would affect families already on a low income, and who may end up presenting themselves to the Council in the future for support.

A Welfare Reform Partnership had been created which included representatives from local registered providers, Department for Work and Pensions and third sector organisations along with officers from the Council. It would be responsible for contributing to the delivery of the Welfare

Reform Action Plan that has been developed to mitigate the impact of the initial welfare reform changes.

The action plan identified four areas for focus as the main challenges identified for the authority -

- Tackling worklessness and removing barriers to employment
- Promoting social and financial inclusion
- Promoting digital inclusion
- Creating and sustaining affordable homes

### **3.5 TOWN CENTRE**

(Councillor Alistair Bradley, Executive Leader and Executive Member (Economic Development and Partnerships) and Councillor Danny Gee, Chair of the Town Centre Team were in attendance)

The Panel was informed that the majority of key indicators for the town centre were performing above target at the end of quarter 3, 2015/16 (December 2015). Performance for floor space improved/created and vacant town centre floor space was excellent. The percentage occupancy of the covered market had decreased slightly compared to last year (95.7% against almost full occupancy of 99% for 2014/15) but remained above the target of 95%.

Performance of Market Walk across September, October and November 2015, had been comparable to previous years. However, there had been a significant increase in footfall in December 2015 of 13.5%, which was likely to be a result of a successful programme of creative marketing and PR over the Christmas period.

Since coming under Council management in 2015, Market Walk had continued to generate revenue above anticipated levels and provided an additional income stream for the Council. A recent management report highlighted one vacant unit out of 35 which equates to 97% occupancy. The Committee was informed of the initiatives undertaken by the Council to improve the aesthetics of Market Walk and town centre. It was reported that rent arrears totalled approximately £25,000, which equated to an average of just over 5 days of late payments. The Panel was reassured that none of the tenants were in arrears due to hardship; it was more because of internal workings of the bigger companies as to when they make their payments.

The Panel were informed that the Council was making £150,000 more than the £1 million per annum anticipated.

It was also highlighted that a number of retailers/landlords with premises located towards the Pall Mall side of Market Street had successfully secured Council grants to make improvements to shop floor and shop fronts. This has improved the look and feel of that part of Market Street substantially. It is reported that the night-time economy has also increased without any interventions from the Council.

Discussion at the meeting also included details of where tenants are making strides to improve their area of the town centre and other areas that require substantial investment by Lancashire County Council for highways repairs. The Committee was also informed of the consultation processes used to ascertain what residents and shoppers of Chorley wanted in the town centre.

## **4 Key Messages from Scrutiny Task Groups**

### **4.1 Single Front Office – Chaired by Councillor Alistair Morwood**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee requested this review following the decision by the Council for the creation of a Single Front Office. The Council needed to ensure that it was able to respond to continued changes and challenges in delivering high quality services against a backdrop of drastically reduced resources and increased demand, the creation of a single front office had therefore become crucial. The proposals built on the Council's Customer Access Strategy already

implemented by the authority that would lead to significant changes in staffing arrangements and service delivery.

The Task Group felt that although the Single Front Office was only part way through its implementation, at the time the review took place, it had already demonstrated improved efficiencies and impacted on productivity. The Task Group supported the continued development, implementation of and migration to accessible services online.

The Executive Cabinet was asked to consider the following recommendations:

- So that members got a better understanding of what the Council was trying to achieve, the Task Group recommended a the Single Front Office as a topic for a future Member Learning Session, and that the training be made available to parish/town councils.
- For the Council to continue to engage with those residents who need additional support to access services online and that online tutorials be made available for residents to help them make effective use of the My Account system.
- That the dialogue on the My Account system be improved at the necessary stages, to provide better information to residents regarding assurances on the status of jobs and the transfer of requests to other partner organisations.
- That the process for requesting the addition of an asset to the Council's Asset Register, be better promoted to residents using the My Account system.
- That an option be considered on the My Account system that will allow customers to enter service request details when that specific option is not available to select.
- That a 'suggestion box' be considered on the My Account system that will allow customers to feedback and promote ownership of the system by the residents of the borough.
- That the Task Group supports the Council's review of all its correspondence with the aim of improving this method of communication to its residents and details of how to register on the My Account system be incorporated into its design.
- For the Council to explore ways to improve the process of customer call backs by officers across the authority.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will receive the Executive Cabinet's response to the review in July 2016.

## **4.2 Staff Sickness Absence – Chaired by Councillor John Walker**

Chorley Council had historically performed well in terms of attendance management, particularly in 2011/12 which saw the least number of days lost per employee (5.44) compared with other local authorities in the North West. Despite this, and a solid health and wellbeing and attendance management policy, unprecedented sickness absence figures have been recorded in December 2015 for both short-term and long-term absences. In response to this increase, a Task Group was formed to investigate the reasons for the increase in absence and to ascertain if there was a pattern that could be identified to those absences. The Task Group also wanted to gain an understanding of what employees felt about the Council's sickness policy and how it is implemented. The Task Group received both written and verbal information from the Council's Human Resources and Occupational Development team as well as representatives from Unison and the Staff Matters meeting.

Once the Task Group had reviewed all the information, they felt satisfied that the reported increase in the level of sickness absence for 2015/16 did not suggest any underlying cause for concern. The

Task Group also felt that the Council's current Sickness Absence Policy and approach to both short and long term staff sickness absence was fair and proportionate to manage staff sickness effectively. The range of health and wellbeing initiatives and interventions available to employees to help maintain a healthy workforce was also welcomed.

It was acknowledged that a lot of work has taken place to reassure employees that the Sickness Absence Policy was there to help and support employees suffering short or long term sickness absences. However, as employees were not surveyed about their experience of how the policy was implemented for them, there was no data available to identify any issues or possible improvements. Questions were also raised about the benchmarked figure that was based on the previous years' figures which, in the Task Group's opinion, was very low. It was felt that a more realistic benchmarking figure should come from data available prior to the policy being implemented.

The Task Group was encouraged that reports from those employees who had been through the processes generally felt supported. However, it was accepted that employees may consider the Staff Sickness Absence Policy relating to the trigger points somewhat harsh, especially to those employees who have previously had very few instances of sickness absence, although these concerns were unsubstantiated. It also became apparent that employees' experience of the Staff Absence Sickness Policy varied quite significantly depending on how the policy was implemented by managers. The Task Group agreed it was important to have a consistent approach throughout the Council.

The Executive Committee was asked to consider the following recommendations:

- Employees to complete a survey, a minimum of three weeks following their return to work after a period of absence to provide feedback to HR on their experience of the application of the Sickness Absence Policy.
- Managers to receive refresher training on applying the Sickness Absence Policy to ensure a consistent approach across the Council.
- Review the wording in the letter that employees receive when the Sickness Absence Policy is triggered.
- To review the current performance measure for sickness absence monitoring and establish a range of measures using figures prior to the policy being introduced when compared with current information.

## **5 CRIME AND DISORDER: PCSO DEPLOYMENT IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING ARENA**

This year the scrutiny for crime and disorder focused on PCSO deployment within Chorley. Members of the Committee were given the background to the current funding arrangements for PCSO's and made aware of the financial constraints being placed on Lancashire Constabulary. As a result of those constraints a review of PCSO numbers across Lancashire had been undertaken based on risk, and threat.

The outcome of the recent restructure of PCSOs resulted in the number of PCSO's for Chorley would be reduced to 19 from 21. Of that number, eight had been deployed to deal with early action intervention initiatives. They would be responsible for delivering the majority of projects and initiatives including working with schools, working with vulnerable callers and the cadet system all of which was previously the responsibility of all the PCSOs. The Committee was informed that by having a dedicated team dealing with early intervention work, allowed more consistency in approach while continuing to link in with neighbourhood officers. The change also allowed the remaining PCSOs to concentrate on working in their neighbourhood and being more visible to the community.

The Committee was informed that each of the neighbourhood areas had been indexed based on risk, threat and vulnerability. This calculation determined how many PCSOs would be allocated to each neighbourhood. The majority of incidents which occur would still be attended by PCSOs for that area. However, if the PCSO was not available or if it is felt the situation would be better attended by a different PCSO who was more specialised, a deployment would be made accordingly. It was acknowledged that from time to time resources may need to be increased in an area based on risk and threat. Although this meant taking some PCSOs away from their beat, the Committee was reassured that it would not be for more than one day at a time.

The Committee was reassured that all money provided by the residents of Chorley was being spent in Chorley. It was reported that in previous years, any days lost due to vacancies or staff sickness of PCSOs had resulted in the Council receiving a refund of monies or a reduction for the following year for the difference. However, in the last two years, there had been no overall loss.

The Committee was informed about the recruitment process. Any PCSO vacancies would be filled once the new recruits have completed the necessary training. Discussion also led to the value of PACT meetings, and the need for PCSOs to be more visible in their neighbourhood area, which could also include them attending community events and parish/town council meetings.

## **6 CHALLENGING THE EXECUTIVE**

In addition to challenging the Executive Members through the Performance Panel the Committee worked together positively with the Executive Leader and his Cabinet in scrutinising the delivered of their proposals.

The following areas are additional areas that the Overview and Scrutiny considered in 2015/16 –

- Waste Contract update
- Unrecoverable Council Debts

## **7 CALL IN OF AN EXECUTIVE DECISION – COMMUNITY ACTION PLANS**

(Councillor Alistair Bradley, Executive Leader and Executive Members (Economic Development and Partnerships) and Councillor Beverley Murray, Executive Member (Community Services) were in attendance)

The Committee considered a call-in request regarding the decision made by the Executive Cabinet on 18 February 2016 in relation to Community Action Plans.

The application was made on the grounds that the Community Action Plans, overall, failed to be consistent in its approach or fairness. It also stated that the Community Action Plan for Astley Village had missed an opportunity to make a serious impact on the community and the lives of individuals in the area. The proposed Action Plan/Proposals for resources was sufficient to make a real impact on long standing issues.

The Executive Member (Community Services) reminded the Committee that this was the first year that the Action Plans had been piloted and it had been important that each area was allowed to develop them in different ways to see what worked best. The process would be reviewed to find out how successful the pilot was and what lessons could be learnt for the future.

In conclusion, the Committee was satisfied with the explanation put forward in the development of the Action Plans and the call-in request was dismissed.

## **8 FINANCIAL SCRUTINY**

The Executive Member (Resources) attended the meeting to give an overview of the draft budget proposals for 2016/17. It included a forecast for the following two years to 2018/19 and presented



relevant proposals in respect of potential investment in the Council's Corporate Strategy priorities in 2016/17 that would increase draft budget resilience in the longer term, providing funding to support the transitional period of the fundamental service review being undertaken by Lancashire County Council, along with information about the budget consultation.

This was the fourth consecutive year that Council Tax would not be increased. Due to the successful implementation of the MTFs, budget efficiency savings totalling £0.214m had been applied to achieve a balanced budget position for 2016/17. This had mainly been achieved by the Council entering into a Business Rates Retention Pooling agreement within Lancashire effective from 1 April 2016.

In addition, contributions to the New Investment Packages for 2016/17, totalling £2.845m for both Revenue and Capital projects and the New Homes Bonus provided an opportunity for the Council to invest in other areas to protect public services within the borough and increase financial resilience, given the revolutionary funding changes ahead.

A budget of £0.500m was to be made available for the next two years to assist in the transactional period public services currently provided for and funded by Lancashire County Council and a £0.500m provision per annum to increase General Balances to mitigate against the financial risk of a core grant income shift to 100% local taxation sources. £0.603m was also available to be used to invest in projects that would provide income streams to the Council. In regards to potential investment proposals; funding had been achieved by not building all the New Homes Bonus income received since 2013/14 into the base budget. An approach taken to enable the Council flexibility and resilience in order to address the volatile and variable nature of future core funding which continued to be under review by central government. The latest round of projects will bring the total new investment on the Council's corporate priorities to £12.008m since 2013/14.

Consultation on the proposed budget focused on obtaining feedback in key areas in order to help prioritise activity. It had also highlighted the impact of a reduction in Council funds and asked for residents' views on the proposed budget, the result of which were analysed and published for consideration as part of the budget finalisation.

The Committee asked a variety of questions which included the reasoning behind not reducing the forecast for Market Walk Extension in light of the reduction of units available, and the 3% overspend in respect of Chorley Flower Show and what lessons had been learnt for the future.

## **9 CONCLUSION AND THE YEAR AHEAD**

2015/16 had been an interesting year for scrutiny, resulting in some key recommendations on topics of concern to members and the public. Challenges ahead are to continue to scrutinise areas of interest for members and their constituents; to follow up on the implementations of scrutiny recommendations, to work more effectively with our partners on scrutiny and to continue to challenge the Executive in a constructive way with recommendations that result in positive outcomes for the residents in Chorley.

The Council will hold four meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and four meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel. This year Councillor John Walker, as Chair of the Committee will be joined by Councillor Roy Lees as Vice Chair as well as some new members to the Committee.

The topic for the first Task Group has already been agreed and will be on the subject of Child Sexual Exploitation and Safeguarding Issues.



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17

	16 Jun OSPP	7 Jul OSC	22 Sep OSPP	6 Oct OSC	1 Dec OSPP	26 Jan OSC	9 Mar OSPP	30 Mar OSC
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**To be considered:**

Panel Meeting (OSPP) to consider Council and related performance in addition to scrutiny of key service areas	*		*		*		*	
Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel minutes		*		*		*		*
Executive Cabinet Minutes		*		*		*		*
Notice of key decisions		*		*		*		*
Budget Scrutiny						*		
Health Scrutiny		*		*		*		*
Section 106 update				*				
Annual Reporting Back Report		*						
Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for the year		*		*		*		*

**Scrutiny Reviews:**

Neighbourhood Working				2M				
Public Transport Issues				1M			2M	
Single Front Office				1M			2M	
Staff Absence				R				

**Potential topics for future reviews**

Counter Terrorism Act								
Communications								
Community Racial Integration								
Flooding								
Waste Management Contract								

**Crime and Disorder Scrutiny:**

Community Safety Partnership – Child Sexual Exploitation				S		C		
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**Key:**

**Task Group Reviews:**

- S Scoping of the review
- C Collecting and considering evidence
- FR Final report of the review
- R Feedback and response from the Executive Cabinet
- M Monitoring Reports, 1 2 and 3 (if required)
- V Verbal update from the Chair
- ML Member Learning Session

**Acronyms**

- OSC Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- OSPP Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel

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