

EXECUTIVE CABINET

THURSDAY, 16TH MARCH 2017, 6.00 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, CHORLEY

AGENDA

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1 **MINUTES OF MEETING THURSDAY, 16 FEBRUARY 2017 OF EXECUTIVE CABINET**

(Pages 3 - 8)

- 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 DEPUTY EXECUTIVE LEADER AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER (RESOURCES) (INTRODUCED BY COUNCILLOR PETER WILSON)

- 4 **PURCHASE OF VICTORY PARK AND OAK HOUSE AND ASSOCIATED LAND**

(Pages 9 - 18)

Report of the Director of Policy and Governance (enclosed)

ITEM OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER (COMMUNITY SERVICES) (INTRODUCED BY COUNCILLOR BEV MURRAY)

- 5 **HOME ENERGY CONSERVATION ACT (HECA) REPORT 2017**

(Pages 19 - 28)

Report of the Director of Early Intervention and Support (enclosed)

**ITEM OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER (CUSTOMER AND ADVICE SERVICES)
(INTRODUCED BY COUNCILLOR GRAHAM DUNN)**

6 CARE LEAVERS COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNT

Report of the Director of Customer and Digital (enclosed)

(Pages 29 - 34)

7 ANY URGENT BUSINESS PREVIOUSLY AGREED WITH THE CHAIR

GARY HALL
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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**MINUTES OF****EXECUTIVE CABINET****MEETING DATE****Thursday, 16 February 2017****MEMBERS PRESENT:**

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

MEMBER RESPONSIBLE:

Councillors Danny Gee, Matthew Lynch and Alistair Morwood

COUNCIL CHAMPIONS:

Councillors Gordon France, Jean Cronshaw, Margaret France and Marion Lowe

OFFICERS:

Gary Hall (Chief Executive), Jamie Carson (Director (Early Intervention and Support)), Asim Khan (Director (Customer and Digital)), Mark Lester (Director (Business, Economic and Growth)), Jo Oliver (Waste and Streetscene Manager), James Thomson (Principal Management Accountant), Dianne Scambler (Democratic and Member Services Officer), Alex Jackson (Legal Services Team Leader) and Victoria Willett (Performance and Partnerships Manager)

APOLOGIES:

Councillors Margaret Lees

OTHER MEMBERS:

Councillors Aaron Beaver, Charlie Bromilow, Tom Gray, Paul Leadbetter, Roy Lees, June Molyneaux and Richard Toon

17.EC.58 Minutes of meeting Thursday, 19 January 2017 of Executive Cabinet

Decision: The meeting of the Executive Cabinet meeting held on 19 January 2017 were confirmed as a correct record for signing by the Executive Leader.

17.EC.59 Declarations of Any Interests

There were no declarations of any interests.

17.EC.60 Public Questions

There were no public questions.

17.EC.61 Final report of Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - Child Sexual Exploitation

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor John Walker, presented the report.

The Task Group were encouraged by the work already undertaken by the council to raise awareness of this type of child abuse. However, it was felt that the council could play a bigger role in raising awareness with elected members, officers of the council, other organisations, and individuals.

The review had identified a set of recommendations that Members felt would keep CSE awareness at the forefront of people's minds and that the checks and balances suggested would ensure that the council does not become complacent about its responsibilities and role in the community.

Councillor Walker thanked the Chair, Councillor Roy Lees and members of the Task Group and officers involved with the inquiry.

Decision: Approval granted that the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group be received and accepted for consideration. The Executive Cabinet's response to the recommendations would be reported to a future meeting.

17.EC.62 Chorley Council Performance Monitoring Report - Third Quarter 2016/17

The Executive Member (Resources) presented the report of the Director of Policy and Governance that set out the performance against the delivery of the Corporate Strategy, and key performance indicators during the third quarter of 2016/17. 1 October – 31 December 2017.

Overall performance of the 2015/16 key projects was good, with 81% of the projects either on track or complete. Only two projects (13%) were rated amber and actions plans for each of the projects were contained within the report. Only one (6%) was rated red, the delivery of the Friday Street Health Centre, due to a long standing issue regarding access to funding and although the project had undergone further consideration a part of a review by the Clinical Commissioning Group, clarification was still being sought on how this was progressing.

It was reported that this would be the final time that the 2015/16 Corporate Strategy projects would be reported to Executive Cabinet. Those projects, not yet completed, would either be carried over for delivery through the 2016/17 Corporate Strategy, were due to be completed in quarter four or alternatively would continue to be delivered through business as usual activity. Further details were appended to the report.

Performance of the Corporate Strategy indicators and key service delivery measures also remained good with 100% of the indicators and 80% of the key service measures performing well above target or within the 5% tolerance.

Two key service delivery measures that were performing below target were time taken to process all new claims and change events for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit and the number of missed collections per 100,000 collections of household waste. Action plans for these indicators had been developed to improve performance in these areas.

In response to members, it was explained that the target for processing all new and change events for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit within 6 days had been an ambitious one and had been changed from a previous target of 10 days to reflect the Council's ambitions in service delivery.

A 12 month training programme was currently underway in the Single Front Office which would mean increased resources being available to process benefit claims that would in turn improve on this indicator. It was however stressed, that each claim was dealt with individually and due to the sometimes sensitive nature of the service being provided, a review of the target maybe needed to ensure good customer care is maintained.

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

Reasons for recommendation(s)

To facilitate the ongoing analysis and management of the Council's performance in delivering the Corporate Strategy

Alternative options considered and rejected

None

17.EC.63 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 2016/17 Report 3 (end of December 2016)

The Executive Member (Resources) presented the report of the Chief Finance Officer that 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 2016/17.

The latest net revenue budget was £18.960m which had been amended to include approved slippage from 2015/16 and any other transfers from reserves. A full schedule of the investment budgets carried forward from 2015/16 and the new (non-recurrent) investment budgets introduced in the 2016/17 budget was appended to the report together with expenditure to date against these projects. The Council's approved revenue budget for 2016/17 included target savings of £150,000 from management of the staffing establishment which had already been achieved.

Following the recommendations made in September 2016 budget monitoring report, in year revenue underspends had been set aside to fund the Retail Grants Programme, Local Development Framework costs anticipated in 2017/18 and investment in the Public Realm works capital scheme.

The provisional outturn position for the Council based upon actual spend in the first nine months of the financial year was appended to the report and adjusted for future spend based upon assumptions regarding vacancies and service delivery. The latest forecast of capital expenditure in 2016/17 is £14.563m

The projected revenue outturn was currently showing a forecasted underspend of £298,000 against budget although no action was required at this stage.

In the 2016/17 budget, the expected net income for Market Walk after deducting financing costs is £1.002m, with the latest projection also showing a forecast outturn of £1.002m.

The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy proposed that working balances would reach £4.0m over the three year lifespan of the MTFS to 2018/19 due to financial risks facing the Council. A budgeted contribution of £500k was contained within the new investment package for 2016/17. The current forecast to the end of December showed that the General Fund closing balance could be around £3.483m by the end of the financial year and following approval of the recommendations in the report, the forecast balance would be £3.283m and in line to achieve the target of £4.0m by 2018/19

Decision:

- 1. That the full year forecast position for the 2016/17 revenue budget and capital investment programme be noted.**
- 2. That the forecast position on the Council's reserves be noted.**
- 3. To request Full Council to grant approval for the contribution of £150,000 from in-year revenue underspends to the Change Management Reserve to finance one-off redundancy and pension strain costs arising from transformation and shared services strategies.**
- 4. To request Full Council to grant approval venue underspends to the Change Management Reserve to the Buildings Maintenance Reserve to finance one-off costs relating to office utilisation and transformational change.**
- 5. To request Full Council to grant approval of the following increases and additions to the capital programme:**

- a. £20k increase in the CCTV capital budget to complete the installation of CCTV equipment to be funded from underspends on the CCTV revenue maintenance budget.
 - b. £27k budget increase for Ranglett's recreation project for works to the surrounding roads to meet LCC requirements for a crossing.
 - c. £100k increase in the Astley 2020 budget to increase the Council's match funding for a HLF grant bid from £100k to £200K to secure a £2m HLF grant that is necessary to meet the scope of works required to fully renovate the Hall.
 - d. £2.947m for the purchase of HCA employment land to be funded through the sale of Council residential land and prudential borrowing.
 - e. £2.2m for the Bank Hall project of which the Council will act as the accountable body for receiving requests for HLF grant. The grant money will be paid to the Council and the Council will then pay monies over to the claimants.
6. To request Full Council to note the changes to the capital programme to reflect delivery in 2016/17 and 2017/18

Reasons for recommendation(s)

To ensure the Council's budgetary targets are achieved.

Alternative options considered and rejected

None.

17.EC.64 Exclusion of the Public and Press

Approval that the press and public be excluded 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.

17.EC.65 Primrose Gardens Retirement Living Pre-Construction Services Agreement

The Executive Member (Customer and Advice Services) presented the report of the Director for Business, Economic and Growth that provided an update on the Primrose Gardens project and sought approval for entering into a contract with Eric Wright Construction to progress the first stage of site enabling works.

The main advantage of this approach is so that the Council can progress the site preparation whilst investing sufficient time for overall scheme costs to be refined and value engineered. It would also reduce the risk to the Council and will ensure that the final contract price is fully market tested.

An addendum report was also presented that provided an update on the work being undertaken to ensure that Primrose Gardens is viable for both capital and revenue financing.

Decision:

1. That the contract strategy be noted.
2. That the recommendation to use a JCT (D&B) 2016 form of contract for the construction contract be noted.
3. Approval granted for the Council to enter into a Pre-Construction Services Agreement Contract (PCSA) under the Lancashire Regeneration Property Partnership to enable the site preparation works to commence, including the demolition of the HSS Hire and St John Ambulance buildings.
4. The proposal to change the tenure mix of the scheme to 100% affordable rent was noted.
5. Executive Cabinet noted the strong possibility that additional HCA grant funding of approximately £300k will be secured which will ensure all capital costs are fully funded.
6. Executive Cabinet noted that the uplift in HCA grant requires the Council to commit a start on site before 31 March 2017. The PCSA satisfies this because it is with the same contractor and is our main development contractor. This will mean that the Council will

have entered into the HCA contract and will enable the first tranche of the grant (75% of the total) to be drawn.

7. Executive Cabinet also noted that officers will explore options to reduce the annual operational costs of the retirement village model. This will include the benchmarking of running costs against similar developments, a review of staffing and concierge services. It was also noted that officers will explore developing alternative models of generating income. This will include modelling income from the commercial aspects of the scheme and working with health colleagues around a step down/re-enablement for a block number of units.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

To ensure the project remains on track and deliverable and that the site enabling works are commenced whilst the full construction contract is prepared. This provides time for further risk control and contingency work to be undertaken without jeopardising the overall project.

Alternative options considered and rejected

Entering into the final construction contract immediately - This was rejected because of the levels of risk and because more detailed design work and cost engineering was required.

Delay the site preparation works pending the outcome of the two risk control measures. This was rejected because the overall project will slip and the HCA deadline will be missed therefore putting the grant award at risk. The site must be cleared in preparation for the development in any case as the two buildings (HSS Hire and St John Ambulance) have both reached the end of their useful life and would be a liability if they remain in use or empty.

Not progress the Primrose Gardens project. This was rejected as it was felt there is scope to investigate ways to develop a viable delivery model which is cost neutral and this work will be completed ahead of the final decision to appoint the construction contractor and progress the development.

17.EC.66 Proposed Waste and Streetscene Staffing Review

The Executive Member (Streetscene) presented the report of the Director of Customer and Digital that sought approval for a new proposed structure in the Waste and Streetscene team for consultation.

Following the management restructure in April 2016 and approval of the Streetscene Modernisation Strategy a review of the structure was thought necessary to ensure the service is able to deliver the priority areas of work over the next few years. The review would also drive improvements in health and safety, productivity and quality of work delivered by the teams on site.

Decision:

1. **Approval of the proposed structure for consultation.**
2. **Delegated authority granted to the Executive Member (Streetscene) to approve the final structure, subject to there being no major changes following the consultation period.**
3. **Approval of the ERVS requests contained within the report.**

Reasons for recommendation(s)

It is necessary to look at changing the structure of the team to make sure it is best positioned to deliver the priorities of the council.

Alternative options considered and rejected

To continue with the current structure – This was rejected because the structure and capacity in the team would not deliver the priorities identified in the Streetscene Modernisation Strategy.

Chair

Date

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Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Policy and Governance (Introduced by the Executive Member for Resources)	Executive Cabinet	16 March 2017

PURCHASE OF VICTORY PARK AND OAK HOUSE AND ASSOCIATED LAND

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To authorise the purchase of Victory Park, Oak House and associated land.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. That the Council purchase the land and buildings known as Victory Park, Duke Street, Chorley for the sum of £200,000 and the land and buildings known as Oak House, High Street Chorley to include the former Converters Site , High Street Chorley and other offices within that title for the sum of £2.05m. The total estimated cost of the purchase including stamp duty and land tax is £2.375m
3. That the Council approves the temporary use of prudential borrowing if the receipt from the sale of land at Southport Rd is not received before the purchase of Victory Park and Oak House.
4. That authority be delegated to the Head of Legal, Democratic and HR Services to prepare the necessary legal documentation to complete the purchase.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

5. The Council have been in negotiations with Northern Trust concerning a proposed landswap whereby Northern Trust would transfer their interest in the land opposite the Town Hall, (comprising the Royal Oak Public House, Oak House (the offices), the former Cash Converters site and the offices occupied by Miller Metcalfe and Entwistle Green) and the Victory Park Football Ground site in exchange the Council would transfer their interest in the land at Southport Road.
6. This agreement was amended whereby the Council marketed the land at Southport Road for sale and would use the proceeds to purchase the Northern Trust Land. This proposal was considered and approved by Cabinet in March 2016.
7. The sale of the Southport Road Land is due to complete imminently and authority is sought to complete the purchase of the Northern Trust Land. It is intended to complete the purchase only following the sale of Southport Road. However, it is recommended to approve the use of prudential borrowing to complete the purchase if it is needed.

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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Key Decision? Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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Reason 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	4, Significant impact in environmental, social or physical terms in two or more wards

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

(If the recommendations are accepted)

- 8. The purchase will support the Councils ambitions in the delivery of the Town Centre Masterplan and provide parking to support developments such as the Market Walk extension.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 9. To acquiring the leasehold titles to the site.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 10. 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	X
Clean, safe and healthy communities		An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	X

BACKGROUND

- 11. The town centre masterplan provides for a civic square on the land currently occupied by Gala Bingo and the Royal Oak/ Oak House buildings. The Council have a freehold interest in much of this site but it is held on long leases by other occupiers including NT.
- 12. In addition to furthering the Council’s ambition for a Civic Square this area will be multi-function and provide a car parking option to support the town centre as a whole but also the Market Walk development in particular.
- 13. The proposal will provide for the Council to get control over substantial parts of this site. If it were not pursued then the Council may not have an opportunity to purchase this land at a later date if it were transferred to a third party.
- 14. Northern Trust have made the sale of the Oak House land conditional on the concurrent transfer of Victory Park to the Council.

THE NORTHERN TRUST LAND

- 15. Northern Trust are proposing to transfer 2 parcels of land to the Council their interest in the Oak House and offices site and Victory Park. NT have provided valuations of these parcels of land which have been used for the auditing of their accounts. These valuations have been considered by the Council’s Property Service and approved as being correct.
- 16. The parcels of land are important to the Council for not only the implementation of the town centre masterplan but also to provide support to the local football team by having control over their ground.
- 17. The valuations of the land are a combined £2.25million being £2.05 million for the NT Land and £0.2 million for Victory Park.
- 18. The Heads of Terms for the transfers are appended to this report.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

- 19. 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

- 20. The estimated cost of the purchase is £2.25m plus stamp duty and land tax of £124,500 giving a total cost of £2.375m
- 21. This proposed land deal with Northern Trust can be implemented at no cost the Council, the proceeds of sale from the Southport Road site being used to fund the purchase of the Northern Trust Land and Victory Park and still provide a surplus.
- 22. If the sale of land at Southport Rd does not occur before this purchase it is proposed that temporary prudential borrowing is used to finance the purchase.
- 23. The proposal furthers 2 council priorities being the delivery of housing (the Southport Road Land being released for development) and the accumulation of assets that realise and income for the Council. In addition the Northern Trust Land forms part of the area allocated for a Civic Space in the Council’s Town Centre Masterplan. In order to ensure the delivery of this it is important for the Council to gain possession of this site.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

- 24. Whilst this purchase has not been approved previously, Members have considered the wider terms and have approved the principle of this transaction. Monies have been ring fenced to this purchase and there is no legal reason why it should not proceed.

CHRIS SINNOTT
 DIRECTOR OF POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Chris Moister	5160	3 March 2017	***

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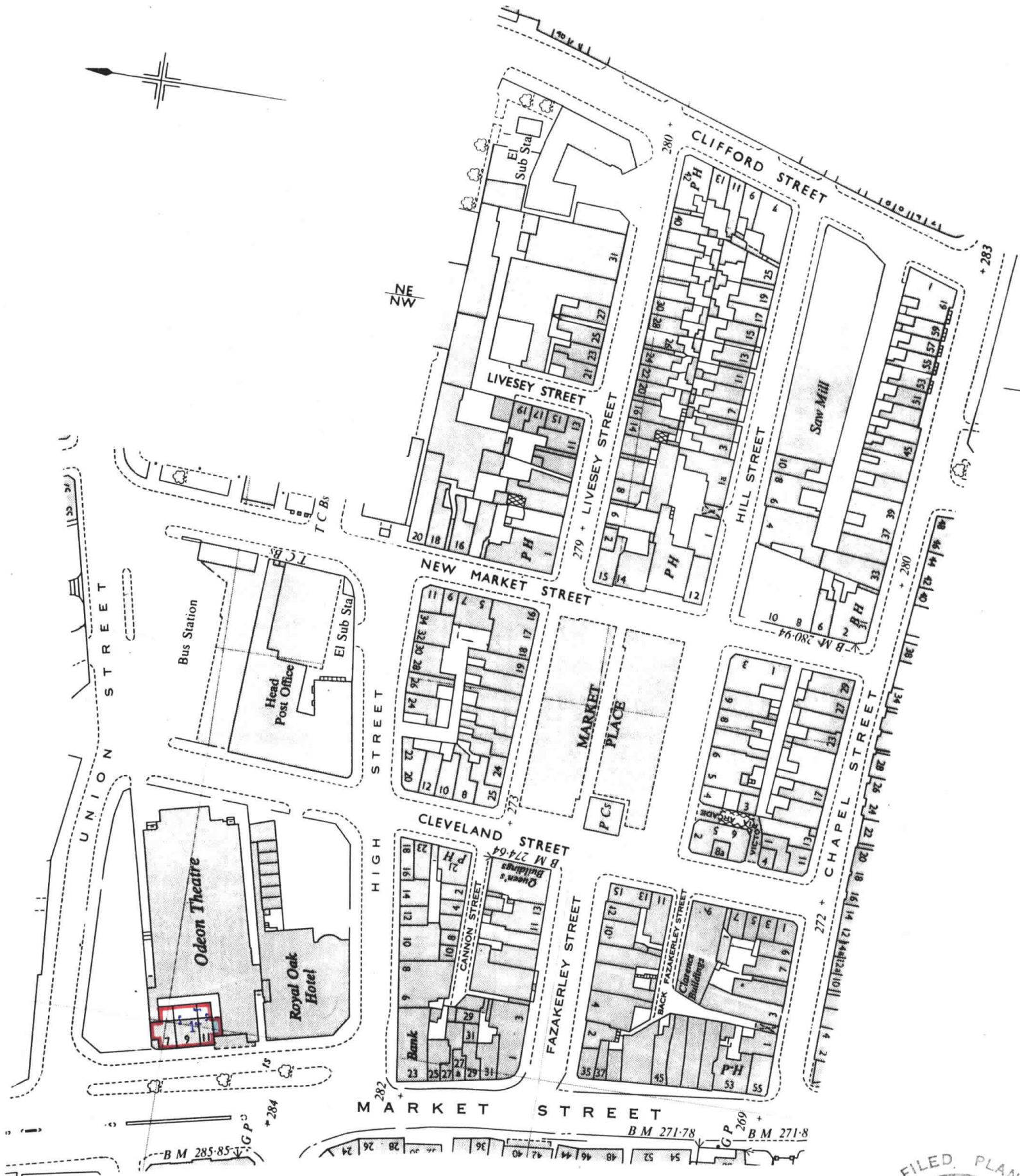
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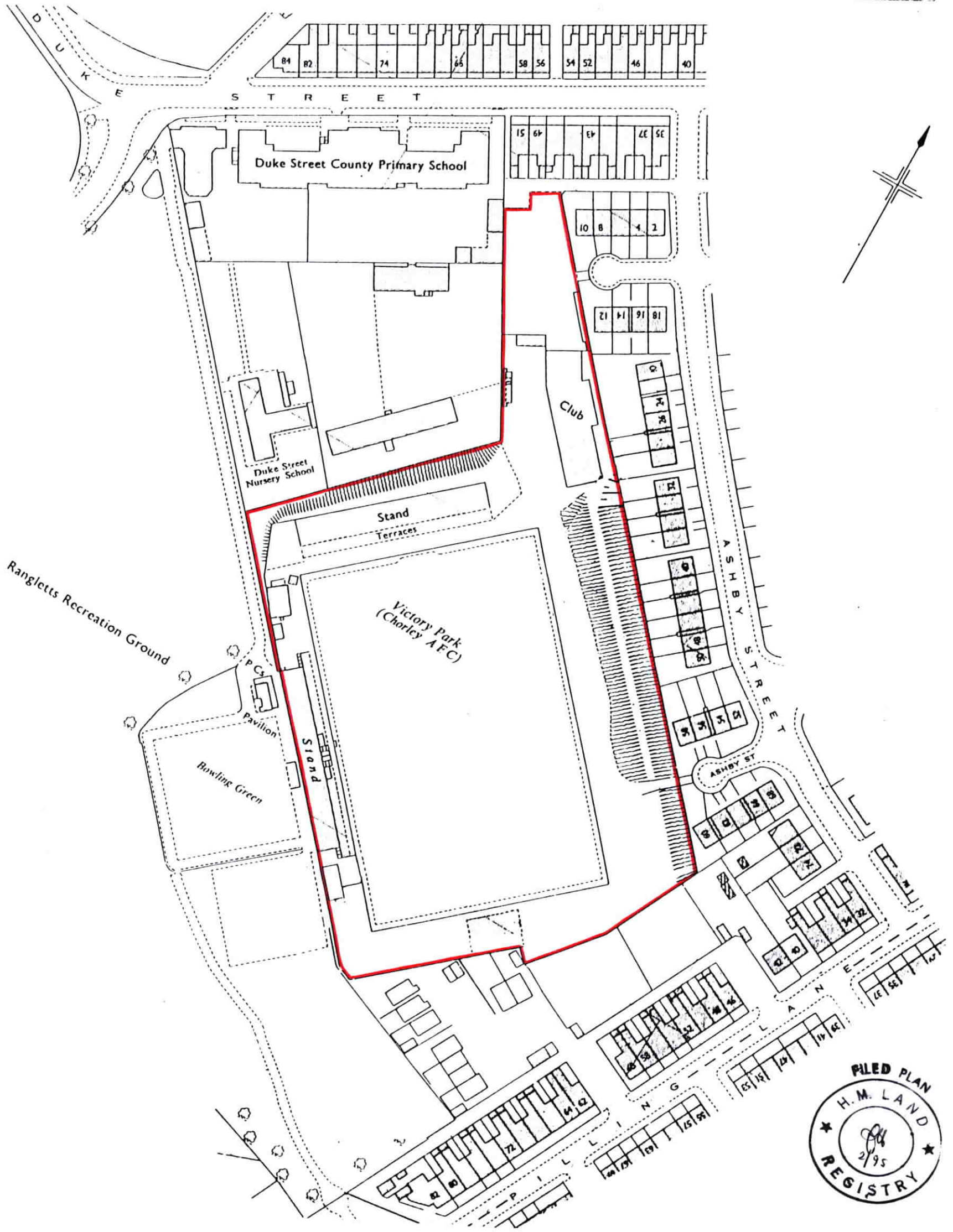
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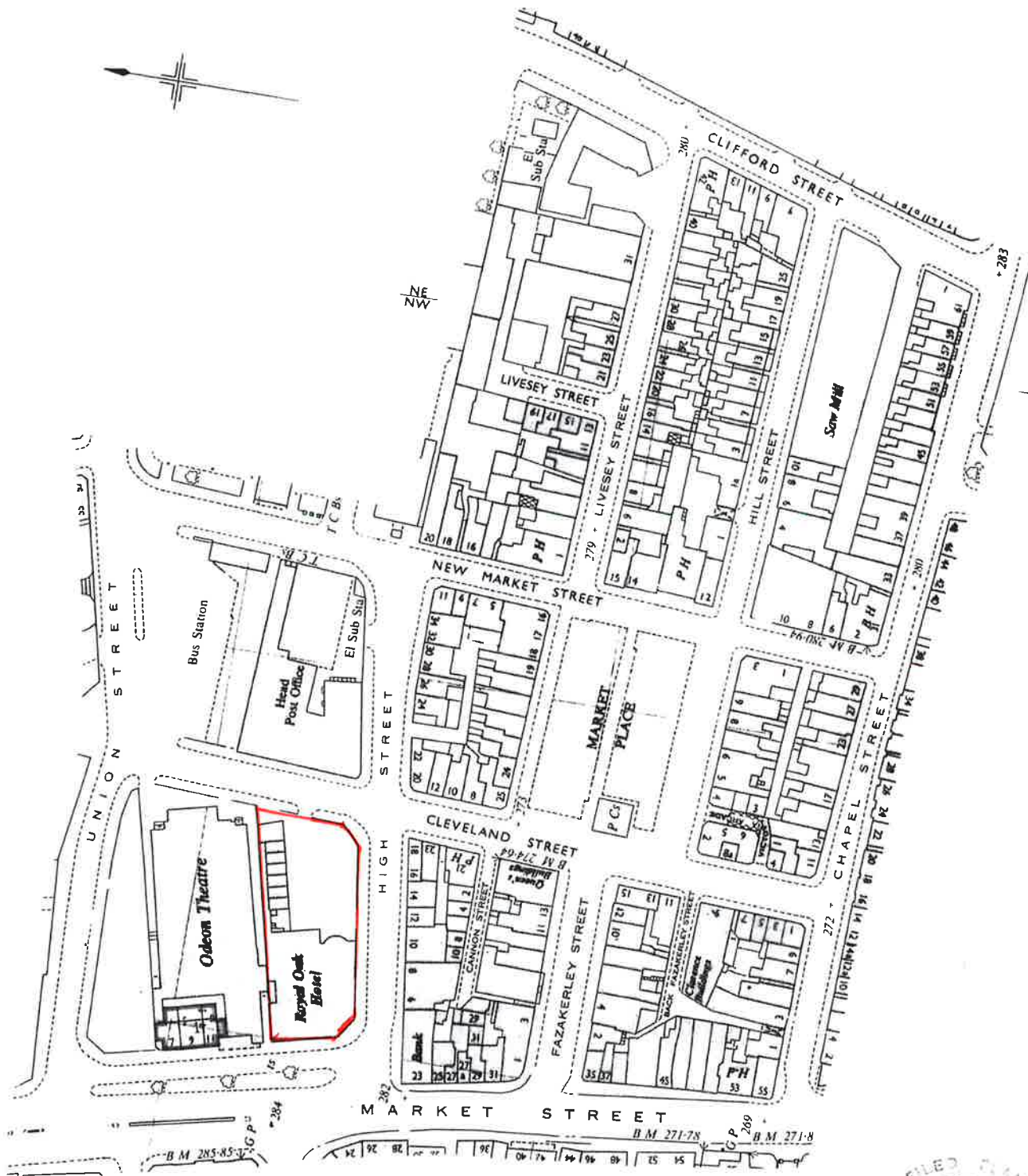
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Report of	Meeting	Date
Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Early Intervention (Introduced by the Executive Member for Early Intervention)	Executive Cabinet	16 March 2017

HOME ENERGY CONSERVATION ACT (HECA) REPORT 2017

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To explain the Council's requirements in respect of the Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA), to advise on HECA-related activity carried out to date, and to set out the proposed HECA-related activity for the future.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. Appendix 1 of this report reviews the Council's HECA-related activities over the past two years and its suggested priorities for the next two years. Members are requested to approve the proposals.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

3. The summary of the HECA further report 2017 is attached as Appendix 1, using the reporting template recommended by the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).
4. The report provides context about the requirement to provide a HECA update and gives an update on the Council's performance, based on the latest figures available from the Government, in respect of Fuel Poverty and Carbon dioxide emissions.

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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Key Decision? Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

(If the recommendations are accepted)

5. By accepting the HECA report the Council has ensured that it is meeting its statutory obligations to publish such a report by 31st March 2017.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

6. 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.

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	X	An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	X

BACKGROUND

8. Using powers under section 5(1)(b) of the Home Energy Conservation Act, the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) requires all English authorities to publish progress reports electronically on their website and with a link to be forwarded to the Secretary of State at heca-reports@beis.gov.uk at two yearly intervals ie by 31st March 2017, 31st March 2019 and so on, up to and including 31st March 2027.
9. One of the key aspects of a Council's HECA report is the work being undertaken to address Fuel Poverty.
10. Fuel Poverty rates for Chorley, based on the most recent figures from 2014 (which were published in 2016) indicate that 8.7% of homes or approximately 3,968 households in the borough of Chorley are experiencing fuel poverty.
11. This figure places Chorley 229th out of 326 Local Authorities in England.
12. This is the second lowest incidence of Fuel Poverty in Lancashire and the third lowest in the North West.
13. The North West regional average for Fuel Poverty is 11.2% and the national average for England is 10.6%. (*Source – BEIS*).
14. The Council's corporate strategy target is for Chorley's Fuel Poverty rates to be below the North West average. To date this target has been attained.
15. Fuel Poverty is influenced by three main factors: the energy efficiency of dwellings, the cost of energy, and the income levels of occupants.
16. In Chorley we seek to influence all three determinants of Fuel Poverty in various ways.
17. The **Energy Switching Support Service**, which the Council introduced in 2014, helps to make customers' energy bills more affordable and, by generating cost savings, provides more disposable income for the household.
18. Since the service launched in June 2014, up to 31st January 2017, the Council has assisted 495 customers to switch tariffs.
19. Customers have collectively saved a total of £133,225 by switching, which equates to average annual savings of £269.10 achieved by each customer who has switched.

20. In October 2016 the Council successfully bid to LCC for **Affordable Warmth Grant**, to deliver various Affordable Warmth interventions such as providing boiler servicing free of charge for eligible households.
21. The approved funding of £35,936 for the winter of 2016/17 is sub-divided as follows:
 - £13,500 on heating system maintenance incorporating boiler services and gas fire servicing
 - £4,000 on draught proofing
 - £12,500 to assist customers with Energy Company Obligation ('ECO') funding shortfalls to obtain new boilers
 - £3,000 on cavity wall insulation
 - £2,936 on loft insulation
22. As at 1st February 2017, 42 households have benefited from one or more interventions funded by the Affordable Warmth Fund. The scheme will run until the end of April 2017, and it is anticipated that the Council will receive a similar amount of funding for the winter of 2017/18.
23. The Council engages with other District Councils in Lancashire, plus LCC, on a number of collaborations to deliver various schemes designed to offer residents the opportunity to make energy efficiency improvements to their homes.
24. Since the last HECA report in 2015 the Council's ongoing Energy Efficiency collaboration with other District and Unitary Councils in Lancashire and the County Council has operated under the banner of '**Cosy Homes in Lancashire**' (**CHiL**).
25. The intention of CHiL, which was supported by the Directors of Public Health in Lancashire, was that it would act as a county-wide mechanism to attract ECO and other funding. <http://www.chil.uk.com/about-chil>
26. The scheme operated as a one year pilot project during 2016, with day to day project management undertaken by a Project Manager hosted by Blackpool Council. The scheme yielded modest results as far as Chorley was concerned. 6 households qualified for free boiler installations.
27. During 2016, again operating under the 'CHiL' banner, a successful bid on behalf of Lancashire was submitted to the Government which resulted in funding being awarded via the DECC 'Central Heating Fund'. Only 20 bids were successful nationally.
28. The aim of the Central Heating Fund was to offer 'first time' central heating to eligible residents whose homes had never previously had it. Therefore a simple boiler replacement was not an eligible item, but a full installation of central heating - including radiators – where none had previously existed, was eligible.
29. By the time that the scheme closed in early February 2017, 16 households across Chorley had received full central heating systems. In 7 of the 14 Lancashire Districts (including Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool) between 15 and 30 households had received full central heating systems under this programme.

- 30. Other areas of the Council’s work also contribute to the overall objective of addressing Fuel Poverty:
- 31. The Council’s Employment, Skills and Business Support team seek to promote commercial activity and business start-ups in Chorley, which in turn leads to greater job opportunities for local residents. This includes the specific role of the Employability Officer, whose work helps unemployed residents back into paid employment and thus be more able to afford to heat their home.
- 32. The Business Development and Growth Directorate facilitate the provision of new, energy efficient affordable housing across the borough.
- 33. Between 1st January 2006 and 31st December 2016 a total of 795 new build affordable homes have been built in Chorley.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

- 34. 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

- 35. All expenditure is met from external funding. Funding of £21,561 has already been received with the remaining £14,375 to be received before the end of the financial year.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

- 36. No comment

JAMIE CARSON
 DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE/
 DIRECTOR OF EARLY INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT

Background Papers			
Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
1. Guidance to English Energy Conservation Authorities issued pursuant to the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995	January 2017		https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/581598/HECA_Guidance_2017.pdf
2. DECC fuel poverty statistics 2014	June 2016		http://dashboards.instantatlas.com/viewer/report?appid=76dd5dc8c5b041458608752ffd11b67a&authid=EeUdmTVM2tQfwwHh
3. UK Local Authority and regional carbon dioxide emission national statistics 2005-2014	June 2016		https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics-2005-2014
4. Energy Company Obligation: Help to Heat (Government response to the consultation)	January 2017		https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/energy-company-obligation-eco-help-to-heat
5. Chorley Council draft Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy	January 2017 (consultation draft)		https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/documents/s71205/Report.pdf https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/documents/s71206/Private%20Sector%20Housing%20Assistance%20Draft%20Policy%20for%20Consultation.pdf

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Martin Sample	5704	02/03/17	***

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Chorley Council

ACTION	OUTCOMES	TIMING
i) LOCAL ENERGY EFFICIENCY AMBITIONS AND PRIORITIES		
Lancashire Climate Change Strategy	Although the partnership no longer meets, the Lancashire Climate Change Strategy sets out the long term vision that Lancashire is “low carbon and well adapted by 2020” with a target to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by at least 34% (relative to 1990) by that time.	2020
Lancashire Health and Wellbeing Strategy	<p>Lancashire – and Chorley - is moving towards the preventative agenda and its overarching goals are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better health – increase the time that people in Lancashire can expect to live in good health, and narrow the gap in health and wellbeing for the people of Lancashire • Better care – deliver measureable improvements in people’s experience of health and social care services • Better value – reduce the cost of health and social care, whilst increasing its effectiveness by promoting collaboration and integration between partners <p>http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0ahUKEwiM3Ke6l7RAhVBCBoKHa0dDsAQFgqkMAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww3.lancashire.gov.uk%2Fcorporate%2Fweb%2Fviewdoc.asp%3Fid%3D108853&usq=AFQjCNHK1yytWT58nT-hq2e3HhWOawRkHg&bvm=bv.146094739,d.d2s</p>	2020
Carbon Reduction	6.4% per capita Carbon Dioxide emissions in Chorley. This is based on the most recent figures from June 2014. This compares with a Lancashire average of 6.7% and UK average of 6.3% pc.	Ongoing
Fuel Poverty in Chorley	<p>8.7% of homes or approximately 3,968 households in the borough of Chorley experience fuel poverty, based on the most recent figures from 2014, which were published in June 2016.</p> <p>This places Chorley 229th out of 326 Local Authorities in England. This is the second lowest incidence of Fuel Poverty across Lancashire and third lowest across the North West. The North West regional average for Fuel Poverty is 11.2% and the national average for England is 10.6% (Source - Department of Energy and Climate Change). The Council’s Corporate Strategy contains a performance target which is for the Fuel Poverty rate in Chorley to be lower than the North West regional average. To date this target has been met.</p>	Ongoing

<p>Minimum standards in the private rented sector</p>	<p>The Council’s Neighbourhoods team carries out HHSRS inspections. Where there are issues with excess cold associated with the heating systems, the Council requires a fixed heating system to be installed and maintained. The Council always encourages the landlord to install the most energy efficient option.</p> <p>The Council has a number of generic Environmental Health Officers in the Regulatory Services team who enforce all aspects of food safety, health and safety, environmental protection, nuisance and all housing standards. The Council carries out proactive housing inspections which are linked to Housing Benefit claims, and thus do not rely on complaints-driven inspections. The opportunity to request these ‘healthy home inspections’ are advertised in local GP surgeries and pharmacists, to highlight the importance of housing in relation to health.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>ii) MEASURES THAT TAKE ADVANTAGE OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND OTHER BENEFITS OFFERED FROM CENTRAL GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES, TO HELP RESULT IN SIGNIFICANT ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS OF RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION</p>		
<p>Energy Company Obligation (ECO)</p>	<p>The Cosy Homes in Lancashire (CHiL) scheme is a county wide collaboration which Chorley Council participated in during 2015-16.</p> <p>Its primary aim was to test the business model of installing energy efficiency and heating improvements in domestic dwellings through ECO funding and to achieve as many installations as possible to improve the thermal efficiency of Lancashire homes, especially for the benefit of customers experiencing fuel poverty and/or with cold-related health issues.</p> <p>The CHiL project gained an Ashden Award for Sustainable Homes in 2016 – see link below: http://www.ashden.org/files/case_studies/CHiL%20Ashden%20UK%202016%20case%20study_0.pdf</p> <p>The Council will continue to participate on the Lancashire Home Energy Officers Group and will review the opportunities for further ECO-related collaborative projects under the CHiL banner.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Energy Switching Support Service</p>	<p>Since 2014 the Council has offered customers the opportunity to have their existing gas and electricity tariffs reviewed by an expert who is engaged by the Council to assist customers to switch tariffs/suppliers on a one to one basis.</p> <p>The service is appointment-based and operates predominantly from the Council offices but home visits for disabled customers are also available. It is a free service and consists of a search of OFGEM approved comparison websites (ie those who sign up to the Confidence Code), which enables us to identify the best deal for the customer based on the energy they</p>	<p>Since 2014 and ongoing</p>

	<p>consume. The service also includes guiding the customer through the switching process, liaising with suppliers on customers' behalf, and dealing with any aftercare issues.</p> <p>As at 31st January 2017, since the service started in June 2014, 495 customers have switched tariffs/suppliers as a result of the Council having identified more favourable energy deals for them, based on a search of independent websites who comply with the OFGEM Confidence Code criteria. This has generated cumulative savings of £133,235 which equates to an average annual saving per customer of £269.10. Since 2014 the budget for this service has been provided via a combination of Chorley Council and Lancashire County Council funding streams.</p>	
<p>iii) MEASURES TO IMPLEMENT ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS COST-EFFECTIVELY IN RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION BY USING AREA BASED/STREET ROLL OUT INVOLVING LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS</p>		
<p>Cosy Homes in Lancashire (CHiL)</p>	<p>Chorley, alongside Lancashire District Council partners will remain vigilant for opportunities to access funding and develop coherent Affordable Warmth schemes. Examples are likely to include bidding for funding generated by Energy Companies' fines (the Voluntary Redress Payments), the ECO Flexible Eligibility initiatives, the Smart Energy GB (smart metering).</p>	<p>2017 and ongoing</p>
<p>Hard to Treat Homes</p>	<p>The Council notes the Government's response (January 2017) to the 'Help to Heat' consultation with regards to solid wall insulation. The Council will endeavour to facilitate opportunities for residents in Chorley to access suitable funding.</p>	<p>2017 and ongoing</p>
<p>iv) TIMEFRAME FOR DELIVERY AND NATIONAL/LOCAL PARTNERS</p>		
<p>Energy Supply</p>	<p>The Council is currently actively investigating the option of entering the energy market as a 'Full Supply Entry' operator. Discussions with Utiligroup are taking place to assess the viability of Chorley Council working with Utiligroup to create and deliver a local supply company that delivers citizen benefits, creates new skills and grows long term job opportunities across the sub-region.</p>	<p>2017 and ongoing</p>
<p>Affordable Warmth Projects</p>	<p>For 2016/17 the Council has secured funding from Lancashire County Council's "Affordable Warmth Grant" to carry out seasonal interventions to assist vulnerable customers with affordable warmth needs over the winter months. £35,936 was allocated to Chorley in 2016/17 and a similar amount is anticipated for 2017/18.</p> <p>This funding has enabled the Council to provide the following services:</p> <p>* Heating System Maintenance service (boiler servicing and gas fire servicing)</p>	<p>2016/7 & 2017/18</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Draught-proofing * Cavity Wall Insulation * Loft Insulation * Gap funding to enable customers with ECO funding shortfalls to access new boilers. 	
<p>Integrated Wellbeing Service for Chorley</p>	<p>An integrated community wellbeing service for Chorley aims to integrate a range of services focussed on prevention and early intervention including functions like community mental health, learning disability, housing, neighbourhood management, environmental health, health and wellbeing services, school nursing and community centre development. This service will comprise of up to 50 colleagues from Chorley Council and around 120 colleagues from LCFT. Its aim over the next 18 months from 3rd April 2017 will be to focus on improving the wider determinants of health and taking a whole-person early intervention approach to individuals without unnecessarily medicalising or institutionalising issues.</p>	
<p>Lancashire Home Energy Officers Group</p>	<p>The Lancashire Home Energy Group consists of representatives from the 12 district councils in Lancashire, Blackburn with Darwen Council, Blackpool Council, Lancashire County Council and Lancashire County Developments Ltd. The Group was established in 2007 and works in partnership to improve the energy efficiency of Lancashire Homes, address health inequalities exacerbated by living in cold damp homes, reduce fuel poverty, tackle seasonal excess deaths and reduce carbon emissions from the domestic sector.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

<p>Signed off by</p>	<p>(Councillor Alistair Bradley)</p>
<p>Position</p>	<p>Leader of Chorley Council</p>



Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Customer and Digital (Introduced by the Executive Member for Customer and Advice Services)	Executive Cabinet	16 March 2016

CARE LEAVERS – COUNCIL TAX FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. This report aims to highlight the difficulties that Care Leavers can face when they leave care (aged 16 or over), and have to manage their own budgets for the first time.
2. To support care leavers the report recommends making changes to our Council Tax Scheme (CTS) discretionary hardship policy so that we can give Care Leavers who meet the CTS criteria 100% council tax relief until they reach the age of 25.
3. It also recommends that where a Care Leaver doesn't meet the CTS criteria, the Council offers Council Tax relief of Chorley Council's element, which is roughly a 10% discount. The Council would then encourage all preceptors to offer the same support to care leavers, with the aim of enabling all care leavers to benefit from 100% council tax relief until they reach the age of 25.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

4. Members are recommended to approve:
 - a. Changes to the existing discretionary hardship policy which applies to council tax payers who receive Council Tax Support (CTS) to make provision for Care Leavers who meet the CTS criteria to be granted 100% relief from paying Council Tax from 1 April 2017.
 - b. Changes to the Council's discretionary hardship policy which applies to council tax payers who do not receive CTS to provide 100% relief of Chorley Council's element of the Council Tax for all Care Leavers who do not meet the CTS criteria up until the age of 25.
 - c. Writing to all major preceptors to make them aware of the difficulties care leavers face, and asking them to support giving all care leavers 100% relief until the age of 25 by contributing to the cost chargeable to this council's General Fund in proportion to their share of council tax income for 2017/18.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

5. Lancashire County Council wrote to Chorley Council in July 2016 to make us aware of the financial difficulties that care leavers face and to make us aware that they have written to the Minister of State for Children and Families to urge him to introduce legislation for a national exemption for care leavers from council tax up to the age of 25
6. Chorley Council already has two discretionary hardship policies that can be used to provide additional Council Tax relief if conditions are met. One applies to Council Tax payers who

receive Council Tax Support (CTS), and one applies to Council Tax payers who do not receive CTS.

- 7. Both of these policies would need amending to extend the existing provision to allow Council Tax relief to the care leaver group.
- 8. The new care leavers' relief would start from 1 April 2017.

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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Key Decision? Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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Reason 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 un-programmed 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)

- 9. Lancashire County Council has provided information that many young adults who leave the care of Lancashire County Council find it difficult to begin the transition out of care into adulthood.
- 10. Awarding former care leavers who meet the council tax scheme criteria council tax relief until they are 25 years will assist this vulnerable group to make the transition from care to adult life is as smooth as possible, and will mitigate the chances of care leavers falling into debt as they begin to manage their own finances. It is recommended that they should be exempt from paying Council Tax until they are 25.
- 11. Changing the council's discretionary hardship policy for care leavers who do not meet the CTS criteria, will provide them with some level of relief, and also show other major preceptors that the council considered it important to provide support to care leavers. It is hoped that leading by example in offering relief of the Chorley Council element of the council tax income will also encourage other preceptors to offer the same support and relief.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 12. We could choose to have no special provision for this group. The existing hardship policies could already be used to provide discretionary financial assistance; however, this would only be if all the current conditions in the policy were met.

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	✓

BACKGROUND

14. In July 2016 Lancashire County Council (LCC) contacted the Leader of Chorley Council to advise that they had approved a resolution to contact the Minister of State for Children and Families urging him to introduce legislation for a national exemption from payment of Council Tax for care leavers up to the age of 25.
15. LCC have estimated that there are 57 Care Leavers resident in Chorley, however this figure doesn't take account of young people who have left the care of authorities other than LCC and have now moved to Chorley.
16. LCC have provided the following background information:
 - a. Last year many young people aged 16 or over left the care of Lancashire County Council and began the difficult transition out of care and into adulthood.
 - b. A 2016 report by the Children's Society found that when care leavers move into independent accommodation they begin to manage their own budget fully for the first time. The report showed that care leavers can find this extremely challenging and with no family to support them, are falling into debt and financial difficulty.
 - c. Research from the Centre for Social Justice found that over half (57%) of young people leaving care have difficulty managing their money and end up in debt when leaving care.
 - d. In 'Keep on Caring: Supporting Young People from Care to Independence', July 2016, HM Government highlighted how local authorities can also support care leavers financially in lots of different ways, including introducing exemptions from Council Tax.
 - e. The Children and Social Work Bill, currently progressing through parliament, introducing a new 'Care Leavers Covenant' underpinned by statutory duties to make sure local authorities set out clearly the entitlements for care leavers including housing, jobs and healthcare.
 - f. The local authority has a duty of care to care leavers.
17. LCC believes that:
 - a. To ensure that the transition from care to adult life is as smooth as possible, and to mitigate the chances of care leavers falling into debt as they begin to manager their own finances, they should be exempt from paying Council Tax until they are 25.
 - b. Care leavers are a particularly vulnerable group for Council Tax debt.
18. LCC have defined a care leaver is defined as:
 - a. A person aged 25 who is a former relevant child within the meaning given by section 23C (1) of The Children Act 1989.

FINANCIAL HARDSHIP POLICIES

19. Chorley Council currently has two policies that allow additional financial assistance to pay Council Tax where the Council Tax payer demonstrates financial hardship. Both of these local discretionary policies would need amending to make provision for the new Care Leaver relief.
20. The first policy offers discretionary hardship relief in respect of Council Tax liability under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (Section 13A (1)(c)) and the Local Government Act 2003 Section 76. This allows 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.

21. The Council could only grant hardship relief for those who do not receive CTS to the extent of the Council's council tax element, which would be approximately a 10% council tax discount. This discount would need to be covered from the Council's General Fund, however the impact on the general fund should be minimal as most care leavers are likely to meet the CTS criteria and therefore will be able to access the 100% relief.
22. In order to offer 100% discount for the care leavers who do not meet the CTS criteria all other preceptors would need to agree to contribute to it. It is therefore proposed to write to them to encourage them to do so and to agree a process of recouping the money at the end of year.
23. The second policy offers financial assistance under the LGFA 1992 (Section 13A (1)(a)) by way of additional Council Tax Support (CTS) to Council Tax payers who already receive CTS but where the level of support being paid by the council does not meet their full Council Tax liability. This discretionary policy has been approved as part of Chorley's Council Tax Support scheme to assist recipients of CTS who are facing exceptional financial hardship.
24. The cost of granting hardship relief for those who receive CTS would be shared automatically with other preceptors as it is treated as an additional payment of CTS within the Collection Fund.
25. Consultation on the Care Leavers discount was carried out between 1 November to 6 December 16. Only one response was received and with the respondent agreeing that Chorley Council should award 100% relief from payment of Council Tax in specific circumstances set out within the guidelines.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

26. 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

27. There is no provision in the Council's General Fund revenue budget for 2017/18 for awarding discretionary hardship relief to Care Leavers. If the existing hardship policies are amended as recommended, the financial effect would be identified in budget monitoring reports during 2017/18. The cost to this council would depend on the split of Care Leavers between the two hardship relief categories; and whether other major preceptors would contribute towards the cost of the relief chargeable directly to this council's General Fund.
28. If the hardship relief is awarded under Section 13A (1)(a) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the cost would be accounted for in the Collection Fund. It would be a minor increase in the cost of the Council Tax Support Scheme, which estimated to be £6.1m in 2017/18. In effect if no other elements making up the Council Tax budget for 2017/18 changed, the unbudgeted relief would contribute to a deficit in 2017/18, which would be shared between major preceptors in 2018/19 in proportion to their 2017/18 precepts. If all Care Leavers currently identified had relief in this category, then the estimated cost would be less than £5,000, of which this council's share in 2018/19 would be around £600.

29. Hardship relief awarded under Section 13A (1)(c) of the 1992 Act would be charged directly to this council's General Fund revenue budget in 2017/18 rather than via the Collection Fund mechanism. It is considered likely that the majority of care leavers would meet the CTS criteria, therefore the cost to the council's General Fund of providing 100% relief should be minimal. There is no automatic way of sharing this cost between major preceptors. The recommendation therefore is that the other major preceptors should be approached to ask them to contribute to the cost in proportion to their shares of Council Tax income.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

The Council have an obligation to act reasonably when agreeing discretionary relief policies such as this. In this instance a sound argument for the change to the policy has been provided by LCC which is in line with the Councils Vision to protect vulnerable people.

Asim Khan
DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER AND DIGITAL SERVICES

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Julie Riding	5421	02 March 2017	***

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