

# Executive Cabinet

## Minutes of meeting held on Thursday, 5 October 2006

**Present:** Councillor P Goldsworthy (Executive Leader in the Chair), Councillor Mrs P Case (Deputy Leader of the Council) and Councillors E Bell, P Malpas, G Morgan, M Perks and J Walker.

**Also in attendance:**

**Lead Members:** Councillors A Cullens (Lead Member for Wardens), D Dickinson (Lead Member for Parish Councils), Mrs M Gray (Lead Member for the Town Centre), G Russell (Leader Member for Finance), Mrs R Russell (Lead Member for Health and Older People) and Mrs I Smith (Lead Member for Licensing)

**Other Members:**

Councillors D Edgerley, A Gee, D Gee, R Lees, A Lowe, M Lowe and J Wilson

### 06.EC.121 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest by the Executive Cabinet Members in any of the agenda items.

### 06.EC.122 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Executive Cabinet held on 24 August 2006 were confirmed as a correct record for signature by the Executive Leader.

### 06.EC.123 CHORLEY TOWN CENTRE STRATEGY

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report and gave a short presentation on the draft Chorley Town Centre Strategy being presented for approval by the Executive Cabinet.

The Director explained the background to the development of the Strategy, which had evolved from the Economic Development Strategy and the study undertaken by White Young Green in May 2005 into the town centre and the wider retail and leisure needs of the Borough. The resultant draft strategy had undergone a wide consultation exercise, the responses to which were summarised in an appendix to the report.

The principal objectives of the 10 year strategy were to realise the potential of the town centre and improve its vitality and viability. The strategy aimed to provide a co-ordinated framework for policy and actions that would build on the town's strengths and attract investment through a greater range of quality outlets.

The strategy identified the following four key elements, under each of which initial targets and actions plans to implement the strategy had been compiled:

- Town Centre Diversification

The strategy planned to broaden the town centre's economic base by encouraging new small and middle-range outlets and stimulating the expansion of the evening economy.

A plan showing potential development sites (eg Market Walk extension; land at the junction of Gillibrand Street and Market Street; and land at the rear of the Pall Mall triangle) was exhibited.

- Town Centre Environment

The strategy required the significant enhancement and maintenance of the town's physical fabric through, for example, improvements to the town's gateway areas and design guides for shop fronts.

- Accessibility and Movement

The strategy aimed to build upon the current high levels of accessibility by reviewing existing car parking provision and pedestrian linkages within the town centre.

Special reference was made to the proposals to create a prestigious Town Hall Square feature.

- Business Promotion and Support

More effective marketing and promotion of Chorley as a 'Contemporary Market Town' and partnership working were crucial to the delivery of the strategy.

In this context, reference was made to the current negotiations with a private company with a view to the company being contracted to undertake the future operation and management of the town's Markets.

In response to a Councillor's query, the Chief Executive indicated that town centre management issues would be examined as part of the review of the planned measures through which the Strategy would be implemented, as requested by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 4 October.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had also raised issues around community safety aspects of the Strategy, which would be addressed within the Action Plan for the improvement of the Town Centre Environment.

**Decision made:**

**That the Chorley Town Centre Strategy, as now submitted, be approved and adopted.**

**Reason for decision:**

Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres recommends that local authorities adopt a pro-active approach to town centres by the production of Town Centre Strategies which plan for future development in the town.

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

None.

## **06.EC.124 CONCESSIONARY TRAVEL - USE OF SMART CARDS**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting on 5 September 2006, had recommended the Executive Cabinet to support the abandonment of the use of smart cards in relation to concessionary travel passes.

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor D Edgerley, informed the Members, however, that the Committee had, at its subsequent meeting on 4 October, requested the preparation of a report on the operation and financial implications of the

concessionary travel scheme, particularly in the light of the planned revisions to the scheme on 1 April 2007.

In the circumstances, the Executive Cabinet concurred with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's suggestion that it would be prudent to await the receipt of the requested report before determining whether or not the Council should support the abandonment of smart cards up to 2008.

**Decision made:**

**That further consideration of the future use of smart cards be deferred pending the submission of a report by the Director of Finance on the operation and financing of the concessionary travel scheme to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Executive Cabinet.**

**Reason for decision:**

The report on the anticipated funding of the concessionary travel scheme will enable a more informed decision to be taken on the future use of smart cards.

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

None.

**06.EC.125 REVENUE BUDGET, 2006/07 - MONITORING REPORT NO. 3**

The Executive Cabinet received a report of the Director of Finance monitoring the current financial position of the Council in comparison with the budgetary and efficiency savings targets for 2006/07 in respect of the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account.

The report contained details of the significant budget variations that had occurred since the last monitoring report, which had effectively increased the projected overspend of the General Fund from £66,000 to £170,000. Members' attention was drawn to the areas that would need to be closely monitored over the remainder of the year. Each Service Director had been instructed to review their respective budget heads and identify any cost reductions and potential savings required to meet the cash savings targets set for 2006/07.

The Housing Revenue Account balances were expected to increase to £837,000 as a result of the Executive Cabinet's authorisation at its previous meeting of the use of £150,000 of the regional Housing Capital Grant to replace the HRA contribution to capital.

The Executive Member for Resources, Councillor G Morgan, indicated that the frequency of future revenue budget monitoring reports to both the Executive Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been discussed at the last meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4 October and that, consequently, the Executive Member had agreed to examine the issue with the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**Decision made:**

**That the report be noted.**

**06.EC.126 QUARTERLY BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS, 2006/07 - MONITORING REPORT AS AT 30 JUNE 2006**

The Executive Cabinet received and considered a statistical report prepared by the Director of Policy and Performance monitoring the Council's performance during the first quarter period of 2006/07 against the Best Value Key Performance Indicators (ie national indicators collected in accordance with definitions issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government).

The report indicated that, overall, the Authority's performance during the quarter period was positive and improving. Action Plans had been devised to enhance the performance of those areas where the identified targets had been missed by 5% or more.

The Members were also advised of plans to strengthen the Authority's performance management arrangements through the introduction of quarterly 'Round Table' meetings between the Executive Member for Corporate Policy and Performance and the Director of Policy and Performance with each other Executive Member and their respective Director. The meetings would enable poor or deteriorating areas of performance to be identified and discussion on means of addressing and resolving the issues.

**Decision made:**

**That the report be noted.**

Executive Leader