Chorley Council

MINUTES OF	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE PANEL
MEETING DATE	**Thursday, 19 November 2020**
MEMBERS PRESENT:	Councillor John Walker (Chair) and Councillors Roy Lees, Alex Hilton, Marion Lowe and June Molyneaux
OFFICERS:	Chris Sinnott (Deputy Chief Executive), Victoria Willett (Service Lead - Transformation and Partnerships) and Nina Neisser (Democratic and Member Services Officer)
OTHER MEMBERS:	Councillor Peter Wilson

20.OSP.38 Minutes of meeting Thursday, 8 October 2020 of Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel

Decision – That the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel held on 8 October 2020 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

20.OSP.39 Declarations of Any Interests

There were no declarations of interest received.

20.OSP.40 Performance Focus - Policy and Governance

The Chair, Councillor John Walker, welcomed Chris Sinnott, Deputy Chief Executive, and Councillor Peter Wilson, Deputy Executive Leader and Executive Member (Resources), to the meeting.

Councillor Peter Wilson presented the report which provided contextual information with regards to the overall Directorate summary, including the budget position and the key performance summary and key project update for 2020/21.

The Policy and Governance directorate was last considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel in January 2020. The directorate incorporates a number of services including; governance, shared financial services, transformation and partnerships and communications and visitor economy.

Members noted that the Policy and Governance directorate has led on delivering phase one of shared services. It was reported that the new shared services started working together on 1 April and have benefitted from the increased resilience offered by a larger, more diverse workforce, particularly when responding to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Members had previously held concerns regarding the Terms and Conditions, however they were reassured that there had been numerous consultation opportunities for staff. Shared Service employees had adopted the new terms and conditions which were agreed by both councils in July.

Following queries on the terms and conditions, it was reiterated to Members that the new terms and conditions applied only to Shared Service staff at this time, and as more employees entered into the shared service they would also adopt the new terms and conditions. There was no plan at the moment for all Chorley Council staff to go under the new terms and conditions but this would be kept under review.

Overall performance for 2020/21 had been good. For key corporate projects, there were four projects that fell under the Policy and Governance directorate, with all four of these performing on target for quarter two. For key service level performance, overall there were 38 indicators; 24 (63%) were performing on or above target, 3 (8%) were performing worse than target but within the threshold and 11 (29%) were performing below target. Members recognised the indicators that were off target which related to visitors to events or attractions and website visitors for these events or attractions and understood the impact Covid-19 had had on this.

The directorate budget was underspending by £160k, which created a 3.5% variance against the original cash budget. Savings were made as part of the shared services and the events programme as the Covid-19 pandemic meant that many events such at the flower show had been taken online.

In response to queries by the Chair, Members were advised that due to Covid-19 and working from home, shared services had happened differently than planned however staff had adapted well. It was understood that a couple of weeks were lost following this but now all staff were entirely able to work from home.

With regards to the HR Policy Framework, Members were advised that this was now in place and staff had been consulted with along the process. Good progress had been made to integrate the two HR teams and no redundancies had been made.

Members recognised a decrease in staff sickness absence and discussed how working from home had affected this. Reassurances were made that managers were monitoring the performance and productivity of their staff under the new ways of working.

The Chair thanked Chris Sinnott and Councillor Peter Wilson for their attendance and thanked staff for all of their work, in particular with shared services during difficult times.

Decision: That the report be noted.

20.OSP.41   Quarter Two Performance Report 2020/21

The Performance Panel considered a monitoring report from the Deputy Chief Executive which was presented to the Executive Cabinet on 12 November 2020. Councillor Peter Wilson advised that the report set out the performance against the delivery of the Corporate Strategy and key performance indicators during the second quarter of 2020/21, 1 July to 30 September 2020.

Overall performance of key projects was excellent with 85% of the projects rated as green and 15% currently rated as amber; there were two action plans for the amber projects which were contained in the report. Performance of the Corporate Strategy indicators and key service delivery measures was good with 67% of Corporate Strategy measures and 86% of key service delivery measures performing on or above target, or within the 5% threshold. Those indicators performing below target had action plans outlined with measures to improve performance.

Members discussed the report, in particular the delivery of affordable homes within the borough, recognising that a lot of work had been done but more was required. The current figures for the number of affordable homes under construction were requested and Members were advised that a report on the Wholly Owned Company would be brought before Members for consideration in due course.

With regards to unemployment and the impact of Covid, Members were reassured that the situation in Chorley reflected the national picture. The hard work of the Business Engagement Team during this time was recognised and commended.

Decision: That the report be noted.

Chair   Date