

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 9 November 2009

Present: Councillor Dennis Edgerley (Chair), Councillor Alan Cullens (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Mike Devaney, Marie Gray, Harold Heaton, Adrian Lowe, Rosie Russell, Edward Smith, Iris Smith and Peter Wilson

Also in attendance: Councillors Peter Malpas (Executive Member (Business))

Officers in attendance: Gary Hall (Assistant Chief Executive (Business Transformation)), Lesley-Ann Fenton (Assistant Chief Executive (Policy and Performance)), Jamie Carson (Corporate Director (People)), Jane Meek (Corporate Director (Business)), Ishbel Murray (Corporate Director (Neighbourhoods)), Zoe Whiteside (Strategic Housing Services Manager), Carol Russell (Head of Democratic Services) and Ruth Rimmington (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

09.OS.84 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Nora Ball and Joyce Snape.

09.OS.85 MINUTES

RESOLVED – The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 28 September 2009 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

09.OS.86 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

In accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Members Code of Conduct the following interests were declared:

- Councillor Adrian Lowe declared a personal interest in item 9: Chorley Partnership's Performance Report - Second Quarter 2009 / 2010 and item 10: Performance of Key Partnerships - 2008/09 Year End Progress report.
- Councillor Alan Cullens declared a personal interest in item 10: Performance of Key Partnerships - 2008/09 Year End Progress report.

09.OS.87 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No members of the public requested to ask a question at the meeting.

09.OS.88 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY INQUIRIES - AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Chair welcomed Councillor Peter Malpas (Executive Member (Business)) to the meeting.

Members received and considered the final report, recommendations and action plan in respect of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Task Group inquiry with Preston and South Ribble into Affordable Housing.

The Chair advised there were useful recommendations within the report that, in some cases, the Executive Cabinet had already implemented as part of the Affordable Housing action plan. Councillor Malpas supported the recommendations, in particular, those made to the Homes and Communities Agency.

The inquiry had been a learning experience with regards to joint scrutiny.

RESOLVED - The report be presented to Executive Cabinet for consideration in December 2009.

09.OS.89 EXECUTIVE CABINET - 3 DECEMBER 2009

The Chair reported that there had been no requests from Committee Members to consider reports on the Executive Cabinet agenda for the meeting on 3 December 2009.

09.OS.90 BUSINESS PLAN AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING STATEMENTS - SECOND QUARTER 2009 / 2010

The Committee received the Business Plan and Performance Monitoring Statements.

(a) Business Directorate

The Corporate Director (Business) reported progress against the key actions and performance indicators.

It was reported the new ASDA development would aim to employ 440 staff, with 40% of these being full time equivalents.

In response to a query it was clarified that a total of 43 Disabled Facilities Grants had been received, with only 5 awaiting approval. Of the £354,000 budget £315,000 had been committed.

With regards to the Abbey Village and Brindle Conservation Area Reviews this would include the history, boundaries of the area, full consultation and an exhibition held in the area.

RESOLVED – The report be noted.

(b) Neighbourhoods Directorate

The Corporate Director (Neighbourhoods) reported progress against the key actions and performance indicators.

38 families who had been involved with the Families First project so far, with 25 active families currently. The route to the project was primarily Registered Social Landlords because of antisocial behaviour in children, drug and alcohol misuse, parenting / educational issues and financial issues.

At the Withnell Fold Memorial garden project Groundwork had successfully applied to the Chorley Partnership for a grant of £2,300 and the Council contributed a further £700. In addition to providing the plants for the volunteer day the Groundwork Green Team undertook some work in the garden to repair damaged footpaths, improve drainage and landscape features. Hillside Methodist Youth Club volunteers also worked with Withnell Fold Residents Association on the planting up of the garden for autumn and there were over 20 volunteers involved.

RESOLVED - The report be noted.

(c) People Directorate

The Corporate Director (People) reported progress against the key actions and performance indicators.

It was recognised that there had been delays for customers contacting the contact centre at the beginning of the year. An action plan had been prepared to turn the situation around and in recent weeks performance had been brought to an acceptable

level. 20% of enquiries were dealt at the first point of contact on the telephone with 85% dealt at the first point of contact when visiting the One Stop Shop.

Positive feedback had been received by Members regarding the newly reopened Pets Corner in Astley Park.

RESOLVED -

- 1. An allotments action plan would be produced by the next quarter, including community growing schemes,**
- 2. An update report on free swimming would be presented to a future meeting,**
- 3. The report be noted.**

(d) Business Transformation Directorate

The Assistant Chief Executive (Business Transformation) reported progress against the key actions and performance indicators.

There had been a dip in performance for the revenues and benefits section – this was due to an increased demand, but would be addressed by an additional member of staff. The number of claims outstanding had reduced.

It was noted that some of the outstanding debtors were other Local Authorities.

RESOLVED - The report be noted.

Councillor Devaney left the meeting at 7.10pm.

(e) Policy and Performance Directorate

The Assistant Chief Executive (Policy and Performance) reported progress against the key actions and performance indicators.

The third edition of the Chorley Smile magazine had been produced. In addition, the first on-line version of the Chorley Smile magazine was produced which was now available through the Council's website. In the first two weeks of October there had been 1500 hits on the magazine page and 150 people had downloaded the magazine.

Working with LCC the second Locality Plan for Chorley had been finalised which was approved by both the District Council and County Council Cabinets in September. Over the next 12 months the Directorate working with LCC's District Partnership Officer would monitor the delivery of the joint action plan. In addition, work had commenced with the PCT and LCC to develop a Health Locality Plan with joint actions to improve health outcomes in Chorley (linked to the recently approved Health Inequalities Strategy) by identifying opportunities to work together to address key health issues such as alcohol related harm.

RESOLVED - The report be noted.

09.OS.91 PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT - SECOND QUARTER 2009 / 2010

The Assistant Chief Executive (Policy and Performance) presented the report setting out performance against the Corporate Strategy and the Council's National Indicators for the second quarter of 2009/10.

The Corporate Strategy 2008/9 identified 36 key projects. The overall performance of the key projects was excellent with 34 (94%) being either completed or rated 'green' and progressing ahead of or according to plan by the end of September 2009. This exceeded the Council's target of 90%.

20 of the key projects had been completed, while fourteen projects were rated as 'green', meaning that they were on track. Two projects were rated 'amber', and no projects were rated 'red'.

At the end of the 2nd quarter, 15 national indicators could be reported. All of these indicators had targets set and had been reported previously. Of the 15 the majority (13) had matched or exceeded target and 2 had missed target by 5% or more. Action plans were included for those indicators where performance was lower than anticipated.

RESOLVED - The report be noted.

09.OS.92 CHORLEY PARTNERSHIP'S PERFORMANCE REPORT - SECOND QUARTER 2009 / 2010

The Assistant Chief Executive (Policy and Performance) presented the report which updated Members on the progress of the Local Strategic Partnership in the second quarter of 2009/10.

Crime was up, on average, by 5.4% on this time last year, despite performing well against the LAA targets. There had been an overall increase in fraud and acquisitive crime compared to this time last year. Numbers of primary fires in Chorley had fallen.

All of the Chorley Partnership's projects for 2009/10 were now underway and on track.

RESOLVED -

- 1. An article be prepared for intheknow outlining figures for unemployment and job seekers allowance for each ward.**
- 2. The report be noted.**

09.OS.93 PERFORMANCE OF KEY PARTNERSHIPS - 2008/09 YEAR END PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee received a report that had previously been presented to the Executive Cabinet in June 2009. One of the topics raised at the "review of the year" event in March had been "Outsourcing and the effectiveness of subcontractors". The purpose of this item was to determine how the Committee would like to go forward on this issue.

Members discussed the presentation of the report and identified several additional areas they would like to receive information.

RESOLVED – A report be presented to a future meeting outlining areas of performance of key partnerships that Members may wish to scrutinise in detail, such as customer satisfaction and performance indicator information.

09.OS.94 EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY INQUIRY INTO CHORLEY LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

The Committee noted the Executive's response to the Overview and Scrutiny Inquiry into the Chorley Local Strategic Partnership.

Members were invited to make any requests for further information in relation to the Local Strategic Partnership to Lesley-Ann Fenton (lesley-ann.fenton@chorley.gov.uk).

Of the nine LSP projects funded for 2009/10, two were funding diversionary activity for young people at risk of alcohol abuse or Anti Social Behaviour and seeking to raise the self-esteem and aspirations of these young people.

The Safer Chorley and South Ribble Partnership had formally supported progress to be made on the establishment of a Designated Public Place Order for the Town Centre, Chorley and Astley Park. A report would be presented to Executive Cabinet which would outline the process and seek approval to go forward.

RESOLVED -

- 1. Further information be forwarded to the ward Councillors for Chorley North East and Chorley North West regarding a potential hotspot for alcohol misuse.**
- 2. The report be welcomed and noted.**

7.50 Councillor Rosie Russell left the meeting.

09.OS.95 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The Committee noted that the date of the next meeting had changed from Monday, 30 November 2009 to Tuesday, 1 December 2009. The main item on the agenda for the next meeting would be crime and disorder.

RESOLVED - The work programme and Forward Plan be noted.

09.OS.96 REPORTS FROM THE TASK AND FINISH GROUPS

Highways Issues Task and Finish Group

The Democratic and Member Services Officer reported that the Group would be considering the draft final report at their next meeting. The final report would be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January.

Town Centre Vitality Task and Finish Group

Councillor Peter Wilson reported that the group had considered issues relating to leisure and culture and signage into the town centre, including car parks. The following meeting would discuss vacant floor space and the markets.

Potential new review

The Chair requested Members to consider any issues they would like to be the subject of a scrutiny inquiry in the New Year.

RESOLVED - To note the update reports.

Chair