

Executive Cabinet

Minutes of meeting held on Thursday, 25 March 2010

Present: Councillor Peter Goldsworthy (Executive Leader in the Chair), Councillor Pat Case (Deputy Leader of the Council) and Councillors Eric Bell, Kevin Joyce, Peter Malpas, Greg Morgan and John Walker

Also in attendance:

Lead Members: Councillors Harold Heaton (Lead Member (Development Control))

Other Members: Councillors Kenneth Ball, Mike Devaney, Roy Lees, Laura Lennox, June Molyneaux and Mick Muncaster.

10.EC.148 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor David Dickinson.

10.EC.149 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest in any of the meeting's agenda items by any of the Executive Cabinet members.

10.EC.150 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of the Executive Cabinet held on 18 February 2010 were confirmed as a correct record for signature by the Executive Leader.

10.EC.151 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Executive Leader reported that there had been no requests from any member of the public to speak on any of the meeting's agenda items.

10.EC.152 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY INQUIRY -TOWN CENTRE ISSUES

The Executive Cabinet was presented with the findings and recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group that had been set up to consider Town Centre issues.

The report contains a number of recommendations aimed at enhancing the vitality and viability of the town centre, including measures to improve the marketing and promotion of the town, the signage strategy and the development of short and long term action plans for the markets.

Decision made:

That the findings and recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group be received and that the Executive's response to the recommendations be determined at a future meeting.

Reason for decision:

The decision will allow the Executive the opportunity to assess the inquiry's findings and recommendations before firm decisions on implementation are reached.

Alternative option(s) considered and rejected:

None.

10.EC.153 MULTI-AREA AGREEMENT FOR MID-LANCASHIRE

The Chief Executive presented a report on a draft Multi-Area Agreement (MAA) that had been developed for the Mid-Lancashire sub-region comprising the districts of Chorley, Lancaster, Preston, South Ribble and West Lancashire. MAAs were already in operation for Pennine Lancashire and the Fylde coast and it was proposed to introduce a similar Agreement to cover the remaining districts of Lancashire.

The Mid-Lancashire Multi-Area Agreement would provide a mechanism and conduit for the attraction of funding for the regeneration and enhancement of the economic prosperity of the sub-region.

Decision made:

That the Multi-Area Agreement for Mid-Lancashire, as presented as Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be approved for submission to the Department of Communities and Local Government, subject to delegated authority being granted to the Executive Leader to agree any necessary amendments to the final version prior to submission, following consultation with the Executive Member (Business).

Reasons for decision:

The partnership working to be developed by the Agreement will help to maximise the economic potential of the area.

Alternative option(s) considered and rejected:

None.

10.EC.154 REFRESH OF THE CHORLEY ECONOMIC REGENERATION STRATEGY

The Executive Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Partnerships, Planning and Policy seeking endorsement of the refreshed Economic Regeneration Strategy for consultation purposes.

The current strategy had been introduced in 2006 to maximise economic opportunity and to drive up value added activity, in order to achieve sustainable growth over the next 10 – 15 years. Following a workshop event with the Chorley Partnership Board a revised draft Strategy had been drawn up both to highlight the past successful initiatives and to define future key priorities and actions that would reflect current economic circumstances.

The Executive Leader commended the refreshed Strategy and suggested that greater prominence be given to the encouragement of efforts to realise the potential of the district for growing food.

Decision made:

That the first draft refresh of Chorley's Economic Regeneration Strategy, as set out in Appendix A to the submitted report, be approved for consultation purposes.

Reason for decision:

Since the delivery of the refreshed Strategy will be reliant on a cross-sector partnership and collaboration, it is important for the respective partners and stakeholders to be consulted before the finalised version is agreed.

Alternative option(s) considered and rejected:

None.

10.EC.155 PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING ASSISTANCE POLICY

The Executive Cabinet received and considered a report of the Director of Partnerships, Planning and Policy recommending approval in principle to the Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy for 2010 – 2012, incorporating amendments to reflect the consultation responses received to date.

The Executive Cabinet had, in December 2009, agreed the draft Policy for consultation purposes, with the consultation period being due to expire on 13 April 2010.

The Policy was designed to offer a mechanism for the provision of housing assistance to customers in private housing, by integrating the various strands of housing assistance in a manner that would maximise the effective use of resources and target resources to customers in most need.

In response to a number of Member queries during the debate on the new Policy, the Members were informed of the Council's intention to pursue the introduction of a Private Sector Landlords' Accreditation scheme on a voluntary basis, with the aim of creating a list of accredited landlords that could be recommended to potential tenants and letting agents.

Decisions made:

- (1) That approval in principle be given to the private Sector Housing Assistance Policy, as attached to the submitted report, following its update to reflect the consultation responses received to date.**
- (2) That the Executive Member (Business) be granted delegated authority to approve the final version of the Policy, including any minor amendments required at the conclusion of the consultation period on 13 April 2010.**

Reasons for decisions:

1. The proposed policy is designed to offer a mechanism to provide housing assistance to customers in private housing, in a way that maximises the effective use of resources in targeting customers in most need.
2. The policy integrates the various strands of housing assistance and enables the Council to provide a more coherent approach to improving housing conditions in the Borough.
3. Following an extension of the consultation period requested by the Equality Forum, delegated responsibility to approve any further changes to the Policy which are considered appropriate up to the end of the consultation period on 13 April 2010 will enable the policy to be in effect by the end of April, as planned.
- 4.

Alternative option(s) considered and rejected:

None.

10.EC.156 CORE FUNDING GRANTS TO LOCAL VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH SECTOR ORGANISATIONS - AWARD OF GRANTS FOR 2010/11

The Executive Cabinet considered a report of the Director of People and Places seeking the Members' instructions on applications for Core Funding grant aid in 2010/11.

The report contained the Director's recommendations on the award of grant aid to the organisations whose activities contributed towards the Council's strategic objectives and themes within the Sustainable Community Strategy.

The Core Funding for 2010/11 had amalgamated the grant assistance from Chorley Council's Core Fund budget provision, Chorley Partnership funding and Central Lancashire Health Inequalities Grants, which would streamline and reduce administrative procedures and enable the compilation of a central database for partners.

Decisions made:

- (1) **That approval be given to the making of the following Core Fund grants, subject to the Director of People and Places agreeing and signing off a Core Funding Agreement with each organisation:**
 - **'Improving Life Chances for Young People at Risk' (The Arts Partnership) – Grant of £7,000, together with a grant of £7,940 for the Aspects Project;**
 - **'Family Support' (Homestart) – Grant of £20,000;**
 - **'Manage your Money Better' (Citizens' Advice Bureau) – Grant of £10,000;**
 - **'Core Advice Services' (Citizens' Advice Bureau) – Grant of £75,000 (including accommodation costs);**
 - **Chorley and District Sports Forum – Grant of £5,000;**
 - **'Chorley Pensioners' Running Costs' (Chorley Pensioners' Association) – Grant of £350;**
 - **Chorley and South Ribble Council for Voluntary Service – Grant of £4,165;**
 - **'Chorley Street Pastors' (Ascension Trust) – Grant of £7,000;**
 - **'Chorley Lifestyle Centre' (Age Concern) – Grant of £7,600;**
 - **Chorley Women's Centre – Grant of £4,550;**
 - **'Evening and Saturday Dial-a-Bus Service' (Central Lancashire Dial-a-Ride) – Grant of £2,080, provided NowCards are not used on the service and that the service is developed further with Lancashire County Council and Central Lancashire Dial-a-Ride;**
- (2) **That the application from Chorley and South Ribble Shopmobility be removed from the Core Grants application process and that funds be found from the mainstream budget to support the essential service.**
- (3) **That no Core Grant be provided in 2010/11 in respect of the application from the Preston and Western Lancashire Racial Equality Council for support of 'Chorley Discrimination and Racism Assistance' initiatives, as the application failed to meet the funding criteria.**
- (4) **That the Central Lancashire Primary Care Trust be requested to provide financial support for the Citizens' Advice Bureau's 'CABability' service for 2010/11.**

- (5) That, in respect of the Chorley and South Ribble Council for voluntary Service's application for funding of the 'H Factor' project, the Central Lancashire PCT be requested to collaborate with the CVS to arrange a health awareness event.
- (6) That the Central Lancashire PCT be requested to provide support to the Saheliyaan Asian Women's Forum for their 'Health and Well-Being for BME Older People and Families' service.
- (7) That further information be sought in respect of the applications for grant assistance from the following organisations and that delegated authority be granted to the Executive Member (People) to determine the applications on receipt of the requested information:

**Groundwork Lancashire West and Wigan;
The Chorley Help Hub.**

Reason for decision:

The Core Funding provided will enable key local organisations to continue their activities in 2010/11.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

None.

10.EC.157 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

Decision made:

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the ground that it includes the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

10.EC.158 UPDATE ON SHARED SERVICES

The Executive Cabinet received and considered a confidential report of the Director of Transformation on the progress and successes to date of the Council's collaborative working with South Ribble and Preston on a number of ventures.

In order to achieve the targets identified in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2010/11 – 2012/13, the report recommended an examination of the further development of collaborative working with South Ribble Council on two identified services

The Members were assured that the proposals would be assessed on the assumption that any prospective venture would not result in any diminution of service and would effect financial savings.

Decisions made:

That approval be given to the further development of collaborative working with South Ribble Council along the lines outlined in the submitted report, and that detailed plans be drawn up and presented to the Executive Cabinet for consideration.

Reason for decisions:

To progress the Council's collaborative working agenda.

Alternative option(s) considered and rejected:

None.

(NB The meeting was re-opened to the press and public at this point.)

10.EC.159 NEIGHBOURHOOD WORKING - 2009/10 PROGRESS REPORT AND PROPOSALS FOR 2010/11

The Executive Cabinet received a report of the Director of People and Places on the progress so far of the neighbourhood working regime and putting forward revised action plans and proposals for 2010/11.

The Head of Leisure and Neighbourhoods also gave a short presentation, which illustrated the progress and success of the on-going initiative and highlighted the plans for future projects and ways in which Member engagement could be developed.

The Executive Cabinet confirmed its commitment to the introduction of the neighbourhood working initiative as a means of encouraging the development of more community links and partnership working, and generating external funding for the betterment of the seven neighbourhood areas.

Decision made:

That the progress report on the neighbourhood working regime activities in 2009/10 be noted and that the draft Neighbourhood Action Plans and proposals for 2010/11, as appended to the submitted report, be approved.

Reasons for decision:

Strong partnership working and community engagement are key elements to the achievement of the Council's corporate priorities.

The neighbourhood working venture is perceived as the best means of making the most effective use of shared resources to achieve real benefits for the seven neighbourhood areas.

Alternative option(s) considered and rejected:

While other models and ventures have been tested, the current model appears to be a closer 'fit' for Chorley's purpose and demographic.

Discontinuing neighbourhood working could jeopardise the further development of community engagement and partnership working at a neighbourhood level.

Executive Leader