

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 1 June 2010

Present: Councillor Adrian Lowe (Chair), Councillor Alan Cullens (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Julia Berry, Marie Gray, Alison Hansford, Pat Haughton, Harold Heaton, Mark Perks, Rosie Russell, Edward Smith, Joyce Snape and Peter Wilson

Officers in attendance: Gary Hall (Director of Transformation), Jamie Carson (Director of People and Places), Carol Russell (Democratic Services Manager) and Dianne Scambler (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

10.OS.06 THANK YOU

The Chair on behalf of the Committee expressed thanks to the former Chair, Councillor Dennis Edgerley for his valuable contribution to the work of the Committee over the past few years.

The Chair also thanked former Committee Members Councillors Nora Ball and Mike Devaney for their work on the Committee.

10.OS.07 WELCOME

Councillor Adrian Lowe, as the new Chair of the Committee, welcomed everybody to the first meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2010/11 municipal year, with a special mention to Councillors Julia Berry, Alison Hansford and Mark Perks.

10.OS.08 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

10.OS.09 MINUTES

RESOLVED

- 1. That the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 22 March 2010 be confirmed as a correct record for signing by the Chair.**
- 2. That a Member Learning Session be delivered to inform Members about the recent changes at Chorley Community Housing in late July/early August.**

10.OS.10 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were declared.

10.OS.11 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No members of the public requested to ask a question.

10.OS.12 EXECUTIVE CABINET - 3 JUNE 2010

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 June 2010, although a number of reports from the Cabinet were being considered on this agenda.

10.OS.13 SAFER CHORLEY AND SOUTH RIBBLE PARTNERSHIP

(a) Minutes of the Joint meeting of representatives of Chorley and South Ribble Overview and Scrutiny Committees

The Committee considered the minutes of the joint meeting of representatives of Chorley and South Ribble Overview and Scrutiny Committees that had been held on 31 March 2010 to scrutinise the performance of the merged Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership.

Members noted the two Member Learning Session that were to be delivered jointly with South Ribble on Crime and Disorder related topics:

- Understanding the Safer Chorley and South Ribble Partnership to be held on Wednesday 16 June 2010 at the Civic Centre, West Paddock, Leyland; and
- Drugs and Alcohol Abuse to be held on Monday 5 July 2010 in Committee Room 1, Town Hall Chorley

Both sessions would commence at 6.00pm and all Elected Members of both Authorities and the Partnership would be invited to attend.

RESOLVED – That the minutes be approved.

(b) Chorley and South Ribble Merged Community Safety Partnership

The Committee received a report of the Director of People and Places informing Members of the progress and outcome of the Merged Partnership which was going to the next meeting of the Executive Cabinet for approval.

The report provided detail on the performance of the pilot merger against agreed evaluation criteria and crime levels and made recommendations relating to the future arrangements for delivering community safety across the Chorley and South Ribble Borough footprints. The proposal was for a continuation of the merged arrangements through a proposed model of collaboration.

RESOLVED

- 1. That the report be noted and the model of collaboration for the Chorley and South Ribble Partnership be supported.**
- 2. That the Executive Cabinet be asked to look specifically at the role of the Elected Member within the Partnership to ensure democratic accountability and effective communications.**

10.OS.14 BUSINESS PLAN MONITORING STATEMENTS

The Committee received the Business Plan and Monitoring Statements for the final quarter of 2009/10.

As a consequence of the Council restructure in December 2009 the existing departments had been merged to create the three new directorates:

- Partnerships, Planning and Policy
- People and Places; and
- Transformation

(a) Partnerships, Planning and Policy Directorate

The Committee received a report of the Director of Partnerships, Planning and Policy for consideration.

The Director of Transformation outline some of the key messages contained within the report including the improved performance around affordable housing delivery and processing of planning applications.

Members were also informed that the new government had stated that it planned to abolish Comprehensive Area Assessment. Therefore all work on updating the area assessment and organisational assessment had ceased and it was therefore anticipated that there may be no performance related assessment carried out for 2010/11.

Members asked to receive further information on the Economic Development pilot scheme aimed at breathing new life in to Chorley Town Centre in partnership with Lancashire County Council.

Some concern was expressed that due to the installation of the new 'You are here' maps across the Town Centre there was now no provision for voluntary groups to display community notices.

The work with Public-1 to create a development site for the Virtual Town Hall was also discussed and an update requested on the launch of the project.

RESOLVED – That the Business Plan Monitoring Statement be noted.

(b) People and Places Directorate

The Committee received a report of the Director of People and Places highlighting key messages including much improved performance against the NI195 targets in the fourth quarter following a more robust improvement plan that had been recently implemented.

Members sought clarification on the timescale of allocating funding against projects listed in the Neighbourhood Action Plans and how they would be informed of this. Some concern was expressed about the organisation of the Days of Action.

Members noted that meetings were currently underway to discuss Locality working and to forge better partnership arrangements between Council Leaders and Chief Executives following the abolishment of the Lancashire Locals. The County Council was currently considering some services being delegated to District Councils to deliver.

Members were also informed that a full club audit had also been launched and was near completion. This would enable the Council to better support its community groups and in turn help to achieve targets. The Committee considered the participation rates for volunteering and Members suggested that the Council could use the yearly National Volunteers Week as a platform for promoting this type of activity and encouraging people to come forward.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

(c) Transformation Directorate

The Committee received a report of the Director of Transformation reporting on key projects within his directorate and highlighting some key messages. The Council was only one of two District Councils to obtain a maximum score for its Use of Resources and had also achieved level 2 of the Member Development Charter which was an indicator of the level of training and development support currently being provided to Members.

At the last meeting it had been reported that there was £500,000 of debt outstanding over the 90 day period. The Council had since collected eighty percent of the outstanding total, some of which had linked to Section 106 money.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

10.OS.15 REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN FOR 2009/10

The Director of Transformation presented a report on the provisional outturn figures for the Council's budget for the 2009/10 financial year.

The forecasted revenue underspend had been improved on with the revenue outturn now coming in under budget by £181,000. In terms of the Capital programme, a number of schemes had slipped and borrowing was therefore contained within the estimates and working balances were set to increase.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

10.OS.16 CORPORATE STRATEGY KEY PROJECTS: FOURTH QUARTER PERFORMANCE 2009/10

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Partnerships, Planning and Policy which set out and reviewed the Authority's performance both in respect of the 33 key projects included in the Corporate Strategy and the National Indicators for which the Council were responsible, during the fourth quarter of 2009/10 ending on March 2010.

The report revealed a commendable performance in the delivery of the 33 Corporate key projects, with 100% being either already completed or on track for delivery.

In addition, the report confirmed that 17 of the 25 National indicators that were able to be measured during the fourth quarter had matched or exceeded target, four had performed worse than target but within the 5% threshold, and that actions plans had been prepared to redress the four performance indicators that had missed their targets by more than 5%. Although it was also reported that one of the four, NI170 was set to be deleted as at the end of March 2010.

A few Members queried a number of issues related to the projects and measures for which recovery plans had been put in place, including whether or not the completion of the I&DeA Peer Review of the Local Strategic Partnership would still go ahead.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

10.OS.17 CHORLEY PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2010

The Committee received a report of the Director of Partnerships, Planning and Policy presenting the Chorley Partnership's end of year performance report for 2009/10.

The report reviewed the Partnership's activities and performance throughout 2009/10, commenting particularly on progress and implications of the LSP sponsored projects and how they were contributing to the Sustainable Community Strategy. The report also reviewed the Council's performance against the second year of the Local Area Agreement.

The Director of Transformation highlighted a number of key issues discussed in the Annual Report, pointing out, for example, that the delivery of affordable homes had increased by 174% since last year.

While the overall crime rate had reduced by 2.1% over the past 12 months, the number of burglary dwelling had risen mainly due to some large spikes when the

recession was at its most intense. The Community Safety Partnership had responded by tackling the issue of cross border crime, particularly insecure burglaries. Some Members asked if statistics relating to rural crime could be reported on in the future.

The 'Street Pastors ' project, works with people in the community and although initially the project did not focus on young people this subsequently changed and safeguarding arrangements were then put in place. Members were keen to ensure that organisations which received Council funding and worked with young people and vulnerable adults had sufficient safeguard policies and arrangements in place.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

10.OS.18 ANNUAL REVIEW OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY 2009 / 10 AND TOPICS FOR 2010 / 11

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Transformation which presented a review of the issues covered by Scrutiny in 2009/10 and outlined future Task Group topics suggested at the “Scrutiny – A review of the year session” held prior to the last meeting.

RESOLVED –

1. **The outcomes of the review of 2009/10 be noted.**
2. **The review topics for 2010/11 be:**
 - **Asset Management to be Chaired by Councillor Alan Cullens**
 - **Allotments to be Chaired by Councillor Julia Berry**
3. **That following the Member Learning Session to be delivered on Chorley Community Housing available for all Members, the issue of CCH transfer promises be considered at a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

10.OS.19 SCRUTINY REPORTING BACK: ANNUAL REPORT OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IN 2009 / 10

Members considered the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report that detailed the work of the Committee in 2009/10, including the specific outcomes from the Task Groups and the Committee's role in scrutinising performance and holding the Executive to account.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted and be submitted to Council in July.

10.OS.20 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PLAN

The Committee received the proposed Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2010/11 which identified the proposed areas of work to be undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED – That the Work Programme be noted.

10.OS.21 FORWARD PLAN

The Committee received the Forward Plan for the period 1 June 2010 to 30 September 2010.

RESOLVED – That the Forward Plan be noted.

Chair