

# Scrutiny Inquiry Project Outline

## Overview and Scrutiny Inquiry Project Outline

### Review Topic:

Overview and Scrutiny Task Group – Empty Properties

### Objectives:

- To gain a greater understanding of empty properties, the definition used, and powers available to the council.
- To understand the number of empty properties within Chorley and how it compares to other neighbouring borough councils.
- To ensure that the council is fulfilling its required duties and exercising best practice.

### Desired Outcomes:

- To be updated on the number of empty properties in the borough. The definition the council used to classify empty properties and to understand what powers the council has in relation to empty properties, and the circumstances required for powers to be exercised.
- To understand the position of Chorley Council in respect of the number of empty properties in the borough.
- To understand the process of empty properties in Chorley, and to understand how each department in the is involved with empty properties.

### Terms of Reference:

To understand how the council handles empty properties in the borough.

To establish if there is anything that the council could do to improve its empty property figures and understand the resources that will be needed.

To develop recommendations to Executive Cabinet on how the council can make improvements.

**Equality and diversity implications:**

Rurality

Identify how our geography may effect influencing changes

**Risks:**

- Managing expectations of Member and the public
- Whether stakeholders will want to engage, if so, work must be conducted in a positive way to avoid any long-lasting damage to any working relationships.
- Scope creep – the Task Group must focus on achievable goals.

**Venue(s):**

Town Hall, Market Street, Chorley.

**Chair: Councillor Sarah Ainsworth**

**Vice-Chair: Councillor Michelle Le Marinel**

**Timescale:**

**Start: December 2022**

**Finish: March 2023**

**Information Requirements and Sources:****Documents/evidence:** (what/why?)

- Chorley Council's Empty Properties Policy
- Feedback from other local authorities in relation to their number of empty properties, their definition.

**Witnesses:** (who, why?)

- Adele Hayes – Head of Planning and Enforcement
- Nathan Howson – Enforcement Team Leader (Licensing)
- Councillor Alistair Morwood – Executive Member for Planning and Development
- Neighbouring Borough/District Councils
- Chorley Borough Council Officers involved with empty properties (via World Café Event)
  - Licensing and Enforcement,
  - Legal
  - Customer Services, Revenue and Benefits
  - Housing -
  - Environmental Health

**Consultation/Research:** (what, why, who?)

- Research to be completed into other borough councils that have completed similar task groups exploring empty properties.

**Site Visits:** (where, why, when?)

**Officer Support:**

Lead Officer: Adele Hayes

Democratic and  
Member Services Officer: Matthew Pawlyszyn

**Likely Budget Requirements:**

Purpose

£

**Total**

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**Target Body<sup>1</sup> for Findings/Recommendations**

**Executive Cabinet**

(Eg Executive Cabinet, Council, partner)

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<sup>1</sup> All project outcomes require the approval of Overview and Scrutiny Committee before progressing