

## **REPORT OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND TASK AND FINISH GROUPS**

1. This report summarises the business transacted at the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 8 November and 6 December 2010 and 14 February 2011, as well as a brief summary of the recent activities and matters discussed at meetings that have taken place of the Task and Finish Groups.

### **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 8 NOVEMBER 2010**

#### **Chorley Council Performance Monitoring Report – Second Quarter of 2010/11**

2. The Committee received a report of the Director of Partnerships, Planning and Policy setting out the performance against the Corporate Strategy and the Councils National Indicators for the second quarter of 2010/11.
3. The Corporate Strategy identified 33 key projects. The overall performance of the key projects remained excellent with 91% of projects being either completed, closed off, or rated 'green' and progressing ahead. This had been an improvement on the last quarter's performance. The 9% of projects that were rated 'red' or 'amber' were expected to be brought back on track over the next quarter.
4. Overall performance of the key measures in the Corporate Strategy remained strong, with 93% of measures performing about target or within the 5% tolerance. Where performance had been below target, action plans had been developed that outlined what action would be taken to improve performance.

#### **Chorley Partnership – Performance Monitoring Report for Second Quarter of 2010/11**

5. The Committee received a report of the Director of Partnerships, Planning and Policy updating Members on the performance of the Local Strategic Partnership for the second quarter of 2010/11.
6. The information provided had been based on performance against the 2007 Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement Targets and it was explained that measures would be developed in line with the new Sustainable Community Strategy 2010 – 2020, to be reported on, from April 2011.
7. Overall crime had reduced by 6.5% in comparison to this time last year and reductions had been seen in most categories of crime. The number of new businesses being established was now back on target and performing well, with 33 businesses being established against a target of 26.
8. Chorley Partnership had commissioned 9 projects for 2010/11. Seven of these projects had been rated green, indicated that performance is as planned or ahead of target.

#### **Business Plan Monitoring Statements**

9. The Committee received the Business Plan Monitoring Statements for the first six months of 2010/11.

## **Partnerships Planning and Policy Directorate**

10. There had been a number of notable achievements for the Directorate that included:
  - The development of an Alcohol Improvement Programme aimed at reducing alcohol related admissions.
  - Another successful Chorley Picnic in the Park event that included the Chorley Smile Awards.
  - Working in partnership with the local voluntary sector businesses to secure 12 new vacancies in the Future Jobs Fund programme.
11. The report also highlighted those actions that were currently behind schedule, giving details for the delays and what action would be taken to get back on track.

## **People and Places Directorate**

12. Key achievements for the directorate included:
  - A Civic Society Award for the Coach House Café at Astley Park
  - The retention of the Green Flags at Yarrow Valley Country Park and, Tatton Recreational Ground and Withnell Linear Park
  - Country Park accreditation for Yarrow Valley County Park
13. The majority of key actions in the Business Improvement Plan had been delivered on schedule and an explanation had been given for those currently off target.
14. It was noted that measures taken to improve performance against NI195b and NI195c, improved street and environmental cleanliness; levels of detritus and graffiti had been successful and there had been evidence to suggest that this would be back on target in the next quarter.

## **Transformation Directorate**

15. Notable successes for the directorate included:
  - A 100% completion of staff Performance Appraisals.
  - Attaining an unqualified audit opinion on the statement of accounts.
  - Implementation of a cycle to work scheme.
16. The key focus for improvement in the first part of 2010 had been on evaluating options in respect of the Councils ICT infrastructure and network. Replacements had now been procured and the second half of the year would see the implementation phase.
17. It was also reported that the Council had introduced a single financial system across the shared service with South Ribble Council that would progress against the milestones and deliver further financial savings.

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 6 DECEMBER 2010**

### **2011/12 Budget Principles**

18. The Committee received a report of the Director of Transformation on Budget Principles that was presented by Councillor Kevin Joyce – Executive Member for Transformation.
19. The Executive would consider the Council's budget, based upon a set of core principles to be discussed and agreed at Executive Cabinet on 9 December 2010. The key principles to be adopted were:
  - To continue to be a high performing Council
  - To contain Council Tax increases
  - To protect the Chorley community from the impact of the current economic situation
  - Continuing to provide value for money
  - Safeguarding front line services and focusing on the removal of bureaucracy and managerial posts
  - Looking for opportunities to share services and generate additional revenue
  - Preparing for the future and uncertainty over public finances
  - To look to reduce debt and the consequent financing charges
20. There was continued uncertainty regarding the Concessionary Travel Scheme and there were a number of proposed changes to funding mechanisms including the new home bonus scheme and deregulation of planning fees, which were yet to be approved. It was hoped that some clarity would be given upon the publication of the draft revenue support grant figures that would be revealed shortly.

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 14 FEBRUARY 2011**

### **Executive Cabinet – 9 December 2010**

21. Members considered the minutes of the last Executive Cabinet meeting and discussions took place in relation to the following items:

#### Coppull Leisure Centre

- Comments on the consultation processes.

#### Core Funding, 2011/12 – Review of process

- Comments on the process of allocation of the Core Funding grants and what monitoring procedures are in place to ensure there is no overlapping of funds by the various organisations.
- Comments about the publication of the Local Strategic Partnership's Board, Executive and Thematic Groups minutes.
- Comments on the restructure of the Local Strategic Partnership.

#### General Budget Principles for 2011/12 and Restructures

- Comments on what shared services the Council are exploring to continue driving efficiencies forward.

### **Executives Response to Overview and Scrutiny Inquiry into Allotment issues**

22. The Committee were pleased to note that the Executive Cabinet was proposing to accept almost all of the findings and recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Inquiry into Allotments.

## **Scrutiny of Chorley Safety Partnership**

23. The Committee received a report of the Director of Transformation on the proposed arrangements for the scrutiny of the work of the Community Safety Partnership to fulfil the statutory requirement on crime and disorder scrutiny.
24. It was proposed that the Committee concentrated the scrutiny on one particular aspect of the work of the Community Safety Partnership and anti social behaviour was identified as an area that affected everybody with strong links to the Neighbourhood Working agenda.
25. Arrangements had been tailored to make the meeting more interactive. Members would be invited to visit the Council's CCTV suite ahead of the meeting and two Members would be given the opportunity to experience first hand two of the initiatives currently taking place within the Borough to combat anti social behaviour.

## **Reports from the Task and Finish Groups**

### **Overview and Scrutiny Task Group – Allotments**

26. The Committee received and considered the final report of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group – Allotments. The Chair, Councillor Julia Berry outlined the work that had been undertaken along with key findings and recommendations.
27. The recommendations had the capacity to increase revenue and minimise running costs, with no major budget implications to the Council, Some were organisational and would establish best practice under the following main headings:
  - Provision and demand for allotments
  - Tenancy agreements and monitoring and inspection reports
  - Allotments charges
  - Community Growing
  - Community management of allotments
28. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee approved the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group for submission to the next meeting of the Executive Cabinet.

### **Overview and Scrutiny Task Group – Asset Management**

29. The Committee received and considered the final report of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group – Asset Management. The Chair, Councillor Alan Cullens, explained that the Group had recommended a set of strategic principles for the Executive's consideration.
30. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee approved the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group for submission at the next meeting of the Executive Cabinet.

### **Overview and Scrutiny Task Group – Lancastrian**

31. Following on from the recommendation of the Asset Management Task Group the Committee appointed Members to a Task and Finish Group to undertake an inquiry into the Lancastrian Suite.
32. The Task Group met in January to agree the key themes for the review and requested further information on past users of the Lancastrian, how South Ribble Borough Council manages its hospitality suite and the commercial market for the hire of function room facilities. It was intended to take the draft scoping document to the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in March.

### **Recommendation**

33. The Council is recommended to note this report.

REPORT OF COUNCILLOR ADRIAN LOWE  
Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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There are no background papers to this report.