

## **Executive Cabinet – Report to Council**

1. This report summarises the business considered at the meeting of the Executive Cabinet held on 23 January 2025.
2. Please note that the report may not reflect the wording used in the minutes, as they have yet to be formally agreed. The You Tube stream and documents relating to the meeting can be found here: [Chorley Council - YouTube](#)

### **23 January 2025**

#### **Draft 25/26 Budget Update**

3. Councillor Peter Wilson, Executive Member for Resources presented the report of the Director of Finance which set out the draft budget position for the council for 2025/26 and the forecast for 2026/27.
4. In summary, the council would continue to deliver services outlined within the report, address the needs of its residents and achieve its corporate priorities through a mixture of external funding, revenue and capital budgets. We recognised that although a balanced budget position could be achieved for 2025/26, this was subject to increasing council tax by 2.99%.
5. It was acknowledged that there was a budget gap of £1.932m for the year 2026/27 and plans would be refined and developed over coming months to address this. We recognised the challenges faced and the uncertainty around the council's future funding streams beyond 2025/26 and therefore the projection and assumptions underpinning the MTFs for 2026/27 would be kept under review. It was hoped that the government will deliver a multi-year settlement for 2026/27 to help with forward planning.

#### **Fees and Charges 25/26**

6. Councillor Peter Wilson, Executive Member for Resources presented the report of the Director of Finance which set out the current position around fees and charges and proposals for 2025/26. If agreed, the increases would be implemented from 1 April 2025, or the most suitable date after.
7. We considered the report which set out the key fees and charges budgets and the income generated from each. It also set out an estimate of the financial impact in 2025/26 of the proposals made, if they were to be adopted.
8. We recognised the need to increase the majority of fees and charges in line with inflation rates to avoid them falling below the cost of providing that service.

This would allow the council to continue to strive to achieve value for money for residents.

9. With regards to cemetery fees, we commended the proposal to not charge for burials of a stillborn baby or a child under the age of 16, and recognised Chorley was the only borough in Lancashire to do this.

### **Equality Objective and Equality Strategy**

10. Councillor Margaret France, Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Partnerships presented the report of the Director of Change and Delivery which sought approval of the proposed equality objectives, Equality Strategy and action plan.
11. The council's equality objectives required a refresh in line with the Equality Act 2010. The new Equality Strategy would help to ensure that equality is considered within decision-making, policy and service delivery. This would help strengthen the council's commitment to addressing inequalities and ensure that its Public Sector Equality Duty is met. We considered the five proposed equality objectives for 2025 – 2029 as outlined in the report.
12. We welcomed the creation of a dedicated Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Board, the reinvigoration of the Equality Forum and the relaunch of the staff Equality Champions Network to help promote a diverse, supportive and inclusive workplace. Mandatory training for staff and councillors, as well as the inclusion of health inequalities in the Equality Action Plan for 2025/26 was also supported. We thanked officers for their work in producing this Strategy.

### **Chorley Town Hall Improvement Works – Procurement Strategy**

13. I presented the confidential report of the Director of Property and Planning, which sought approval of the procurement strategy to procure a contractor to undertake Chorley Town Hall improvement works.
14. We recognised the need for the improvement works outlined in the report, following the results of the condition survey on the Town Hall.

Councillor Alistair Bradley  
Chair, Executive Cabinet

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