

REPORT OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND PANELS

GENERAL REPORT

1. This report briefly summarises the business transacted at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 15 December 2005, as well as a brief summary of the recent activities and matters discussed at meetings of the Community and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel. There has been no meeting of the Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel since last Council.
2. The meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 19 January 2006 will be reported to the next Council meeting on 7 March 2006.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee 15 December 2005

Sustainable Resources - Preferred Options Document and Draft Supplementary Planning Document

3. We received a report of the Head of Development and Regeneration on the draft Preferred Options Document and Supplementary Planning Document on Sustainable Resources that will form part of the Local Development Framework.
4. The Executive Cabinet at its meeting on 1 December 2005 had requested this Committee to ask the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel to examine how the Council could encourage the use of renewable energy within the Borough and how the Council would take a lead on this issue on a cost neutral basis.
5. The Committee expressed a view that this was a large topic for the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel to consider and that a specific area should be looked at.
6. The Committee agreed to invite the Executive Member for Customer, Policy and Performance to the next meeting to clarify the decision of the Executive Cabinet.

Revenue Budget Monitoring - 2005/06

7. We received from the Director of Finance a report setting out the Council's current financial position as compared against the budgets and efficiency savings targets it had set itself for 2005/06 for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account.
8. We were informed that action had been taken to reduce an overspend with further savings being investigated. The position had been improved since

the last monitoring report as a result of the actions taken and would continue until such time as the budget position improved.

Contact Chorley - Achieving The Strategy

9. We received a report from the Head of Customer, Democratic and Office Support Services explaining the measures to be undertaken during the next twelve months to enable the implementation of the third phase of the 'Strategy for an Accessible Public Service One Stop Contact Centre' which was adopted in March 2002.

Forward Plan

10. We received the Council's Forward Plan which set out details of the key decisions which the Executive Cabinet, individual Executive Member or officers were expected to take during the four month period commencing from 1 December 2006.
11. We noted that some of the items on the previous Forward Plan had been dealt with and some items rolled forward to the January Plan.

Refuse and Recycling Collection Services

12. I accepted as urgent, consideration of this item, not included on the agenda in order to consider a request received from a Councillor for a scrutiny inquiry into a proposal to change collection points for waste and recycling, within the Withnell area of Chorley. The request raised a number of issues that required to be addressed.
13. The Committee accepted that there were problems in outlying areas of the Borough and that areas such as Withnell had only just been introduced to the new enhanced recycling contract. Answers and explanations to these difficulties would be best addressed by the Head of Environmental Services at the next meeting of the Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel - Meeting held on 5 January 2006

Refuse and Recycling Collection Services

14. Members were due to discuss with the Head of Environmental Services the Councils refuse and recycling collection service and the recent difficulties being experienced by some residents, but due to unforeseen circumstances he was unable to attend the meeting. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had referred this matter to the Panel for consideration.

Management of the Councils Cemeteries Service

15. As requested at the last meeting of the Panel the Head of Public Space Services attended the meeting to inform Members and provide them with a better understanding of the management of the Council's cemeteries service, prior to the submission to a future meeting of a Consultant's report.
16. He informed Members of the work currently nearing completion on the extension to the Chorley Cemetery to enable the provision for burials for the Muslim community. The project was delayed by new regulations on environmental protection, however the work had been completed under budget. Minor alterations to the Cemetery rules would be made to accommodate the cultural differences. The completion of the scheme will be a great success and a valuable addition to the environment of the cemetery.

Highways Partnership and Call-Out to Incidents of Flooding

17. As requested at the last meeting of the Panel, the Head of Public Space Services attended the meeting to inform Members of the contingency plans that would be in place for reported incidents of flooding after the termination of the Lancashire Highways Partnership on 30 June 2006.

Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel - Meeting held on 4 July 2006

18. The Panel has met once since the last Council meeting on 4 January 2006 primarily to consider progress on the scrutiny inquiry into public participation in the Council's decision making process.
19. The Panel received reports from the Panel members who had been able to attend the recent meetings of Pendle Borough Council's West Craven Area Committee and Colne Area Committee and South Ribble Borough Council's Western Parishes Area Committee. The Panel is also arranging to attend, as observers, West Lancashire District Council's Planning Committee meeting on 19 January and the meetings of two neighbouring Lancashire Borough Councils which allow the public to speak at their meetings. In addition, Members are also planning to attend the West Lancashire District Council meeting held as an Assembly on 25 January to observe this alternative concept of public engagement.

Recommendation

20. The Council is recommended to note this report.

COUNCILLOR J WALKER
Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

GKB

There are no background papers to this report.