

## **REPORT OF EXECUTIVE CABINET**

### **GENERAL REPORT – 21 JUNE 2012**

1. The Cabinet's recommendations on the reports that require Council decisions appear as separate items on the agenda.

#### **Update - Chorley Remembers Heritage Lottery Fund Project**

2. Three members of the public asked questions in relation to this item and 20 members of the public were in attendance at the meeting.
3. The Executive Member for People presented the report which updated us on the Chorley Remembers Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) project. An artists impression of an alternative proposal was circulated at the meeting for information.
4. We clarified that a consultation exercise has been undertaken and that the Welsh Guards / Falkland's Stone will feature in the enhanced Chorley Cenotaph. The stone will be moved by a specialist contractor.
5. We discussed the impact delays could have on the project, including loss of funding and the potential for the building work at the Cenotaph not to be completed in time for Remembrance Day.
6. We agreed to approve the recommendations in principle, subject to myself undertaking further consultation with interested parties and undertaking slight amendments to the proposed Scheme, if required.

#### **Final Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - Private Rented Housing Inspection**

7. Councillor Bev Murray presented the report as the Chair of the Task Group and thanked the Members and officers who contributed to the inquiry.
8. The Task Group considered the problem of poor housing conditions in some private rented property in the Borough. The 2010 Housing Stock Conditions Survey identified that there were approximately 4100 private rented properties in the borough which represents 10% of the housing stock. Many of the low cost private rented properties are thought to have poor housing standards with some tenants afraid to complain because of the fear of eviction.
9. In looking at this issue, the Task Group focussed on three streams: identifying where the private rented housing stock is located in the borough, looking at current and potential housing condition inspection regimes; and potential landlord accreditation schemes and what they might bring towards the overall objective of improving private rented housing accommodation.
10. The recommendations proposed the introduction of a more proactive inspection regime providing expertise and capacity to undertake housing inspections on a more programmed basis.
11. We received and accepted the findings and recommendations of the Task Group for consideration, with a view to our recommended response to the recommendations being reported to a future meeting.

## **Final Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - Tourism and Promoting Chorley**

12. Councillor Peter Wilson presented the report as the Chair of the Task Group. He thanked the Task Group Members, Officers and external representatives who contributed to the report.
13. The Task Group collected evidence from a number of different sources including officers and representatives from external organisations to find out what they do, compare areas of best practice and find out how the Council can best work together in the future.
14. The findings and recommendations of the Town Centre Vitality Scrutiny Review were revisited, particularly in relation to attracting more visitors to the town centre and its markets. The Group identified Chorley's main assets for tourism around the Borough and the key events in the calendar that might attract people to visit Chorley.
15. We noted that there will shortly be a catering facility at Yarrow Valley Country Park and queried the possibility of utilising some of the treasures owned by Astley Park more.
16. We received and accepted the findings and recommendations of the Task Group for consideration, with a view to our recommended response to the recommendations being reported to a future meeting.

## **Land rear of 52-78 Fairview Drive, 3 and 4 Barn View and 11-17 Fairview Drive, Adlington - Notification of One Objector to Disposal of Open Space**

17. I presented a report updating Members on a report considered in March 2012. One objection had been received to the disposal of open space as garden extensions from a local dog-walker.
18. All residents at the location have responded requesting to purchase a parcel of land. Where a resident has not responded or did not wish to acquire a garden extension, neighbouring residents with appropriate access had requested to buy the relevant parcel instead. A notice advertising the disposal of the open space had been posted on the site and in the local press in order to give any potential objectors the opportunity to object.
19. We agreed to progress the decision and note the one objection.

## **Chorley Council Fourth Quarter Performance Report 2011/12**

20. The Executive Member for Resources, Policy and Performance presented the report setting out the performance against the delivery of the Corporate Strategy and key performance indicators during the fourth quarter of 2011/12, 1 January to 31 March 2012.
21. We raised several queries, particularly in relation to the website refresh which has been rated red due to on-going delays. Final deployment is due by the end of the second quarter 2012/13.
22. The performance on Town Centre visits is noted as being slightly below target, although plans are being formulated to remedy this.

23. We noted that Selectmove is being reviewed as part of a wider issue. Chorley was leading a Lancashire wide project prior to signing up for the government sponsored "No Second Night Out" programme. This will involve a package of service Lancashire wide.
24. It was clarified that, in total, there are 20 NEETs which are employed by the Council. The information about the number of NEETs is collected on a register by LCC's Children and Young People's Service on a monthly basis.

#### **Chorley Partnership Annual Report 2011/12**

25. The Executive Member for Resources, Policy and Performance presented the report providing a summary of the progress made by the Chorley Partnership throughout 2011/12. The report includes partnership performance information, projects delivered in 2011/12 and the work being undertaken to deliver the Sustainable Community Strategy.
26. We discussed the issue of Domestic Violence and the need for a partnership approach moving forward to tackle this.
27. The pedestrian access from Euxton Lane to the railway station on Buckshaw Village was discussed. A planning application is anticipated that will resolve this issue, include landscaping and lighting in the area of the pedestrian access.
28. The first meeting of the Chorley Partnership will be held shortly where the Annual Report and the priorities and projects going forward will be discussed.

#### **Provisional Revenue Outturn 2011/12**

29. The Executive Member for Resources, Policy and Performance presented the report setting out the provisional revenue outturn figures for the Council as compared against the budgets and efficiency savings targets it set itself for the financial year 2011/12.
30. The accounts are provisional at this stage, subject to final checking and scrutiny by the Council's external auditor. If there are any significant changes to the outturn as a result of this process a further report will be submitted to Executive Cabinet.
31. It was clarified that the Council does not have any investments in Santander and so is not affected by the current issues being experienced by that bank.
32. Members noted there remained uncertainty for the Council's income streams following the implementation of the local Business Rates retention scheme from April 2013 and that it is prudent at this time to maintain balances at a higher level to help mitigate this risk. There is continuing instability in the banking system and it is prudent for the Council to guard against any potential losses that may occur from its investment portfolio. Whilst the risk is low, there is an expectation that the Council will be able to cover any such losses should they occur.
33. We approved the slippage requests and transfer of balances as recommended.

#### **Clean Environment and Neighbourhoods Act 2005 - Dog Control Orders**

34. The Executive Member for Places presented a report seeking approval for the introduction of three new Control Orders relating to the control of dogs in public places.

35. We discussed the level of the fine and noted that enforcement will be undertaken by Neighbourhood Officers, PCSO's and Park Rangers. For the initial three months that the Orders come into force there will be a light touch approach with high profile patrols in areas where the Orders have effect, advising dog walkers of the impact of the new Orders. Following this it is intended to use a high profile media campaign to advise dog owners of the effect of the Orders and that enforcement by way of fixed penalty notice will take place.
36. We agreed to note the results of the consultation and statutory notification period in relation to the introduction of the Control Orders and to approve the making of The Dogs on Leads (Chorley Council) Order 2012, The Dogs on Leads By Direction (Chorley Council) Order 2012 and The Dogs Exclusion (Chorley Council) Order 2012

### **Animal Welfare Act 2006 - Authorisation of Inspectors**

37. The Executive Member for Places presented a report seeking the adoption of powers available under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 to authorise appropriately trained and competent officers as 'inspectors' under the Act.
38. Historically whilst lower tier local authorities have had powers to deal with stray dogs and informally provide support to other agencies in cases of welfare, the role of enforcement has been with upper tier authorities, departments within DEFRA and the RSPCA. The legislation makes provision for district councils to appoint inspectors who can act in cases of animal maltreatment.
39. We approved the adoption of the authorisation powers and inspector appointment powers within the Animal Welfare Act 2006.

### **Review of Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) Policy**

40. The Executive Member for Homes and Business presented the report setting out the results of a review of the DFG Policy.
41. The Private Sector Housing Assistance policy has been reviewed and approved by Executive Cabinet in February 2012. The section of the policy which relates to DFGs had not been included in the revised policy as further work was needed with regard to consulting with Registered Providers of Social Housing (RPs) and developing the principles of an agreement to allow RPs access to the DFG budget.
42. In February Executive Cabinet approved the start of negotiations with RPs to develop an agreement whereby the Council and RPs share the cost of major adaptations on a 50/50 basis. The report details progress in relation to negotiations with RPs, as well as providing options with regard to the funding required to deal with the resulting additional demands on the DFG budget.
43. We approved the revised policy and the principles of the local agreement to be entered into with the Registered Providers.

### **Recommendation**

44. That the report be noted.

COUNCILLOR ALISTAIR BRADLEY  
Executive Leader

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