

REPORT OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND PANELS

GENERAL REPORT

1. This report briefly summaries the business transacted at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 27 June 2006, as well as a brief summary of the recent activities and matters discussed at meetings of the Corporate and Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel and Environment and Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee 27 June 2006

Executive Cabinet - 29 June 2006 - Items

2. As part of the revised scrutiny process, the items for consideration by the Executive Cabinet will be a regular agenda item for meetings of the Committee.
3. At its meeting on 29 June 2006, the Committee examined in detail the Executive Cabinet report entitled 'Draft Provisional Capital Outturn 2005/06 and 2006/07 Monitoring'. I raised the subject of the Capital Outturn 2005/06 overspending for the Town Hall Disabled Access and Refurbishment as well as the Housing Maintenance Capital Programme.
4. The Director of Finance explained that a review was currently taking place on the issues surrounding the Town Hall project and the possibility of receiving some of the costs from the contractor due to the delays.

Chorley Community Safety Partnership Alcohol Strategy

5. We received from the Director of Streetscene, Neighbourhoods and Environment a report enclosing the 'Chorley and South Ribble Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy 2006'.
6. The Strategy has been the result of collaboration between Chorley Community Safety Partnership and the Chorley and South Ribble PCT.
7. The main concern highlighted in the Strategy was that of substance misuse with the document setting out the background to alcohol harm and the issues that required to be addressed. The action plan was required to be implemented by a number of agencies.
8. It was explained that Chorley and South Ribble PCT will take the lead with regard to the treatment and education section. Chorley Community Safety Partnership, through the Multi Action Problem Solving Team will take the lead with crime and disorder and working with the industry. Funding has been allocated for a secondment to take place where a Police Officer will implement the action plan within the area.
9. We welcomed David Herne from the Chorley and South Ribble Primary Care NHS Trust who gave a short presentation to the Committee, giving a summary of the key alcohol related public health issues and the attitude to alcohol use.
10. The Committee agreed to support the strategy and its introduction through the work of the MAPS team as well as the use of the Council's Licensing Liaison Panel in getting the message over to the licensing trade.

Future of Mental Health Services in Lancashire - Consultation

11. The Lancashire Joint Primary Care has requested the Council's views on prospects for changes in the way mental health services are provided in Lancashire.

12. A copy of the consultation document was received by Members. The Environment and Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel at its meeting on 8 June 2006 had initially received a presentation from the Chief Executive at Chorley and South Ribble Primary Care NHS Trust on the proposals and we received a brief summary and views of the Panel.
13. We supported the proposals but requested that a comment be submitted on accessibility for those attending the new mental health hospitals.

Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement Scrutiny Inquiry

14. We received the final report from the Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel on their investigation into the effectiveness of the Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement.
15. The Committee had requested the Panel to carry out the inquiry and to assess the impact the introduction of the Parkwise Scheme had on residents, visitors, traders and businesses in Chorley and to identify any future improvements for customer service.
16. We agreed the Panel's recommendations before their submission to the Executive Cabinet for final approval.

Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2005/06

17. We received the third annual report on the work of the Overview and Scrutiny covering the period May 2005 to April 2006.
18. Overview and Scrutiny continues to improve with areas identified for action to improving the delivery of the Council's services.
19. The purpose of the document was to summarise the inquiries undertaken and activities of the Committee and its three Panels over the past year and to indicate the future work programme and initiatives to be pursued during 2006/07. The document was not intended to incorporate all of the recommendations contained in the respective inquiry reports however each Inquiry report and its recommendation are available for inspection either on the Council's website or on deposit.

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2006/07

20. We received for approval the draft Work Programme for Overview and Scrutiny for the 2006/07 municipal year which identified the proposed areas of work to be undertaken by this Committee and the two newly established Panels. We determined the order of priority for the implementation of the proposed scrutiny inquiries with the first priority inquiry commencing at the next meeting of the Panels.
21. The following scrutiny inquiries were identified in the priority order are set out below:

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- Job Evaluation
- The Council's current performance against the key lines of inquiry to be assessed by the Audit Commission during the Comprehensive Performance Assessment and Direction of Travel
- The effectiveness of the Community Safety Partnership in the delivery of reduced levels of crime within the Borough

Corporate and Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel

- Contact Centre Efficiencies and Partnership with Lancashire County Council
- Gershon Efficiencies
- Staff Sickness Absences

Environment and Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

- Neighbourhood Wardens
- Town Centre Strategy
- Inequalities in the Borough

Forward Plan

22. We received the Council's Forward Plan setting out the details of the key decisions which the Executive Cabinet, individual Executive Members and Officers were expected to take during the four month period 1 July 2006 to 31 October 2006.

Quarterly Performance Indicators 2005/06 End of Year Monitoring Report

23. The Committee received a monitoring report setting out performance against the Council's key and Best Value Performance Indicators for the year ending 31 March 2006.
24. The Performance Indicators fall into three main types of Corporate KPI's, Best Value KPI's and Local KPI's and related to the measuring of performance for each service unit. A number of service issues were raised by the Members.

Business Plan Monitoring Statement January to March 2006

25. We received the Business Plan Monitoring Statements report identifying the progress against the key actions included in Unit Business Plans for 2005/06 for Corporate and Policy Services.

Corporate and Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Meeting held on 6 April 2006

Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement Inquiry

26. The Panel discussed the issues raised throughout the Inquiry with the Executive Member for Traffic and Transportation, Councillor D Gee.
27. In particular, the Panel discussed the recommendations to improve communication regarding Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement with the public and to give further information to Blue Badge holders. An additional recommendation was discussed to support the ongoing trial use of a scooter to improve the service in rural areas.
28. It was noted that there were less incidents of people parking in a selfish manner and that the Parking Attendants had gained important experience since the implementation and were doing a good, but sometimes unpopular job for Chorley.
29. Councillor D Gee thanked the Panel for its work on the Inquiry and supported the recommendations. It was positive that other authorities had adopted some of the recommendations arising from the Inquiry, such as, the additional information leaflet for Blue Badge holders and the use of a sticker to highlight which side the Blue Badge should be displayed.

30. The Panel considered the draft final report and queried several points. A number of the recommendations were reworded, including regarding the inclusion of a question on any relevant surveys undertaken about Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement, the use of mystery shoppers and a review of the Parking Attendant uniform.

Meeting held on 6 June 2006

Welcome by the Chair

31. Councillor G Russell welcomed Councillors and Officers to the first meeting of the Corporate and Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel, in particular those Councillors recently elected to the Council.
32. Councillor Russell indicated that the remit of the Panel would include issues relating to the services provided by Customer, Democratic and Legal Services, Financial Services, Human Resources, Information, Communication Technology Services and Property Services.
33. A meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Chairs would be held on 8 June to discuss the Overview and Scrutiny work programme. The outcome of the meeting would be considered at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on 27 June and to the next Panel meeting to be held on 8 July.

Complaints Monitoring Report Sept 2005 - March 2006

34. The Panel received a report detailing those complaints referred to the Chief Executive during the period September 2005 and March 2006. The Corporate and Policy Services Unit investigated the complaints on behalf of the Chief Executive.
35. It was clarified that a separate report detailing complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman would be presented to a future meeting of the Panel and that the report did not include complaints made to Service Directorates. Any complaints of a racial nature were dealt with at Chief Executive level.

Business Plan Monitoring Statements

36. The Panel received the Business Plan Monitoring Reports for the period January 2006 to March 2006 for Customer, Democratic and Office Support Services, Financial Services, Human Resources, Information, Communication Technology Services, Legal Services and Property Services. The Panel queried several points with the relevant Service Units Heads and thanked them for the updates.

Environment and Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel - 8 June 2006

Working Together to Improve Mental Health in Lancashire Consultation on Modernisation of Hospital Services

37. The Panel received a consultation document compiled by the Lancashire Joint Primary Care Trust requesting the authority to respond to their proposals by 14 July 2006.
38. The Chief Executive of the Chorley & South Ribble Primary Care Trust gave a presentation consulting and advising Members on the mental health public consultation. The Trust wanted to develop services that help and support people in their own homes and communities. Currently there are 15 special adult and older mental health service hospital sites across Lancashire which will be directly affected by the proposed changes. They are of various sizes and generally the buildings are of poor quality and inadequate. These will no longer be needed and it is proposed three new state of the art mental health hospitals will be built.

39. The Panel generally supported the proposals.

Business Plan Monitoring Statement January to March 2006

40. The Panel received the final quarterly updates of the Business Plan for the Environmental Services, Leisure and Cultural Services, Housing Services, Development and Regeneration Directorates and the Public Space Services Unit which fall within the remit and area of responsibility for the Panel.
41. Members raised issues in particular the impact on staff of the new restructuring of the Environmental Services, the number of missed recycling collections, housing stock transfer and the activities of the Neighbourhood Warden Services.
42. The Panel requested that the Neighbourhood Wardens services including Neighbourhood Policing be included in any scrutiny work programme for the 2006/07 Municipal Year.

Recommendation

43. The Council is recommended to note this report.

COUNCILLOR D EDGERLEY
Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

GKB

There are no background papers to this report.