

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

7 June 2005

Present: Councillor Perks (Chairman) and Councillors Bedford, Culshaw, Mrs I Smith and Whittaker.

05.CoP.10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Birchall, Brownlee, Mrs M Gray and Morgan.

05.CoP.11 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor Whittaker declared a non-prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 5 (Inquiry into the provision of youth activities in Chorley) in his capacity as the Lancashire County Council's Cabinet Member for Education. Councillor Whittaker remained in the meeting and participated in the discussion on the item.

05.CoP.12 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 9 February 2005 were confirmed as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

The meeting of the Panel convened on 13 April 2005 had been adjourned as inquorate.

05.CoP.13 BUSINESS PLANS, 2004/05 - FOURTH QUARTER UPDATES

The Panel were reminded that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting in November 2004, had recommended each Overview and Scrutiny body to consider the quarterly updates of the Business Plans for the services and functions falling within its respective area of responsibility.

(a) Economic Regeneration Unit

The Head of Economic Regeneration reminded the Panel that the past restructuring exercise which had resulted in the creation of her Unit had prevented a 2004/05 Business Plan for Economic Regeneration being produced. The Chair confirmed, however, that the Unit's performance targets in respect of each of its strategic areas (eg Astley Park and Withnell Fold) were being achieved.

A Business Plan for 2005/06 had been compiled.

(b) Leisure and Cultural Services Unit

The Panel had been supplied with the 2004/05 Business Plan Updates for the quarter period ending 31 March 2005 in respect of the Leisure and Cultural Services Unit, measuring the Unit's performance against the respective Business Plan.

The Head of Leisure and Cultural Services commented on the exceptions that had occurred in his Unit's Business Plan. Complex negotiations had protracted the completion of the new Indoor Leisure Contract with Community Leisure Services for their operation of the All Seasons, Clayton Green and Coppull Leisure Centres and Brinscall Pool. The target number of golf rounds played at Duxbury had not been achieved for a variety of reasons, including

inclement weather. In this context, the Panel were reminded that the Council had invited expressions of interest from appropriate organisations capable of leasing and operating Duxbury Golf Course as a means of achieving improvements in performance and customer service.

The Head of Leisure and Cultural Services answered a number of queries raised by the Members and, in response to a Member request, undertook to provide the Panel Members with the estimated overall subsidised costs of operating the Authority's three Leisure Centres and Brinscall Pool.

05.CoP.14 TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS FOR 2005/06

The Chairman informed the Panel that, at a recent meeting of the Chairs of the four Overview and Scrutiny bodies, Councillor McGowan had expressed concern at the significant number of meetings included in the current year's timetable of meetings. Councillor McGowan had, accordingly, requested the views of the members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its three associate Panels.

The Chairman stated that an increased number of meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny bodies had been incorporated in the meetings' timetable in order to avoid the need for unscheduled special meetings during the year. In addition, a number of meetings of the other Committees and Working Groups had been factored into the timetable for the first time this year.

The Panel suggested that the draft timetable of meetings for 2006/07 be compiled earlier than in past years, in order to allow more time for consultation amongst Members.

05.CoP.15 INQUIRY INTO THE PROVISION OF YOUTH ACTIVITIES IN CHORLEY

The Panel received and considered the draft final report on its findings and recommendations following the Panel's scrutiny inquiry into the provision of youth activities in Chorley.

The inquiry report had recognised the commitment and effort from all current service providers (eg Chorley Council's Leisure and Cultural Services Unit, Lancashire County Council and numerous voluntary bodies and organisations) to the provision of facilities for sports, arts and cultural activities for young people throughout the Borough. The overriding aim of the inquiry recommendations was to enhance and complement present efforts by helping to facilitate more effective co-ordination and co-operation, particularly between service providers and funding bodies, and to encourage maximisation of the use of current facilities.

The Head of Leisure and Cultural Services circulated sheets which showed the likely financial implications of each of the 12 recommendations. Whilst none of the recommendations would entail any major immediate additional expenditure from the Borough Council, a number of the proposals affecting the Lancashire County Council and other service providers (eg the recommendation urging the County Council to provide and/or support endeavours to establish dedicated 'Youth Centres' in local areas) would require a degree of financial input from the respective organisation.

In response to a query from a Member, the Chairman and other Panel Members emphasised how impressed they had been with the facilities provided at the Bolton Lads and Girls Club. Consequently, the Panel had recommended the establishment of an Officer Working Group to examine the feasibility of a similar, if smaller, facility being provided in Chorley. The Working Group could explore all options for the funding and operation of the project, in conjunction with potential partners and relevant agencies.

The Panel **AGREED**:

(1) That, subject to the substitution of the word 're-established' for 'develop' in Recommendation 6, the draft report of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel's inquiry into the provision of youth activities in Chorley be approved.

(2) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be recommended to endorse the report and recommendations for submission to the Executive Cabinet for approval.

05.CoP.16 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Panel received, for information, the Overview and Scrutiny work programme for 2005/06 which had been agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its last meeting.

The work programme envisaged that the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel, at its next meeting on 5 July 2005, would consider (i) how best to progress its inquiry into public participation in the Council's decision-making process; and (ii) a monitoring report on its past inquiry into the Town Centre Fair.

A monitoring report on the Panel's recent review of Juvenile nuisance in the Borough would be presented to the 13 September 2005 Panel meeting.

Chairman