

Executive Cabinet

Minutes of meeting held on Thursday, 13 February 2014

Present: Councillor Alistair Bradley (Executive Leader in the Chair), Councillor Peter Wilson (Deputy Leader of the Council) and Councillors Beverley Murray, Terry Brown, Dennis Edgerley and Adrian Lowe

Also in attendance

Lead Members: Councillors Steve Murfitt, June Molyneaux, Christopher France, Julia Berry and Danny Gee

Other Members: Councillors Eric Bell, Henry Caunce, John Dalton, Anthony Gee, Steve Holgate, Keith Iddon, Hasina Khan, Paul Leadbetter, Marion Lowe, Greg Morgan and John Walker

Officers: Gary Hall (Chief Executive), Lesley-Ann Fenton (Director of Partnerships, Planning and Policy), Chris Moister (Head of Governance), Simon Clark (Head of Health, Environment and Neighbourhoods), Jamie Dixon (Head of Streetscene & Leisure Contracts), Mark Chambers (Principal Management Accountant), Michael Coogan (Strategic Housing Officer), Victoria Willett (Partnership Officer) and Ruth Rimmington (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

Members of the public: None.

14.EC.14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

14.EC.15 MINUTES

RESOLVED - The minutes of the meeting of the Executive Cabinet held on 16 January 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Executive Leader.

14.EC.16 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

No Members declared an interest in respect of items on the agenda.

14.EC.17 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Executive Leader reported that there had been no requests from members of the public to speak on any of the meeting's agenda items.

14.EC.18 FINAL REPORT - HEALTH AND WELLBEING BENEFITS OF THE PLAY, OPEN SPACES AND PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Councillor Steve Holgate, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, presented the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group – Tourism and Promoting Chorley.

The purpose of the Inquiry had been to review the Council's Integrated Impact Assessment, which was the tool which was used to ascertain whether the Council's policies and procedures were robust and fit for purpose. The Health Impact Section of the document was used to assess whether or not, health and wellbeing opportunities were being maximised.

The inquiry focused on the emerging Play, Open Spaces and Playing Pitch Strategy as a way of testing the current health impact arrangements contained within the Integrated Impact Assessment tool.

Councillor Berry, Chair of the Task Group, highlighted the need for training on the Council's Integrated Impact Assessment.

Decision made

To receive the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group and accept it for consideration, with a view to the Executive Cabinet's recommended response to the recommendations being reported to a future meeting.

Reason(s) for decision

To review the Council's Integrated Impact Assessment, which was the tool which was used to ascertain whether the Council's policies and procedures were robust and fit for purpose.

Alternative option(s) considered and rejected

Not to review.

14.EC.19 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING 2013/14 REPORT 3 (END OF DECEMBER 2013)

The Executive Member for Resources, Policy and Performance presented a report which set out the provisional revenue and capital outturn figures for the Council as compared against the budgets and efficiency savings targets set for the financial year 2013/14.

The projected revenue outturn currently showed a forecast underspend of £118k against budget.

The forecast of outturn excluded several special items, including any underspends on committed items expected to be carried forward into 2014/15; income generated from Market Walk and Section 31 grant received to compensate the Council for loss of Business Rates as a result of Small Business Rate Relief.

The Council had expected to make overall target savings of £200k in 2013/14 from management of the establishment and a total saving of £150k had been achieved to the end of December. Further savings should be made as the year progresses but if the remaining target was not achieved, budget efficiencies would be identified elsewhere to ensure the target for the year was achieved.

The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy proposed that working balances were to be maintained at a level no lower than £2.0m due to the financial risks facing the Council and the current forecast to the end of December showed that the General Fund balance would be £2.152m.

In response to a query Councillor Wilson explained that the latest projection of net income to be received from Market Walk was £160k in 2013/14. It was recommended that the final surplus at year end be divided between two reserves: an equalisation reserve to smooth any fall in forecast income from Market Walk in future years; and a Change Reserve which would assist in funding future organisational change.

Decision made

Recommendations to Council:

- 1. Note the forecast position for the 2013/14 revenue budget and capital investment programme.**
- 2. Approve the transfer to a change reserve and equalisation account, based on a 50:50 split, net income received from Market Walk in 2013/14.**
- 3. Approve a budget virement of £31k from the 2013/14 budget growth item Supporting the Expansion of Local Businesses (Business Improvement Growth Grant) to Starting in Business Grants.**
- 4. Note the forecast position on the Council's reserves.**

5. **Approve the transfer of residual budget from the Leisure Centres capital improvement works to Astley Hall and Park Development Plan.**
6. **Request Council approve the proposed re-profiling of the Capital Programme to better reflect delivery in 2013/14.**
7. **To approve the use of revenue funding from the Small Business Rate Relief to replace borrowing as funding for short life capital schemes to achieve revenue savings in 2014/15 and beyond.**

Reason(s) for decision

To ensure the Council's budgetary targets are achieved.

Alternative option(s) considered and rejected

None.

14.EC.20 CHORLEY COUNCIL PERFORMANCE MONITORING QUARTER THREE 2013/14

The Executive Member for Resources, Policy and Performance advised that the report set out performance against the Corporate Strategy and key performance indicators for 1 October to 31 December 2013.

Overall performance of key projects was excellent, with the majority of the projects now complete. Of those that were yet to be completed, 100% were rated as green and scheduled for completion by the end of quarter four. Performance of projects from the new Corporate Strategy, approved in November 2013, would be reported formally from quarter four.

Overall performance of Corporate Strategy and key service measures remained strong. 72% of the Corporate Strategy measures and 71% of the key service measures were performing above target or within the 5% tolerance.

The Corporate Strategy measures performing below target were; the percentage of customers dissatisfied with the way they were treated by the council, the percentage of domestic violence detections and the number of affordable homes delivered. The key service delivery measures performing below target were; the time taken to process housing and council tax benefit new claims and change events and the percentage of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks. Action plans had been developed to outline what action would be taken to improve performance.

Members discussed the detection rates for domestic violence and noted that a partnership approach was essential in tackling domestic violence. The Police were the lead agency on this indicator and further information had been requested on this complex problem. It was noted that the way Lancashire County Council commissioned services in this area would be changing over the coming months.

The indicator relating to customers dissatisfied with the way they were treated by the council was discussed. The key was to find the reasons why customers were dissatisfied and put solutions in place. These solutions would be outlined in the next performance report. There would be instances where the customer would not be happy with the outcome, but this might not be because they had received bad service, but because they weren't happy with a decision e.g. a planning decision.

It was noted that future reports would show the trend and the change from the previous report.

Decision made

That the report be noted.

Reason(s) for decision

To facilitate the on-going analysis and management of the Council's performance in delivering the Corporate Strategy.

Alternative option(s) considered and rejected

None.

14.EC.21 CHORLEY PARTNERSHIP PERFORMANCE MONITORING QUARTER THREE 2013/14

The Executive Member for Resources, Policy and Performance presented a report which set out the priorities and performance of the Chorley Partnership for 1 October to 31 December 2013.

The report presents the priorities of the partnership groups and how successfully they had been delivering against those priorities. This was a move away from using performance indicators towards providing some contextual information regarding the work that had been delivered and what impact and outcomes this had achieved.

Overall progress against priorities was excellent, of the eighteen priorities identified across the partnership, seventeen were rated green and one was rated amber.

Members noted the Meals on Wheels pilot with volunteers from Runshaw College and Help Direct to support socially isolated older people. A model of 'community kitchens' had been developed and piloted in western parishes, whereby pubs and garden centres were turned into luncheon clubs, supported by Runshaw College and Help Direct volunteers

Members supported the establishment of a project group with health partners including Lancashire Care Foundation Trust and Chorley and South Ribble CCG, to progress the delivery of the Friday Street Health centre. Lancashire Care Foundation Trust was leading on the development and this group would hold partners to account to ensure that progress was being made.

In response to a query it was noted that the Working Together With Families programme was currently working with 133 families across Chorley, not Lancashire as stated in the report. This was ahead of programme target and the Chorley model had been recognised by the Government as good practice.

Members noted the figures in relation to the reducing young people not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs) target and that the Scheme with Runshaw College had had a positive impact on getting young people into apprenticeships.

Decision made

That the report be noted.

Reason(s) for decision

To facilitate the on-going analysis and management of the Chorley Partnership's performance.

Alternative option(s) considered and rejected

None.

14.EC.22 ASTLEY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Executive Member for People presented the report which provided an update on development work in Astley and sought approval for the five year development plan - Astley 2020.

Consultation regarding the future development of the site had taken place during August 2013 together with discussion with key stakeholders. A five year development plan from 2014-19, known as Astley 2020, had been produced that detailed actions covering five key areas:

1. Astley Hall and Park conservation.
2. Improving the visitor offer and experience.
3. Business development to support a sustainable business model.
4. Heritage partnership development.
5. World War I commemoration.

The consultation had received 176 responses from a diverse audience and key stakeholders including Astley Advisory Group, Friends of Astley Park, Chorley Natural Society and the Town Centre Forum. The results clearly demonstrated support for a number of the proposals with strong support for events infrastructure, destination play area, sensory garden, fountain feature and temporary events car parking.

Existing and proposed funding would support the delivery of some elements of the development. However, significant funding would be required to fully deliver Astley 2020. This would require external funding through a suitable source such as the Heritage Lottery Fund. Preliminary discussions had taken place and a joint HLF bid together with Chorley Remembers would provide the best option for a further funding submission.

Members queried plans for WWI commemoration and noted these would be shared with Members when available.

It was confirmed that all of the items within the museum at Astley Hall had been catalogued electronically as part of the museum accreditation process.

A report would be presented to Executive Cabinet in the new municipal year updating Members on the work being undertaken in those Parks and open spaces managed by the Council across the Borough.

Decision made

1. **To note the update on development outlined in the report.**
2. **Approval granted to the five year development plan, Astley 2020, and the further development work as detailed in the action plan be implemented, subject to funding.**
3. **Approval granted for an initial expression of interest including a first round Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid be prepared and submitted together with Chorley Remembers to support the delivery of Astley 2020.**

Reason(s) for decision

To maximise the use of Astley Hall and Park by improving the facilities for visitors and residents together with conserving and maintaining the site.

Alternative option(s) considered and rejected

Not to develop Astley Hall and Park on the scale outlined.

14.EC.23 RENEWABLE AND LOW CARBON ENERGY SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

The Executive Member for LDF and Planning presented a report which sought endorsement of the draft Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for consultation.

The SPD expanded on Core Strategy Policy 28 and provided further guidance on the implementation of this policy. Details were provided on various renewable and low carbon energy technologies, their requirements and the planning issues associated

with each technology that would need to be addressed as part of any planning application.

The technologies covered by the SPD were; wind turbines, solar power, hydropower, biomass, heat pumps and combined heat and power

Guidance on each of the technologies had been brought together from a variety of sources in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the guidance set out in Planning Practice Guidance for Renewable and Low Carbon Energy, DCLG, July 2013.

In accordance with both of these documents, buffer zones or separation distances had not generally been applied as many factors needed to be taken into consideration when determining whether the impact of a proposal was acceptable, not just distance. There were separation guidelines associated with the safety of wind turbines.

Members noted that the SPD highlighted supplementary information that would be necessary to submit with a planning application for any of the technologies covered within the SPD, such as an Environmental Impact Assessment.

Decision made

- 1. Approval granted to the draft Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Supplementary Planning Document, for consultation.**
- 2. Approval granted that delegated authority be granted to the Executive Member for LDF and Planning to approve minor changes and amendments prior to the consultation.**

Reason(s) for decision

To ensure that guidance is produced to provide advice on how the climate change and renewable and low carbon energy scheme policies as set out in the Core Strategy are to be implemented.

Alternative option(s) considered and rejected

None.

14.EC.24 PERMISSION TO CONSULT ON THE REFRESHED PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING ASSISTANCE POLICY

The Executive Member for Homes and Business presented a report which sought to consult on the refreshed draft Private Sector Assistance Policy.

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) remained a statutory duty to provide for qualifying customers to enable them to live independently in their current homes. The refreshed policy now also looked at how applications from all tenures were prioritised, the relationship with Registered Providers, and had more detail on the role of Lancashire County Council. Service standards, conditions and eligibility for DFGs were also covered.

Following the withdrawal of Regional Housing Pot money, the Council was no longer able to offer the Energy Efficiency Assistance scheme or the Minor Repairs Assistance grant. However, the Council carried out an enabling, assistance and signposting role to connect customers up to new and existing schemes both nationally and locally which could improve the energy efficiency or general condition of their homes.

The refreshed policy was planned to last for a year, April 2014 to March 2015, after which it would be reviewed. National and local policy and budgets were currently subject to change beyond March 2015. The Council were monitoring these impending

changes, seeking to influence where possible, to ensure Chorley was not disadvantaged.

It was noted that an Overview and Scrutiny inquiry was ongoing into the delivery of DFGs at Lancashire County Council.

Information in relation to housing standards and fuel poverty would be included within the Policy as context prior to publication. Information was sought on whether there would be people in adapted social rented properties who would be affected by the Under Occupancy (Spare Room Subsidy) Regulations and if so how was this being addressed. It was confirmed that those tenants would be eligible to apply for Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) if they were struggling to maintain the tenancy. Information on the number of applicants in adapted social rent properties would be forwarded to Councillor Leadbetter.

Decision made

- 1. Approval granted to publish the draft Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy for consultation 28 February to 19 March 2014 so it may be adopted in time for the 2014/15 financial year.**
- 2. Approval granted that any minor changes to the draft policy following the consultation can be approved by the delegated authority of the Executive Member for Homes and Business in consultation with the Director of Partnerships, Planning and Policy. Any significant changes to be brought back to the Executive Cabinet.**

Reason(s) for decision

Due to national and local policy changes it has become necessary to have a renewed strategy and the document requires to be consulted on before it can be adopted. The refreshed draft policy reflects the current services on offer which have changed since the 2012-14 version due to national legislation and funding changes.

Alternative option(s) considered and rejected

Due to changes in national and local policy not refreshing the policy was considered inappropriate.

14.EC.25 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED – To exclude the press and public for the following items of business on the ground that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

14.EC.26 APPROVAL FOR THE CONTRACT AWARD FOR RESURFACING OF THREE TOWN CENTRE CAR PARKS

The Executive Member for Resources, Policy and Performance presented a report which sought approval to award the contract for resurfacing and improvements to the Portland Street and Flat Iron car parks. The report also sought approval to award the contract for tarmacing the Fleet Street “free” car park behind the former McDonald’s site to become a pay and display car park (an additional 70 spaces) with a small number of free spaces.

Once the recommendations for contract award were approved discussions would start with the contractor to agree a suitable programme of work. Work would not take place on Portland Street and the Flat Iron at the same time and the Tuesday market would remain on the Flat Iron.

Once an initial programme had been agreed the Town team, which includes local businesses and traders, would be informed. Although there would be some disruption

to the car parks whilst this work takes place it was necessary to improve standards and should result in a long term boost to the town centre.

Decision made

1. **Approval granted to the award of the contract for the resurfacing of Portland Street and Flat Iron car parks.**
2. **Approval granted to the award of the contract for the tarmacing of the Fleet Street “free” car park behind the former McDonald’s site and improvements to the Fleet Street short stay car park.**

Reason(s) for decision

Under the Council’s Contract Procedure Rules approval by the Executive Cabinet of contract award for tenders greater than £ 75,000 in value is required.

Alternative option(s) considered and rejected

To not agree contract award procedure and evaluation criteria would fail to comply with the Council Procurement rules.

Executive Leader