

## **REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

1. This report summarises the business transacted at the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 9 January, and the Special Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 5 February 2014 including the work to date on the Task Group relating to Select Move and CCTV Provision in Chorley.

### **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 9 JANUARY 2014**

#### **Scrutiny of the Executive**

2. Concerns were been raised by Members regarding the difficulty in scrutinising past Executive Cabinet minutes without associated reports and suggested that the Committee should reconsider the way that it scrutinises Executive decisions with a view to reverting back to scrutinising Executive Cabinet reports before they meet.
3. We agreed that if the Committee were to investigate this change of approach it would need a separate and detailed discussion at a future meeting and asked for a report containing proposals to be prepared.

#### **Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel minutes**

4. We considered the minutes of the last meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel held on 5 December 2013. The scrutiny focus for that meeting had been on health and wellbeing and a number of updates were provided. It was agreed that the Panel considers a focus on mental health provision at a future meeting.
5. The Chief Executive reported that in relation to the Friday Street Health Centre, a meeting had recently taken place with the health partners involved – namely Lancashire Care Trust; Clinical Commissioning Groups; and GP's. The Care Trust is driving the process and awaiting CCG requirements within the centre so that they can progress to the design stage. A further meeting will take place in February regarding governance arrangements although it is estimated that it would be at least two years before the centre will be open.
6. We also discussed the issue of Disable Facilities Grant (DFG) which had been raised at full council earlier in the week. From 2015/16 DFG would be paid to Lancashire County Council (LCC) to then allocate to district councils rather than receiving it directly. The funding formula did not take account of housing conditions, deprivation levels or the prevalence of long term health conditions and LCC may take the opportunity to look at the allocations process and to include other services which support people in their homes. This potentially could result in Chorley not receiving the same DFG allocation as in previous years.
7. Taking the view that Councillors from Chorley should be involved in any review of how funds are allocated, we have written to Lancashire County Council to ask that they establish a joint task group with district councils to address this issue.

#### **Budget Scrutiny**

8. The Committee considered the agenda papers being submitted to the Executive Cabinet on 16 January 2014 setting out the 2014/15 budget and summary budget

position over the medium term. The Council's budgetary and policy framework required that any views submitted by the Committee should be taken into account in the final approval of the budget at Budget Council on 25 February 2014.

9. The Chief Executive gave an overview of the Council's position and appended the proposed project mandates for those projects either new or continuing into 2014/15 to the report for information.

### **Police and Crime Commissioner Engagement with Scrutiny**

10. We received a copy of a statement from the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire about engagement with Local Authority Scrutiny Committees under the duty of Councils to undertake crime and disorder scrutiny. The Police and Crime Commissioner has indicated that he is committed to partnership working and set out parameters under which his office would send representation or provide information to Councils undertaking crime and disorder scrutiny.

### **CCTV Provision**

11. Under our requirement to undertake scrutiny of crime and disorder matters, we considered a detailed report of the Director of People and Places on the current Chorley CCTV service and existing infrastructure and also information about CCTV systems in other authorities where systems have been reduced or decommissioned.
12. Details about Chorley's CCTV system – the hours of operation, infrastructure, staffing and maintenance issues were provided, along with overall comments on the impact of reducing CCTV coverage, cost implications and potential options for improvements in the future. In discussion Members raised the public perception of safety provided by CCTV; how far cameras acted as a deterrent, the cameras role in preventing the escalation of crime or the prosecution of offenders.
13. As the subject was complex, the Committee considered that a review of the provision of CCTV in Chorley be undertaken by a task group to be Chaired by Councillor Finnamore which would aim to conclude its work by the end of the current Council year.

### **Call-in procedures**

14. We considered a report of the Chief Executive on the outcomes of a mini scrutiny review that had been undertaken to look into the current call-in procedure. The Committee had agreed that the call-in process needed to be revised following Member concerns about hearing call in requests as part of a wider Committee agenda.
15. A small task group Chaired by myself, met to look at the key aspects of the call-in process, including comparative information from other Councils across the Lancashire. The two main recommendations from that review were:
  - To reduce the call in period from 10 days to 5 days. This was principally to allow speedier implementation of executive decisions as currently all such decisions required a period of 10 days before they could be acted upon. This was in line with most Council's across Lancashire.
  - A Special meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be convened to hear call in requests, rather than hearing them as part of a wider Committee agenda.

16. The changes to the call in procedure required the approval of full Council as part of the constitution.

## **SPECIAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **Consideration of the request to call in an Executive Member Decision**

17. Members were advised of a request submitted by Councillor Paul Leadbetter for the call in of a decision made by the Executive Member for Planning and LDF on 22 January, for the cessation of notification letters to contributors (those who comment on applications).
18. The call in request was on the grounds that the removal of the current practice would reduce the effectiveness of communication between the Council and its stakeholders and that by removing this service the Council is doing less, not more, towards meeting the needs of local residents.
19. Councillor Leadbetter attended the meeting to speak in support of his request and Councillor Dennis Edgerley, Executive Member for Planning and LDF attended to explain his reasoning for approval of the decision.
20. We debated the representations given by all parties at the meeting and resolved (6-5) that the request to call in the decision be accepted and that the Executive Member for Planning and the LDF be asked to reconsider the decision in light of the discussion by Members at the meeting.
21. Since the meeting, Councillor Edgerley has reconsidered the proposal and has decided to uphold his original decision for the cessation of notification letters to contributors. Council. Councillor Edgerley provided the reasons for his decision to all Members of the Committee.

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE PANEL – 13 MARCH 2014**

### **Scrutiny Focus – Detection of Domestic Violence**

22. The Panel had identified domestic violence detections as an area for further scrutiny and Detective Inspector Geoff Hurst attended the meeting to explain the processes that were undertaken to achieve the target and answer questions of the Members.
23. The new Corporate Strategy had been approved in November 2012 and identified the percentage of domestic violence detections as a key measure for success against the priority of 'clean, safe and healthy communities'. The measure had been selected in order to focus attention on this issue and ensure a coordinated effort.
24. A target detection rate had been set that reflected the current police target for this indicator. The indicator is measured using data by the Police and reported to the Chorley and South Ribble Community Safety Partnership.
25. Detective Inspector Hurst explained that the police no longer use this target as a way of measuring its detection success, for a variety of differing reasons. The recording of Domestic Violence incidents has changed over time with many parameters being altered. The age limit for recording had been lowered to 16 years old, sibling to sibling

incidents and other familial incidents are now included and the implementation of a wide range of interventions and alternative disposals other than prosecution and caution, had reduced the number reaching 'detection' stage. With this in mind the police are now focusing more on reducing risk through interventions and managing outcomes.

26. The Detective Inspector went on to explain the various processes, interventions and partnership working initiatives that were currently being undertaken to reduce this risk and also provided the Group with information about a pilot domestic abuse perpetrator project that was being commissioned to deliver interventions to perpetrators that have been deemed high risk but not subject to statutory supervision. The pilot has been funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner and will look to support 5 perpetrators across Chorley Borough with the aim of reducing their reoffending behaviour.
27. Members accepted that it was hard to present a single indicator when there was so much work that actually went on behind it and agreed that we may need to consider a different target to measure success. One suggestion was the referrals into the MASH as this should indicate improved outcomes and the Panel felt that this was something that needed to be considered by the partnership.

### **Organisational Plan**

28. The Chief Executive submitted a report showing progress made against delivering the plans, key action and performance indicators in the single Organisational Improvement Plan 2013/14.
29. The Panel were informed that 35 actions had been completed. 54 actions were rated green, 6 actions were rated amber, no actions were rated as red and 5 actions had not yet started. A table showing the key actions that had been rated red/amber or red with an explanation about the issue and action being taken to address them was provided.
30. A full list of performance indicators were provided for the Panel. The list did include some measures that were reported on a quarterly basis. For those indicators, the most recent reporting period was at the end of the first quarter on 30 December 2013.
31. Thirty two indicators are on or above target, seven are outside the threshold and only six were off target. Of the six that indicators currently off target, three were corporate strategy indicators with reasons and actions provided in the third quarter corporate report that was considered at Executive Cabinet in February. These were:
  - % of customers satisfied with the service they have received from the Council
  - % of domestic violence detections
  - Number of affordable homes delivered
32. The Panel requested an update on the outcomes of the play and open space strategy consultation be brought to the next Overview and Scrutiny Committee and requested an update on the private sector rented property database. Although the number of long term empty properties had improved, Members queried the differing approaches by various departments when dealing with this issue. The Chief Executive explained that he was currently heading up a task group aimed at developing a consistent approach across the Council and asked if something could be reported back to Members in a future edition of intheknow.

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TASK GROUP – SELECT MOVE**

33. At its last meeting, the Group analysed the results of the two surveys that had been undertaken by current applicants of the Select Move lettings service and those people that had recently been housed by the process. The Group has also considered information received from those applicants that attended a customer drop-in session on 7 March 2014. Officers are currently preparing the draft final report of the review to be considered at its next meeting at the end of March.

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TASK GROUP – CCTV PROVISION**

34. At the Groups first meeting, Members interviewed various stakeholders to obtain their views on the provision of the CCTV service in Chorley. The Group also received information from West Lancashire Council on their CCTV provision following a recent review on their systems that had been recently undertaken by the authority.

### **Recommendation**

35. To note the report.

COUNCILLOR STEVE HOLGATE  
CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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