

Report of	Meeting	Date
Chief Executive (Introduced by the Executive Leader)	Executive Cabinet	22 February 2007

## CHORLEY COMMUNITY CHARTER

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To present cabinet with a proposed Chorley Community Charter, exploring the reasoning behind the launch of such a charter and provide an opportunity to debate the concept, the wording and the possible launch of a Community charter.

### CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- Improving Equality of opportunity and life chances and develop the character and feel of Chorley as a good place to live.

### RISK ISSUES

- The issue raised and recommendations made in this report involve risk considerations in the following categories:

Strategy		Information	
Reputation	✓	Regulatory/Legal	
Financial		Operational	
People	✓	Other	

- The Council has a role to place as a community leader; with increasing national and international emphasis on community relations it is critical that we take a proactive approach to tackling issues of community cohesion and belonging. If we fail to do so this could have a real impact upon our reputation and the people within our communities.

### BACKGROUND

- As a community leader, Chorley Council has a role to play in ensuring that all of our communities live together in relative peace and harmony and in building a sense of belonging and togetherness within the Borough.
- Nationally, issues around belonging, Multi Culturalism and togetherness are extremely high profile and we as a Council will need to demonstrate that we have thought about how these debates and tensions impact upon our communities and that we have taken a role in responding to and driving this agenda locally.
- Recently work has been ongoing with the faith community in Chorley to build relationships with, and between, various faith groups and to unite with these groups in working to build understanding and tolerance within our communities.

## 8. Chorley Community Charter

9. An event took place on 27 January 2007, organised in partnership between the Multi Faith Forum and Chorley Borough Council to bring various community and faith representatives together recognise and reflect upon the horror of genocide across the world and to sign up to a declaration of tolerance which has formed the basis of the proposed 'Chorley Community Charter'.
10. Through leading on such an initiative the intention is that the Council will co-ordinate a wide range of public, private and voluntary organisations in promoting a message of togetherness and belonging to the Borough. Through the launch of the charter we as a Council will facilitate discussions across the Borough about how community cohesion principles can be applied to local needs.
11. The purpose of the charter is to make a strong statement about what community cohesion means in Chorley and how we will proactively tackle this agenda. By inviting people and organisations to sign up to the commitments in the charter we aim to provoke thought and debate about what community means in Chorley and to provide a platform for action across the Borough.
12. Other Local Authorities have taken similar approaches to tackling the Community Cohesion agenda with particularly high profile examples being Blackburn with Darwen's highly successful 'Belonging to Blackburn with Darwen' campaign and Stoke-on-Trent's Community Cohesion Charter.
13. The proposed charter is worded;
  - We, the people of Chorley, positively recognise and celebrate the diversity of the borough and value the contribution made, for the good of the community, by all who live, work and visit here.
  - We will strive to make Chorley a place where everybody is welcomed and where equality of opportunity and dignity are afforded to all. To this end,
    - We commit to creating and sustaining an attractive, vibrant, caring and inclusive borough both for today and for the future;
    - We will endeavour to ensure that individuals are empowered and enabled to participate in community life whilst the vulnerable are represented and protected.
  - We recognise the negative impact of intolerance and hatred within communities and will act as agents for change. To this end,
    - We will promote a greater understanding and respect of others, and work towards building a sense of friendship, unity and cohesion.
14. In launching and driving forward the aims of the charter particular focus will be placed upon young people and families as they key to tackling the discrimination and misunderstanding at its very conception and through working with schools and community groups the Council will aim to open up debate and to foster positive and productive relationships between different groups within the Borough upon which we can build.
15. Various means of launching and promoting the aims of the charter can and will be explored and may include an event with children's and young people to launch a shorter summary of the charter which encapsulates the principles and spirit of the charter and allows gives children and young people a central role in promoting the aims of the charter, a campaign in partnership with the press in Chorley to communicate the messages of the charter to the wider population of Chorley, work with various community, voluntary and faith organisations to hold events and campaigns to promote the messages of the Charter.
16. In essence the Charter would act as the catalyst and underpinning for our community cohesion work setting out what we stand for and what we are working towards.

**COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

17. None

**COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE**

18. There are no financial implications associated with this report.

**RECOMMENDATION(S)**

19. That the wording of the Community Charter be approved.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)  
(If the recommendations are accepted)**

20. To allow a programme of activity in launching and promoting the charter to commence.

**ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

21. None

DONNA HALL  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

There are no background papers to this report.

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