

## **REPORT OF EXECUTIVE CABINET**

### **GENERAL REPORT**

1. The Executive Cabinet has met once on 29 March 2007 since the last ordinary Council meeting and this report summarises briefly the principal matters considered at that meeting. Separate reports appear on the Council's agenda in respect of the matters that require specific decisions.

### **Contact Centre Efficiencies and Partnership with Lancashire County Council – Scrutiny Inquiry**

2. The Executive Cabinet received and considered the final report of the Corporate and Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel's Inquiry into the Lancashire Shared Services Contact Centre. The report had been endorsed, with one minor correction, by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its last meeting.
3. The Inquiry has been conducted by two Sub-Groups of the Panel, with separate remits to examine (i) the contribution of the Contact Centre to the achievement of the Council's efficiency measures; (ii) the effectiveness of the partnership arrangements with the Lancashire County Council and other District Councils; and (iii) the delivery of a high quality customer service.
4. While the innovative partnership has already achieved measurable efficiencies, the Inquiry report makes a number of recommendations aimed principally at maximising the effectiveness of the Contact Centre, particularly through the introduction of the Customer Relationship Management scheme, and improving both the effectiveness of the partnership arrangements and customers' access to services at the Centre. These recommendations were approved by the Executive Cabinet for adoption.
5. Driving the discussions, Members accepted that the volume of recorded calls taken at the Contact Centre on 'general environmental issues' warranted on examination of the nature and type of calls, with a view to any identified problems being addressed.

### **'Getting Involved in Shaping the Future of your Neighbourhood' – Response to Consultation**

6. The Chief Executive submitted a report on a consultation paper issued by the Lancashire County Council entitled 'Getting Involved in Shaping the future of your Neighbourhood'. The document sets out the County Council's plans to encourage people to get involved in the Authority's functions and ways of operation, with the ultimate aim of local residents accepting a degree of ownership and management of local services and facilities.
7. A draft response letter to the Chief Executive on behalf of the Borough Council and the Local Strategic Partnership welcomed the plans as a sound framework for future joint working within neighbourhoods to encourage the engagement of local communities, but highlighted a number of key issues that would require resolution before the neighbourhood approach could be implemented successfully. We accepted the Chief Executive's comments and endorsed her letter as the Council's formal response to the County Council's consultation.

### **Civic Events Working Group**

8. We received and considered the minutes and recommendations of the first meeting of the Civic Events Working Group held on 12 March 2007. The Group has recently been set up to co-ordinate the arrangements for major civic events. The first meeting had discussed the

arrangements for the visit in 2007 of delegates from Szekesfehervar, the Mayoral Evening on 18 May 2007, the Freedom of the Borough event on 9 June 2007 and the commemoration of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Falklands conflict.

9. We approved and adopted the recommendations of the Civic Events Working Group, subject to a minor correction.

### **Best Value Residents' Survey 2006**

10. The Executive Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Policy and Performance appraising the findings of the triennial Best Value Survey of residents' satisfaction rating of local services as conducted by MORI on behalf of the Borough Council in 2006.
11. The survey's findings has revealed a reduction in the level of residents' overall general satisfaction with the Council's services since 2003, which does, in fact, accord with national trends. The major variances occurred in the areas of waste collection, museums and galleries, and theatres and concert halls, but residents' satisfaction with the Council's complaints handling procedures has increased. The reduction in satisfaction levels is, in fact, anomalous with the statistic that shows residents' acceptance of Council services have improved over the past three years. This conflict can be accredited to the public's aspirations and expectations of the level of public services being raised.
12. The report also contains a series of recommended actions and measures for the Council's Directorates to instigate in order to ensure that identified concerns are addressed and future services are designed and delivered in a manner that will meet residents' increasing expectations.

### **Transport and Services Accessibility Plan for Chorley Borough**

13. The Director of Development and Regeneration presented a report which sought our endorsement of the Transport and Accessibility Plan for Chorley, which had been instigated by the Lancashire County Council as a pathfinder project within the Lancashire Local Transport Plan for 2006 – 2010.
14. The Plan focuses primarily on public transport provision and its role in enabling the local community to access key services and, particularly, those residents who do not have the use of a car. The Plan concentrates on the non-car modes of transport and the key services that can be accessed by those means.
15. We welcomed and approved the Accessibility Plan for Chorley and recommended the production of an action plan to guide implementation of the planned improvements to both transport and service provision.

### **Revised Local Development Scheme, 2007 – 2010**

16. Following consideration of a report of the Director of Development and Regeneration, the Executive Cabinet approved the timetable to accompany the revised Local Development Scheme for the Local Development Framework to run from 2007 – 2010 and gave the Director delegated authority to amend the existing scheme to reflect recent changes.
17. The Council is required to produce a Local Development Scheme each year, including a timetable of significant dates, or 'milestones', when the relevant documents will be produced. The new timetable has been compiled on the most realistic basis as possible, whilst taking account of the intention to align timetables in the separate strategies of Chorley, South Ribble and Preston and the envisaged delays in the issue of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West.

## **Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004 – Extension of ‘Saved’ Policies**

18. The Director of Development and Regeneration presented a report requesting delegated authority to extend the use of existing planning policies beyond September 2007.
19. Under the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Council's adopted planning policy documents, within the Borough Local Plan will expire on 27 September 2007, unless the Secretary of State consents to the extension of the policies beyond that date.
20. It had been envisaged that the new planning system would have been operative by September 2007, but this has only been implemented by a few authorities. It is, therefore, essential to ensure that the Borough is covered beyond September by appropriate policies tailored to the needs of Chorley, against which development proposals can be judged. The Executive Cabinet consequently granted delegated authority to the Director of Development and Regeneration to request the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to save the majority of the policies contained in the Chorley Borough Local Plan Review, pending the implementation of the new planning system.

## **Action Plans for Every Child Matters, Choosing Health and Improving the Quality of Life for Older People**

21. The Executive Cabinet was presented with a report from the Director of Leisure and Cultural Services and approved for adoption the three appended Action Plans relating to Every Child Matters, Choosing Health and Improving the Quality of Life for Older People.
22. Those three work areas are identified as priority areas within both the Community Strategy and the Council's Corporate Strategy, and the action plans produced for each themed area set out the key projects from 2006/07. The action plans are intended to assist the Council in prioritising requests for further investment and involvement in the three work areas and facilitating consultation with all of the Council's partners to ensure that targeted resources are used most effectively.

## **Astley Park Update**

23. The Director of Leisure and Cultural Services submitted a progress report updating the Executive Cabinet on the on-going works to regenerate and enhance Astley Park.
24. In particular, our instructions were sought on the retention, or otherwise, of the Pets Corner facility in the Park. The results of a recent public survey conducted by external consultants has revealed significant support for the inclusion of a pets corner within the project and, taking this factor into account, the Executive Cabinet has agreed to retain the facility in Astley Park. Further detailed plans for the pets corner will need to be presented to the Executive Cabinet to ensure that any potential impact on neighbouring residents is minimised.
25. A wide ranging review of the capital and revenue implications of the project is currently being undertaken in advance of a future report to Members.

## **2006/07 Core Funding Awards in excess of £5,000**

26. We received a report of the Director of Leisure and Cultural Services and gave approval to the making of Core Fund grants in excess of £5,000 to each of the following key local organisations, subject to the Director agreeing, and signing off, a Core Funding Agreement with each organisation:
  - Chorley and South Ribble Shopmobility;

- The Lifestyle Centre, Chorley (formerly Age Concern);
- South Lancashire Arts Partnership;
- Chorley and District Sports Forum; and
- Chorley, South Ribble and Districts Citizens' Advice Bureau.

### **Staffing Changes following the retirement of the Executive Director**

27. We considered a confidential report of the Chief Executive on the staffing situation in her Office and Directors' reporting procedures as a consequence of the retirement, and dis-establishment of the post, of the Executive Director (Environment and Community).
28. We agreed for consultation the recommended staffing changes, which are expected to generate annual savings in the region of £5,000, and agreed the arrangements for the Directors who previously reported to the Executive Director (ie Director of Development and Regeneration, Director of Leisure and Cultural Services and Director of Streetscene, Neighbourhoods and Environment) to report in future directly to the Chief Executive. In addition, we accepted the recommendation to alter the designation of the Director of Policy and Performance (who already reports directly to the Chief Executive) to Director of Policy and Performance (Assistant Chief Executive).

### **Waste and Recycling Collection Contract**

29. We received and noted a confidential report from the Director of Streetscene, Neighbourhoods and Environment on the action being taken to procure a new waste and recycling collection contract upon the termination of the current contract with Cleanaway/Veolia on 31 March 2009.
30. A Procurement Group, comprising Members, Officers and waste management and vehicle specialists, has already been set up and the Lancashire Waste Partnership has secured Government funding to appoint consultants to produce a procurement model for all partner authorities, with Chorley having been selected as the pilot authority.
31. The forthcoming procurement process will entail extensive consultations with Members and residents in our efforts to ensure the new contract consolidates the considerable achievements of the existing contract and enhances customer satisfaction and recycling levels.

### **Customer, Democratic and Legal Services Directorate – Restructure Proposals**

32. We received a confidential report of the Director of Customer, Democratic and Legal Services and granted delegated authority to the Executive Leader and the Executive Member for Customer, Democratic and Legal Services to respond to the restructure proposals for the Officer's Directorate in the light of the consultation responses received, with the proviso that any material changes to the original proposals will be reported back to the Executive Cabinet. This will enable contractual consultation requirements to be met and will allow a decision on the proposals to be taken without undue delay.

### **Recommendation**

33. The Council is recommended to note this report.

COUNCILLOR MRS P CASE

Deputy Leader of the Council in the Chair of the Executive Cabinet meeting on 29 March 2007

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There are no background papers to this report.