

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Public Protection Streetscene and Community (Introduced by the Executive Member for Community Services)	Executive Cabinet	25 June 2015

EXECUTIVE CABINET RESPONSE TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TASK GROUP REVIEW OF NEIGHBOURHOOD WORKING

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To provide the Executive Cabinets response to the O&S Task Group Review of Neighbourhood Working undertaken in late 2014 and reported to Executive Cabinet in February 2015.

RECOMMENDATION

2. It is recommended that Members accept the recommendations made by the O&S Task Group Review of Neighbourhood Working as outlined in the table contained in the main body of the report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

3. The Councils Overview and Scrutiny Committee established a task group in October 2014 to review neighbourhood working and determine what improvements could be recommended in order to further develop neighbourhood working in Chorley.
4. The Task Group reported its findings and recommendations to the Councils Executive Cabinet in January 2015 and this report provides the Executive response to those recommendations.
5. In summary all the recommendations are accepted, apart from one (Recommendation 4) relating to the provision of a single point of contact on neighbourhood matters for parish councils and community groups.

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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Key Decision? Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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Reason Please bold as appropriate	1, a change in service provision that impacts upon the service revenue budget by £100,000 or more	2, a contract worth £100,000 or more
	3, a new or unprogrammed capital scheme of £100,000 or more	4, Significant impact in environmental, social or physical terms in two or more wards

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

(If the recommendations are accepted)

6. To provide a response to the recommendations made by the O&S Task Group Review of Neighbourhood Working.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

7. None

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

8. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all	√	A strong local economy	
Clean, safe and healthy communities	√	An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	√

BACKGROUND

9. In October 2014 an Overview and Scrutiny Committee Task Group was established to review neighbourhood working. This followed an Executive Member review of neighbourhood working in 2012 and the establishment of neighbourhood working as a service delivery model in 2007.
10. The O&S Task Group took evidence from a number of officers, partner agencies and voluntary organisations and the final task group report can be found at:
<https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/documents/s51008/Draft%20Final%20Report%20-%20Neighbourhood%20Working%20%2029012015%20Overview%20and%20Scrutiny%20Committee.pdf>

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS

11. The table below details the Executive Cabinet response to each of the recommendations made by the Task Group

O&S Task Group Recommendation	Executive Cabinet Response
1. To develop a liaison mechanism between the eight Chairs of the Neighbourhood Area Meetings through an informal meeting that could take place prior to a Chorley 3 Tier Liaison meeting as any issues (of a strategic nature and involving all three tiers of Local Government) can be raised at that meeting.	Agreed – a mechanism can be established linked to the timing of our 3 Tier Liaison meetings where all eight neighbourhood group chairs can meet to discuss and propose strategic issues that are common to neighbourhoods for discussion and the Liaison meeting. It may be possible to do this electronically and this will be explored in the first instance
2. Provide training to borough and parish councillors on effective tools to engage and connect people in their own area.	Agreed – Executive Cabinet believes there is a role here for Parish Councils to identify suitable training and engagement tools that can be delivered at a local level perhaps through PC events to parish councillors and

O&S Task Group Recommendation	Executive Cabinet Response
	ward councillors. In addition the 3 Tier Forum might provide an opportunity to share best practice in this area.
3. That the Neighbourhood Priorities are renamed as Preferred Projects to reflect that, over time, issues and aspirations change.	Agreed
4. To have a single point of contact at the Council for community groups and parish council's to raise matters relating to neighbourhood working. Reporting of day to day environmental issues to use existing channels, for example My Account	Whilst it would be beneficial to have a single point of contact the variety of issues that impact on neighbourhoods and the generic roles of a number of officers across the Council would make this recommendation unworkable. It is felt that the implementation of the other recommendations will establish the appropriate communication networks for all groups involved in neighbourhood working. In addition the use of 'My Account' to channel contacts into the Council would ensure the matter being raised reaches the most appropriate person in the first instance. The Council would be willing to provide some initial training to parish councillors and community groups on its use. Executive Cabinet encourages all contact on day to day service requests and issues to be channelled 'My Account'
5. To improve communication between officers, councillors and stakeholders about the outcomes of priorities to community groups and the public, to include monthly updates on progress and delivery to be provided by the lead officer through use of IntheKnow, IntheBoro, Facebook and Twitter.	Agreed – timely and effective communication is key to the neighbourhood working process. In terms of the three 'Preferred Projects' for each neighbourhood area the lead officers are now tasked with providing a monthly communication with the group representatives on progress of the project delivery. Wider communication issues will be picked up and actioned by the Councils communications team.
6. Where appropriate, the neighbourhood working process should be used to encourage greater financial contributions from parish council funds for the delivery of neighbourhood priorities. It is envisaged that robust debate at neighbourhood area meetings should be the forum to challenge greater contributions from parish councils who may be reluctant to make those contributions.	Agreed – the neighbourhood groups are encouraged to challenge all representation within the group as well as wider agencies and community groups to make contributions (financial and 'in kind') to the successful delivery neighbourhood priorities and other neighbourhood working aspirations.

O&S Task Group Recommendation	Executive Cabinet Response
<p>7. The Council to explore with the Voluntary and Community Faith Sector (VCFS) how the use of current resources provided by the Council to the VCFS, can be used by the VCFS to improve networking across the VCFS sector in Chorley. This could include the facilitation of an Annual Forum on a dedicated topic, for example health initiatives, to help shape future key projects and encourage greater involvement at all levels.</p>	<p>Agreed – The Councils Partnerships Manager to explore with the VCFS network how this can be facilitated.</p>
<p>8. The civic pride campaign be fully integrated into neighbourhood working and members informed or engaged in all aspects of civic pride delivery.</p>	<p>Agreed – Improved communication with Members about civic pride will be undertaken and we will seek to integrate the aspirations and workings of Civic Pride into neighbourhood working. The Policy and Communications team will pick this up.</p>
<p>9. The Overview and Scrutiny Panel are supportive of the Corporate Strategy project to introduce Community Action Plans in parts of the Borough and recommend consideration is given to a wider roll out depending on the implementation and outcomes achieved from the initial plans.</p>	<p>Agreed – Executive Cabinet welcomes O&S support for the Community Action Plan project and will give consideration to a wider roll out subject to the outcomes and impact of the current project.</p>
<p>10. The use of local neighbourhood forums may be considered as appropriate by the Neighbourhood Area meetings as a means to engage and understand community needs. Such forums could be facilitated or hosted jointly with the neighbourhood representatives.</p>	<p>Agreed – the model of using forums to better engage with localities can be beneficial and could be considered by each neighbourhood area. However there are two specific issues to note:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Neighbourhood areas in Chorley cover a large footprint and using forums to engage on that footprint may not drill down to the appropriate level of engagement. 2. The use of forums can become extremely resource intensive and as the recommendation notes, individual neighbourhood area groups should determine themselves if an occasional forum type meeting is appropriate and should then utilise representatives, partner agencies and voluntary groups in their areas to resource them.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

12. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance	√	Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal	√	Integrated Impact Assessment required?	
No significant implications in this area		Policy and Communications	

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

13. There are no financial implications for the Council's budget with regard to the recommendation above.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

14. No comments

JAMIE CARSON
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROTECTION STREETSCENE AND COMMUNITY

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Simon Clark	5732	26 May 2015	O&SNhoodReview