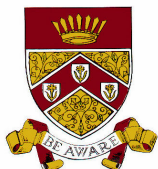


Revision History

Revision Date	Previous Revision Date	Version
Approved by Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Executive Cabinet	02/03/06 09/03/06	1
Approved by Overview and Scrutiny Committee	05/09/06	2
Overview & Scrutiny Committee Executive Cabinet	10/01/07 11/01/07	3
Overview & Scrutiny Committee Executive Cabinet	25/06/07 26/06/07	4



## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IMPROVEMENT PLAN**



# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

This Overview and Scrutiny Improvement Plan forms part of the Council's Performance Management process. The document brings together areas of existing good practice and areas for improvement which have been identified, following the compilation of the Centre for Public Scrutiny self-evaluation framework at a workshop session held on 20 October 2005, attended by Members of the Council and the Senior Management Group. These areas are those which the Council will be focusing its attentions on to remove the barriers to the Council achieving its corporate vision of excellence.

This Overview and Scrutiny Improvement Plan will be kept up to date and will form the key control document for the Executive Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to ensure that improvement plans for Scrutiny are kept on track, to help deliver the Council's Performance Agreement and Corporate Strategy.

We want to share our progress with everyone and regular updates will be posted to the Council's website at [www.chorley.gov.uk](http://www.chorley.gov.uk). In addition, we will provide regular information on how we are doing through the Council's newspaper, Chorley Borough News, and through regular press releases.

If you have any comments relating to the Overview and Scrutiny Improvement Plan or require any further information, please contact:

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Councillor P Goldsworthy, Executive Leader



Councillor J Walker  
Executive Member for Customers, Democratic and  
Legal Services



Councillor D Edgerley  
Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny  
Committee

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SCRUTINY PRINCIPLE	FOCUS	EVIDENCE OF WHAT WE DO WELL	OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED FOR IMPROVEMENT	ACTIONS PLANNED	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	BY WHEN	BY WHOM		PROGRESS UPDATE
							Officer	Member	
1. Provide 'critical friend' challenge	1.1 Does scrutiny provide an effective challenge to the Executive?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Non Cabinet Members can attend Cabinet meetings - receive all papers</li> <li>➢ Revised Forward Plan</li> <li>➢ Toolkit</li> <li>➢ Pls and Business Plans quarterly basis</li> <li>➢ Non political in the main</li> <li>➢ Shadow Executive Cabinet members appointed</li> <li>➢ Shadow Cabinet Briefings held to discuss Executive – Cabinet issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some members reluctant to criticise Executive - more commitment/need for training</li> <li>• Need to improve Executive Cabinet involvement in scrutiny</li> <li>• Increase public awareness</li> <li>• Feed success back to public</li> <li>• Officer support for O&amp;S</li> <li>• More opportunity for call-in powers to be used</li> <li>• Provide the opportunity for Scrutiny Members to question Executive Members</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implement Overview and Scrutiny training sessions on a regular basis for:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Cabinet Members</li> <li>• Overview and Scrutiny Committee/ Panel members</li> <li>• Overview and Scrutiny Committee/ Panel chairs</li> <li>• SMG Officers</li> <li>• Democratic Services Section</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Introduce questions with notice to Executive Members at Council meetings</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Clear understanding of Overview and Scrutiny function</li> <li>2. More effective 'critical friend' challenge to the Executive</li> </ol>	<p>July 2007</p> <p>October 2006</p>	<p>Steve Pearce/Sue Baxendale</p> <p>Donna Hall</p>	<p>Councillor M Lees</p> <p>Councillor J Walker</p>	<p>Implemented -The following Overview and Scrutiny training sessions were delivered by the Improvement and Development Agency for Members of the Council, Directors and other officers involved in the Scrutiny process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Effective Scrutiny – 5 June 2007 ( 32 members attended)</li> <li>▪ Chairing Scrutiny – 6 June 2007 ( 10 members attended)</li> <li>▪ Financial Scrutiny – 11 June 2007 ( 20 members attended)</li> </ul> <p>The training material will be sent to Members who were unable to attend the sessions.</p> <p>All Members receive email alerts of the publication of Executive Member Decisions.</p> <p>Implemented – Council agreed on 31 October 2006 to the introduction of public questions/speaking at various Council meetings</p>
	1.2 How does scrutiny have an impact on the work of the Executive?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Scrutiny Reviews - evidence gathering</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call-in (used once) - should be received positively</li> <li>• Ensure appropriate Cabinet Members attend Inquiry hearings</li> <li>• Increase public involvement in O&amp;S to initiative topics</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Actively invite public to submit Overview and Scrutiny topics</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Improved public involvement in Overview and Scrutiny</li> </ol>	<p>June 2006</p>	<p>Steve Pearce</p>	<p>Councillor J Walker</p>	<p>On-going – Increased publicity on the scrutiny process to be given in the Chorley Borough News, local media and through the Community Forum meetings.</p>

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	<p><b>1.3 How does scrutiny routinely challenge the authority's corporate strategy and budget?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Business Plans and PI's go to O&amp;S committee/Panels every quarter</li> <li>➢ Quarterly financial monitoring reports go to O&amp;S Committee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scrutiny members should have more say in strategic items from the start</li> <li>• O&amp;S Committee to meet prior to Executive Cabinet to scrutinise reports</li> <li>• More training on budget process</li> <li>• Presentations on strategic issues to O&amp; S members</li> <li>• Scrutiny of budget process needs to be improved.</li> <li>• Improved monitoring of performance</li> </ul>	<p>4. Improved scrutiny of draft policy and strategy documents before they are agreed for consultation purposes.</p> <p>5. Improved scrutiny of budget</p> <p>6. Improved scrutiny of performance management within the authority</p>	<p>4. Effective scrutiny of policy and strategic documents</p> <p>5. Effective scrutiny of budget</p> <p>6. Effective performance management</p>	<p>March 2006</p> <p>From March 2006</p> <p>December 2006</p>	<p>Donna Hall</p> <p>Gary Hall</p> <p>Donna Hall</p>	<p>Councillor J Walker</p> <p>Councillor D Ederley</p> <p>Councillor D Ederley</p>	<p>Implemented - Executive Cabinet agreed on 8 September 2005 that all draft policy/strategy documents should be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>On-going - The Overview and Scrutiny Committee/Panels scrutinise revenue/capital budget reports on a quarterly basis and have scrutinised elements of the budget proposals for 2006/07 and 2007/08 which resulted in amendments to the final budget allocations. Frequency and timing of reports to be reviewed</p> <p>On-going – Best Value Performance Management Data is submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis. Directorate Business Plan Monitoring Statements are submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee/Panels on a quarterly basis.</p>
	<p><b>1.4 Are external partners involved in scrutiny and how are they included?</b></p>	<p>Scrutiny Inquiries on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flooding</li> <li>• One Stop Shop</li> <li>• Juvenile nuisance - Youth and Community Service</li> <li>• Parkwise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CBC to scrutinise partners and vice versa</li> <li>• Scrutinise LCC Ask partners/consultative bodies for topics/comments</li> <li>• Bring 'everyone' together to improve service delivery</li> <li>• LSP improvement proposals to be discussed at Scrutiny</li> </ul>	<p>7. Implement scrutiny of external partners</p>	<p>7. Focused scrutiny of local partnership bodies</p>	<p>December 2006</p>	<p>Donna Hall</p>	<p>Councillor D Ederley</p>	<p>On-going - The Corporate and Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel completed a scrutiny inquiry into the Contact Centre Partnership agreement with Lancashire County Council which was submitted to the Executive Cabinet in June 2007 .</p> <p>Other local partnership bodies will be included in the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme in due course following the establishment of the new management structure for the Chorley Partnership (LSP).</p>

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2. Reflect the voice and concerns of the public and its communities	1.5 Does scrutiny work effectively with the Executive and senior management?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Overview and Scrutiny Chair presents Inquiry Reports to Executive Cabinet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings between Leader/Chief Executive with O&amp;S Chairs</li> <li>• Prioritise key issues for scrutiny</li> <li>• Member training on the 'real issues'/chairing skills/O&amp;S Procedures/Role of the Executive and Senior Management</li> <li>• Capacity of Councillors</li> <li>• SMG to refer policy docs to Overview and Scrutiny Committee prior to consultation</li> </ul>	<p>8. (a) Programmed meetings of Overview and Scrutiny chairs with officers</p> <p>(b) Programmed meetings of Overview and Scrutiny chairs with Executive Leader/Chief Executive</p> <p>See Item 1</p> <p>See Item 4</p>	<p>8. Effective working relationship between Overview and Scrutiny Chair with Leader/Chief Executive</p>	From May 2006	Donna Hall	Councillor P Goldsworthy	<p>On-going</p> <p>a) Meetings with Overview and Scrutiny Chairs to be held every Committee cycle.</p> <p>b) Meetings of Chairs with Leader/Chief Executive to be programmed to be held on a quarterly basis.</p>
	2.1 How is the work of the scrutiny informed by the public?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Recommendations at front of report</li> <li>➢ Consult partnerships and relevant organisations</li> <li>➢ Articles in newspaper and website</li> <li>➢ Regular monitoring reports on Inquiries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to be more proactive rather than reactive</li> <li>• More effective communications with partners</li> <li>• More information on website and Borough News</li> <li>• Regular Overview and Scrutiny articles in Borough News</li> <li>• Ensure widespread distribution of Borough News</li> </ul>	<p>9. Improved communication/ publicity of Overview and Scrutiny activities</p>	<p>9. Effective publicity for Overview and Scrutiny inquiries/activities</p>	From May 2006	Steve Pearce/ Shelley Wright	Councillor D Edgerley	<p>On-going - publicity provided for the Parkwise Scrutiny Inquiry in June 2006</p> <p>Regular publicity on scrutiny issues to be provided in the Chorley Borough News.</p> <p>The need for improved publicity is included in the Marketing and Communications Plan 2007-2010.</p> <p>Format of Committee Reports to be reviewed by Director of Customer, Democratic and Legal Services.</p>

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	<p><b>2.2 How does scrutiny make itself accessible to the public?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Questionnaires to relevant parties</li> <li>➤ Citizens Panel</li> <li>➤ Members reflect public complaints for Inquiry requests</li> <li>➤ Regular slot in Borough News</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved communication between Council its partners and other non-executive members - better external and internal communication</li> <li>• Lack of facilities for public participation</li> <li>• Capacity and resource issues</li> <li>• Encouragement of public to comment on Inquiries (eg through Press Articles)</li> </ul>	<p>See Items 3 and 9</p>					
	<p><b>2.3 How does scrutiny communicate?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Publish articles in newspaper</li> <li>➤ Inform consultees of Inquiry results</li> <li>➤ Overview and Scrutiny toolkit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity issues</li> <li>• Better consultation with partners in inquiry/meetings timetable</li> <li>• Time constraints on Member participation</li> <li>• Members ability to attend meetings</li> <li>• Members training opportunities - for both Executive and Scrutiny Members</li> <li>• Executive Members attendance at scrutiny meetings</li> </ul>	<p>See Item 9</p> <p>See Item 1</p> <p>See Item 1</p>					

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<b>3. Take the lead and own the scrutiny process</b>	<b>3.1 Does scrutiny operate with political impartiality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Non political</li> <li>➢ No pressure is placed on Members</li> <li>➢ Consensus on what the corporate issues are to be examined</li> <li>➢ Smaller Panels (10 Members)</li> <li>➢ Collect evidence</li> <li>➢ Opposition Chairs</li> <li>➢ More transparent</li> <li>➢ Referral of Issue from Exec for Scrutiny</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvement of the understanding/more training on the scrutiny process</li> </ul>	See Item 1 and 10. Revise/update Overview and Scrutiny toolkit	10. Updated Overview and Scrutiny toolkit in line with current best practice in other local authorities	May 2007	Steve Pearce	Councillor D Ederley	On-going - Toolkit to be reviewed/updated by Member/Officer Working Group following the review of the Overview and Scrutiny Structure. (item 13)
	<b>3.2 Does scrutiny have ownership of its own work programme?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ We do have a work programme</li> <li>➢ We decide Members contribution</li> <li>➢ We monitor regularly the work programme</li> <li>➢ Criteria for choosing Scrutiny Inquiries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to get the correct information</li> <li>• Need to examine the skills required</li> <li>• External organization to improve timescales</li> </ul>	11. Public invited to submit scrutiny inquiry topics  12. Rolling Overview and Scrutiny work programme to be produced prior to each municipal year following consultation with members/partners /public [To be based on the Corporate Strategy]	11. Improved public involvement in Overview and Scrutiny  12. Improved/co-ordinated annual work programme	From June 2006  From June 2006	Steve Pearce  Donna Hall	Councillor D Ederley  Councillor D Ederley	On-going - Public to be invited to submit topics through articles in the Chorley Borough News and publicity at the Community Forum meetings.  Ongoing - Improved rolling work programme approved by Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Topics all based on issues in the corporate strategy.
	<b>3.3 Do scrutiny members consider that they have a worthwhile and fulfilling role?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ We have a greater response from the Executive</li> <li>➢ Monitoring of Recommendation from Inquiries</li> <li>➢ Most Members are enthusiastic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of experience</li> <li>• More training</li> </ul>	- See Item 1	- See Item 1	- See Item 1	- See Item 1	- See Item 1	- See Item 1

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4 Make an impact on service delivery	3.4 Is there a current constructive working partnership with officers including support arrangements for scrutiny?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Officers attend and present reports</li> <li>➢ Support from officers</li> <li>➢ Toolkit</li> <li>➢ Acceptance of Scrutiny Inquiry Recommendations by the Executive Cabinet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve Chairing skills</li> <li>• Members lack of knowledge of Officers functions due to Directorate restructures</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">See Item 8</p> <p style="text-align: center;">See Item 1</p>					
	4.1 How is the scrutiny workload co-ordinated and integrated in to corporate processes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Panels shaped around corporate priorities eg Markets inquiries</li> <li>➢ Executive Cabinet has accepted majority of recommendations</li> <li>➢ Financial implications now included in Scrutiny reports</li> <li>➢ Corporate priorities in topic selection</li> <li>➢ Reports are requested on agendas by Members</li> <li>➢ Councillors can request scrutiny inquiries and reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training/ understanding of Forward Plan Scrutiny of the budget</li> <li>• needs to be non political</li> <li>• early sharing of budgets</li> <li>• executive and scrutiny look at budget at same time</li> <li>• Identify resources aligned when considering rec's (where is the money coming from)</li> <li>• Ensure scrutiny topics are in line with the corporate priorities</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">See Item 1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">See Item 5</p> <p style="text-align: center;">See Item 5</p> <p style="text-align: center;">See Item 10</p> <p style="text-align: center;">See Item 10</p>					



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	<p><b>4.2 What evidence is there to show that scrutiny has contributed to improvement ?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Results of Inquiries - recs eg grass cutting, One Stop Shop, housing maintenance</li> <li>➢ Executive Cabinet have accepted the majority of recommendations</li> <li>➢ Have monitoring reports on inquiry rec's (every six months)</li> <li>➢ Annual report on Overview and Scrutiny activities</li> <li>➢ Planning/scoping and toolkit good</li> <li>➢ Info received good</li> <li>➢ Officer support good</li> <li>➢ Do consult with partner groups</li> <li>➢ Do go on site visits/consider best practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up small groups to look at issues for scrutiny</li> <li>• Encourage the public to "call-in"/participate in scrutiny</li> <li>• Need to raise awareness of Scrutiny</li> <li>• Officer resources planned throughout the year - clear plan at start of year (impact of inquiries)</li> <li>• Annual review to ensure the quality of recommendations submitted to the Executive</li> <li>• Lessons learnt at the end of Inquiries (what could we do better?)</li> <li>• Percentage of recommendations approved as PI (Scrutiny Performance)</li> </ul>	<p>13. Annual review of Overview and Scrutiny function.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">See Item 12</p> <p style="text-align: center;">See Item 10</p>	<p>13. Effective and efficient Overview and Scrutiny function following a review of the existing structure.</p>	<p>October 2007</p>	<p>Donna Hall</p>	<p>Councillors J Walker and D Edgerley</p>	<p>Overview and Scrutiny structure to be reviewed following the deliberations in Parliament on issues in the the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill, which include Community Call for Action.</p>