

Environment and Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Thursday, 18 October 2007

Present: Councillor Greg Morgan (Chair) and Councillors Nora Ball, Judith Boothman, Magda Cullens, Mike Devaney, Mrs Doreen Dickinson, Anthony Gee, Catherine Hoyle, Kevin Joyce, Roy Lees, Adrian Lowe, Marion Lowe and Shaun Smith

07.ECS.23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Keith Iddon, Margaret Iddon, Mick Muncaster and Rosie Russell.

07.ECS.24 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

No Members declared an interest in relation to matters under consideration at the meeting.

07.ECS.25 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No members of the public requested to speak at the meeting.

07.ECS.26 MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 13 September 2007 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

07.ECS.27 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2007/08

The Panel received the current Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2007/08 Municipal Year and in particular the items relating to the Environment and Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

The Panel noted that one of the scrutiny overview subjects the Panel had requested at its meeting on 16 July 2007 related to an investigation into the Council's environmental footprint and what the Council was doing to reduce its carbon emissions. A report on this was due to be submitted to the Executive Cabinet on 15 November 2007 and that this Panel would receive the report at its next meeting.

RESOLVED – That Members of the Panel receive the report on the Council's actions on reducing its carbon emissions as soon as it is available, with Members of the Panel requested to identify possible areas for investigation prior to the next Panel meeting on 22 November 2007.

07.ECS.28 SCRUTINY INQUIRIES

The Panel received notification that the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2007/08 had the following topics for a full scrutiny inquiry:

- Town Centre Strategy
- Inequalities in the Borough

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Minute 06.OS.36 refers 27 June 2006) approved and the Executive Cabinet (Minute 06.EC.94 refers 29 June 2006) noted that the above inquiries be carried out by this Panel in the order of priority as set out above.

The Panel had recently completed the inquiry into Neighbourhood Working, with a report to be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny at its next meeting on 12 November 2007. The Panel was now in a position to commence its next inquiry into the Town Centre Strategy.

Members of the Panel received copies of the Chorley Town Centre Strategy, which had been adopted by the Council in October 2006. Members were invited to focus their attention on specific areas of the strategy that could be investigated.

Members were conscious of the need to focus their attention on specific areas of the Strategy in view of the wide range of issues and for the potential outcome of the inquiry to be worthwhile. They were also conscious that there should be no duplication of work that may already be carried out by other groups.

The Panel also considered that the other inquiry highlighted in the Scrutiny Work Programme of 'Inequalities in the Borough' could also be looked at, but only on issues relevant to the Town Centre Strategy.

RESOLVED – 1) That the Panel receives from the Corporate Director (Business) a guide as to how the inquiry should progress and the areas it should focus its attention on.

2) That the following areas be put forward as possible suggestions the Panel could focus its attention on:

- **Are there any areas of clarification and improvements to the Strategy?**
- **Are the actions on target?**
- **Consider the current strengths and weaknesses of the Town Centre Strategy.**
- **Examine the planned process for reviewing the existing Strategy and look at the likely issues and factors that would affect future Town Centre Strategy's.**
- **Focus on examining the implementation process of the strategy so far and the funding resource implications.**
- **Are the funding sources on track?**
- **What action is being done to drive up occupancy levels of Town Centre shops?**

3) That the Panel receives any information in relation to inequalities in the Borough that may be relevant to the inquiry.

Chair