

Report of	Meeting	Date
Leader of the Council	Council	28/02/08

Appendix 2

## EXECUTIVES RESPONSE TO BUDGET SCRUTINY

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To inform Councillors of the Executives Cabinet response to the issues raised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to its review of the 2008/09 budget proposals.

### RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. That the Council notes the response made to the issues raised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee during the budget consultation.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

3. The report outlines the issues raised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee during consultation and how the Executive have responded:
4. The response demonstrates that in many cases the Executive have recognised the issues raised by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels and Committee and are seeking to address them through introducing alternative ways of working and where appropriate providing additional resources.

### REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

#### (If the recommendations are accepted)

4. To inform Council of the Executives response to issues raised by Overview and Scrutiny during the budget consultation.

### ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

5. None.

### CORPORATE PRIORITIES

6. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Put Chorley at the heart of regional economic development in the Central Lancashire sub-region	✓	Develop local solutions to climate change.	✓
Improving equality of opportunity and life chances	✓	Develop the Character and feel of Chorley as a good place to live	✓
Involving people in their communities	✓	Ensure Chorley Borough Council is a performing organization	✓

The budget and its impact has the propensity to affect any of the Council's strategic objectives.

## **BACKGROUND**

7. For 2008/09 a similar methodology was adopted to budget scrutiny that had been undertaken for the last two financial years. Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels and Committee was provided with both contextual information regarding services in the form of performance and financial data.
8. The aim of the exercise was to try to demonstrate how the Council performed when compared to other like Council's. Against this backdrop the Scrutineers were also given details of the Council's budget and asked to focus on whether:
  - The proposals would contribute towards the achievement of the Council's Corporate priorities.
  - Their experience as Ward Councillors indicated whether the balance of resourcing allocated to individual services was correct.
9. The individual Scrutiny Panels had the opportunity to ask questions, particularly on significant policy items. The outcome of that work was subsequently fed back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee who endorsed their recommendations to Cabinet. The outcome of that work has been directly fed in to the Executive through the budget consultation process.
10. A response to the issues raised by Scrutiny is therefore set out in this report and a summary is now provided. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee asked the Executive to consider:
11. **Increasing the number of Neighbourhood Wardens and the resources allocated to street cleansing outside the urban core including lobbying the County Council where appropriate.**

### **Response**

12. The Executive is Committed to spending additional resources on front line services and is allocating a further £100k of recurrent expenditure and a further £150k of non recurrent expenditure to improving the look and feel of neighbourhoods, which will include street cleansing. The additional money will be spent determining and identifying priorities for individual neighbourhoods. With regard to the County Council, part of the neighbourhood working agenda will be to pick up such issues and work with our partners including the County Council to resolve them.
13. **Increasing the usage of the machine that removes chewing gum throughout the borough.**

### **Response**

Additional resource will be put into this as part of the Council's spring clean-up programme.

14. **Providing members with schedules of work for street cleaning and grounds maintenance.**

**Response**

Part of the neighbourhood working agenda will be to engage ward member in determining what needs to be done in their neighbourhoods. Part of this engagement will be supplying information to members on how the service is currently delivered.

15. **Identifying where there are gaps in provision of recreational activities particularly in rural areas and look at providing improved transport links where appropriate.**

**Response**

16. The Executive budget proposals include significant extra cash for the Get up and Go Programme with a focus on rural areas where access to services such as leisure facilities is more difficult. Part of the extra cash may be put into transportation to ensure those in rural areas can access the programmes of activities that are provided. The exact details of how the extra money will be spent is yet to be determined but our intention is that the access issue to recreational facilities and activities is addressed.

17. **To explore complimentary concessionary arrangements with South Ribble Borough Council the access to recreational facilities.**

**Response**

The current passport to leisure operates across local boundaries in Preston, Leyland and Ribble Valley so Chorley residents with a Passport to Leisure pass can get discounted rates at facilities other than those within the borough.

18. **That the proposed increase for grant of right of burial fees is phased in.**

**Response**

The Executive considers that the increase should be implemented immediately. This service has been subsidised for many years and even with the increase still represents a subsidy. For this reason the Executive consider the phasing of the increase unnecessary.

GARY HALL  
ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
(BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION)

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Gary Hall	5480	14/02/08	ACE(BI)/Reports/2008/Council/ Executives Response to Budget