

# Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - Local Strategic Partnership

**Tuesday, 20 January 2009**

**Present:** Councillor Mike Devaney (Chair) and Councillors Nora Ball, Alan Cain, Dennis Edgerley, Marie Gray and Hasina Khan

**Officers in attendance:** Lesley-Ann Fenton (Assistant Chief Executive (Policy and Performance)) and Dianne Scambler (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

## **09.01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

## **09.02 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS**

No declarations of interest were declared.

## **09.03 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group – Local Strategic Partnership be confirmed as a correct record for signing by the Chair.**

## **09.04 QUESTIONS FOR ALLAN JONES - CHAIR OF CHORLEY PARTNERSHIP**

The Chair, Councillor Mike Devaney, welcomed Mr Allan Jones, Chair of the Chorley Partnership who had been invited to talk to the Group about the work of the Local Strategic Partnership.

Mr Jones explained that the Chorley Partnership had advanced considerably over the last eighteen months. The North West Regional Development Agency now recognised the excellent work of the Partnership and that Chorley had started to promote itself much more effectively.

By bringing a number of partners together along with their funding the Partnerships guiding principles had allowed them to invest in projects that had in turn brought further benefits. Mr Jones expressed the view there may be greater benefit by investing in fewer projects which covered lots of different aspects of a particular issue.

The forthcoming LAA funding would allow the opportunity to channel a larger investment into a specific project, helping to make a real impact in a particular area. This in turn would attract further investment from key partners and the Council would help by driving the project forward. Once the key partners are committed, the Partnership could turn their attention to other associated partners and groups that may wish to invest in the cause.

Mr Jones said that it was arguable as to whether the Board was too large. However, the Members of the Board do feel that they can have input into the work of the Partnership and can influence change. The Executive also seems to be getting bigger, however who would step down, and as it actually works, why change it?

Perhaps one idea would be to have a core membership and then bring in specific people for different projects by having a Co-opted Membership, for example, local media or local developers. It would depend what the project was.

To achieve inward investment in Chorley, it is necessary to get communities involved. We need to sell Chorley and ask ourselves the question, have we got the right skills that people are looking for?

Mr Jones then explained the reasons why he himself had chosen to invest in Chorley. Chorley had a history of skilled labour in electronics and assembly work, the town's location is central to their other sites of Preston, Bolton and Wigan and is situated next to the motorway making access to the airports viable. Mr Jones also spoke very highly of the Council's Economic Development Unit which had assisted them in the siting of their new premises.

The Members of the Group asked Mr Jones if he felt that the Partnership and the Council should be looking to identify and provide other sites for development in the Borough.

Mr Jones thought that businesses were more likely to rent Council owned premises as there was more trust than with private landlords, and that the Council should lead on this.

The Chair thanked Mr Jones for his time.

The Assistant Chief Executive (Policy and Performance) explained the membership of the Chorley Partnership Board. There were ten representative for each of the four sectors, private, voluntary and community faith, and the Executive Members of the Council. Although this appeared to be a large Board they did all contribute to the work of the Partnership's seven thematic groups. There was no statutory guidance but the Partnership had followed best practice.

The Members of the Group thought that reviewing the model of the Chorley Partnership would take too long and would detract from the good work that was presently being achieved. It would be better for the Partnership to concentrate on its project work, but that they would like to recommend that the Chorley Partnership invest money into fewer projects which would achieve a bigger impact. They would also like to request a project be undertaken which tackles the Alcohol Harm Related statistics.

### **Recommendations**

- 1. To suggest that the Chorley Partnership concentrate on fewer projects, covering more than one of the thematic groups to achieve a greater impact in key initiatives.**
- 2. That one of the projects be related to improving Chorley's Alcohol Harm Related statistics.**
- 3. That the Economic Development Manager be invited to the next meeting of the Group on 27 February 2009 to talk about how Chorley is advertised as an employment area.**

## 09.05 ALCOHOL HARM RELATED STATISTICS

The Assistant Chief Executive (Policy and Performance) submitted a report that summarised ongoing or planned work giving an overview of the public health impact on Chorley, as well as a broad overview on the impact alcohol has on community safety.

In terms of health impacts of alcohol related harm the statistics tell us that:

- Chorley has one of the highest rates of alcohol related harm in Lancashire and is way above the North West and England average.
- In 2006/07 there were 2410 hospital admissions caused by alcohol (including ill health and injury), compared to a Lancashire average of 1845 admissions.
- When we compare this by population size, Chorley is 3<sup>rd</sup> worst out of Lancashire, behind only Preston and Burnley. Chorley's figures are also worse than those of Blackburn and Blackpool, two significant nearby areas of deprivation.
- Compared to the North West and national averages, Chorley is significantly worse off, with rates per 100,000 of 1835 and 1384 respectively.

Further information was circulated at the meeting that gave a more detailed breakdown into the statistics. Some of the figures are in the lowest brackets in the country and getting worse.

In relation to crime:

- 40.3% of all violent crime recorded in Chorley between 1 April 2006 and 30 September 2008 involved an element of alcohol.
- 20% of all anti-social behaviour recorded over the same period involved alcohol.
- The Strategic Assessment currently in place highlights the fact that young people and alcohol are key strategic themes and that by addressing them in partnership could significantly reduce crime and disorder in the Borough.
- The main concentration of violent crime offences are in the Town Centre and the neighbourhoods to the East and West. Other clusters of offences can be seen in the Clayton Brook and Coppull areas.

The Assistant Chief Executive (Policy and Performance) circulated a report of an Overview and Scrutiny that had been done at Lancashire County Council relating to Young People and Alcohol.

Members of the Group felt that they had received enough statistical information on Alcohol Related Harm to satisfy them that this was a real issue for the Borough. However they would like to invite representatives from Coppull Parish Council to talk about the Alcohol Designation Order that was in place at Coppull and also Preston United, a group that tried to raise awareness about the dangers of alcohol to young people.

### **Recommendations:**

1. **That a representative from Coppull Parish Council be invited to a further meeting of the Group to talk about the Alcohol Designation Order in Coppull.**
2. **That Preston United be invited to a further meeting of the Group to talk about their work.**

3. That if Chorley Partnership decided to invest in a project relating to reducing Chorley's Alcohol Related Harm statistics, they be invited to come and talk to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee about its work.

#### **09.06 PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no questions from members of the public.

Chair