

Report of	Meeting	Date
Corporate Director of Governance	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	21 May 2009

ANNUAL REVIEW OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY 2008/09 AND TOPICS FOR 2009/10

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To report on the annual review of the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2008/09 and to agree review topics for 2009/10.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- That the outcomes of the review of 2008/09 be noted and Members consider whether it would be useful to use the final Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting of the year as a review session in future years;
- That the Committee agrees review topics for 2009/10 and establishes Task Groups to undertake those reviews; and
- The Committee considers whether to put forward any topics for review by Lancashire County Council as a response to their request to all District Councils

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 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	4

BACKGROUND

- The purpose of the review which was held at the end of the Council year and attended by 19 Councillors was to:
 - Look back at the work of the Committee in 2008/09 in terms of the reviews undertaken, the performance role and holding the Executive to account.
 - Look at how the new scrutiny structure is working.
 - To consider the new draft scrutiny toolkit and to look at topics for review in 2009/10
 - To help shape the 2008/09 Scrutiny Annual report

OUTCOMES FROM THE REVIEW

7. The review of the years work by the Committee and Task Groups was presented by Councillors Dennis Edgerley, Adrian Lowe and Mike Devaney. In summary, Members were pleased with scrutiny's achievements in 2008/09.

Topics considered from Executive Cabinet were:

- Climate Change Strategy
- Growth Point
- Merged Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
- Town Centre Audit and Design Strategy
- Civil Parking Enforcement – Future Contact arrangements
- Council's investment process and deposit in Landsbanki
- Neighbourhoods Directorate Restructure
- Strategic Housing issues

Three of the six Executive Members had attended meetings of the Committee.

The performance challenge had come from considering quarterly monitoring of:

- Directorate Business Plan Monitoring Statements
- Corporate Strategy projects and performance indicators
- Chorley Partnership performance including LSP projects

Financial scrutiny included considering:

- Capital and revenue budget monitoring reports
- Scrutiny of the 2009/10 draft budget; and
- Making recommendations on the draft Treasury Management Strategy

Review topics which resulted in key recommendations to the Executive:

- Chorley Community Housing
- Housing Allocations Policy
- Streetscene
- LSP (Final report to O & S Committee in June 2009)
- Joint Study of Affordable Housing with South Ribble and Preston (Final report to O & S Committee in June 2009)

SELF ASSESSMENT

8. In addition to looking back over the work of the last 12 months, Members also undertook a brief self assessment process group using voting handsets in a workshop session. The four questions posted were:

Is the current structure working?

Generally Members thought it was working well; that it was an improvement on previous structures, but there should be more consultation with service users.

Does scrutiny challenge and impact on the work of the Executive?

Generally Members thought the Executive had been challenged and had accepted recommendations but that Executive Members rather than officers should be questioned more at meetings.

Do we involve external partners enough in overview and scrutiny?

There has been some challenge to external partners, through the CCH Review and the LSP Review (particularly on the alcohol harm reduction element) but it does depend on the inquiry topic. We should consider who our partners are and what

recommendations and outcomes could result from any scrutiny review of external partners.

What are the best drivers for effective task groups?

Members agreed that a topic of interest or concern to them or of relevance to their constituents results in enthusiastic Members who maintain interest and momentum, keep focused and seek to involve everyone. This makes reviews relevant, constructive and meaningful. We need to ensure service users have a voice in reviews.

TOPIC SUGGESTIONS FOR REVIEWS IN 2009/10

8. The final part of the session was to put forward topics for reviews in 2009/10. The following topics were raised and grouped under three headings of Corporate Strategy, public concerns/service issues and external scrutiny.

Corporate Strategy

Outsourcing – the effectiveness of sub-contractors

Publicity and information for the public

Effectiveness of in-house project management

Prosperity inquiry into increasing business in the Town Centre

Vacant town centre floor space - how to improve

Town centre regeneration – shops closing down/ too many charity shops/shop RV

Affordable housing – can the Council catch up on its missed targets? Scrutiny to investigate ways

Development and implementation of neighbourhood action plans

Strategic Housing Initiatives – link to outcomes 5.2, 5.3

Public Concerns/Service Issues

Organisational effectiveness review

Premises rationalisation

Project budgeting and outcome costs

Travellers

De-regulation of Licensing

Buckshaw Village Development

Dog fouling

Alcohol and youth nuisance

Alcohol control orders

Monitor blue bins/new waste contract

Bus routes through rural areas

Physical activity of older people eg what is the uptake of free swimming

Co-ordination of play space provision

Neighbourhood Wardens – lack of

Spending of S106 monies

Training of Councillors for movement to Executive

Effectiveness and performance of communications strategy and team

External Scrutiny

Scrutinise the Highway's Partnership with LCC

Gritting

LCC pavements are a disgrace according to residents

3rd World highways – LCC Highways under performance

Highway funding allocations – Pavement, Highway, Speed Restriction, Traffic Regulation, Pedestrian crossing

Public Transport LCC service/subsidise school bus services, Network Rail Timetable, Parking

CDRP

Children and young people – partners priorities eg C&YP Grants, YOF, Children’s Trust, PCT – Health Fund – Lancs Local
 Partner / VCF organisations Development / Community Centres etc
 LSP including Partner Group funding priorities – CBC, PCT, LCC

In addition, Lancashire County Council’s Scrutiny Section has asked whether District Council’s would like to put forward topics for them to review in 2009/10. They have given a deadline of 30 May 2009. Some suggestions could be

- o Locality Planning
- o Health scrutiny of the PCT performance and outcomes
- o Enforcement issues in two tier Councils
- o Lancashire County Development Ltd (LCDL) support for economic development across Lancashire

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

9. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Corporate Directors’ comments are included:

Finance		Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal		No significant implications in this area	✓

ANDREW DOCHERTY
 CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE

There are no background papers to this report.

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