



Meeting Agenda

**Community Focus Scrutiny Committee,
Lowther Pavilion, Lytham
Thursday 15 April 2010, 6:15pm**

COMMUNITY FOCUS COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

CHAIRMAN

Keith Hyde

VICE-CHAIRMAN

Thomas Threlfall

Councillors

Christine Akeroyd

Elizabeth Clarkson

Barbara Douglas

Dawn Prestwich

John Prestwich

Paul Rigby

John Singleton

Janine Owen

Kathleen Harper

Tony Ford

Maxine Chew

Linda Nulty

Ken Hopwood

Contact: Lyndsey Lacey, St. Annes (01253) 658504
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Our Vision

To establish Fylde Borough Council as a high performing local authority

Our Corporate Objectives

To improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of our communities through:

- The promotion and enhancement of the natural built environment
- Increasing the availability and access to good quality housing for all
- Maintaining healthy and safe communities to reduce the fear of crime
- Supporting and sustaining a strong and diverse Fylde coast economy to further enhance employment prospects

We will achieve this by:

Focusing on customer requirements
Clear community and organisational leadership
Delivering high quality, cost-effective services
Partnership working



A G E N D A

PUBLIC PLATFORM

*To hear representations from members of the public in accordance with
Committee procedure rules*

ITEM	PAGE
1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: <i>If a member requires advice on Declarations of Interest he/she is advised to contact the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting. (For the assistance of Members an extract from the Councils Code of Conduct is attached).</i>	4
2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES: <i>To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the Community Focus Scrutiny Committee held on 4 March 2010. As attached at the end of the agenda.</i>	4
3. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS: Details of any substitute members notified in accordance with council procedure rule 26.3	4
4. SHARED SERVICE ARRANGEMENTS THE HUMAN RESOURCE & PAYROLL SERVICES	7-11
5. LANCASHIRE LINK	12-14
6. LSP ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT GROUP UPDATE	15-17
7. PERFORMANCE EXCEPTION REPORT	18-20

Personal interests

8.—(1) You have a personal interest in any business of your authority where either—

(a) it relates to or is likely to affect—

- (i) any body of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management and to which you are appointed or nominated by your authority;
- (ii) any body—
 - (aa) exercising functions of a public nature;
 - (bb) directed to charitable purposes; or
 - (cc) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union),

of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management;

- (i) any employment or business carried on by you;
 - (ii) any person or body who employs or has appointed you;
 - (iii) any person or body, other than a relevant authority, who has made a payment to you in respect of your election or any expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties;
 - (iv) any person or body who has a place of business or land in your authority's area, and in whom you have a beneficial interest in a class of securities of that person or body that exceeds the nominal value of £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital (whichever is the lower);
 - (v) any contract for goods, services or works made between your authority and you or a firm in which you are a partner, a company of which you are a remunerated director, or a person or body of the description specified in paragraph (vi);
 - (vi) the interests of any person from whom you have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £25;
 - (vii) any land in your authority's area in which you have a beneficial interest;
 - (viii) any land where the landlord is your authority and you are, or a firm in which you are a partner, a company of which you are a remunerated director, or a person or body of the description specified in paragraph (vi) is, the tenant;
 - (xi) any land in the authority's area for which you have a licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy for 28 days or longer; or
- (b) a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting your well-being or financial position or the well-being or financial position of a relevant person to a greater extent than the majority of other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the ward, as the case may be, affected by the decision;

(2) In sub-paragraph (1)(b), a relevant person is—

- (a) a member of your family or any person with whom you have a close association; or
- (b) any person or body who employs or has appointed such persons, any firm in which they are a partner, or any company of which they are directors;
- (c) any person or body in whom such persons have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000; or
- (d) any body of a type described in sub-paragraph (1)(a)(i) or (ii).

Disclosure of personal interests

- 9.—(1)** Subject to sub-paragraphs (2) to (7), where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority and you attend a meeting of your authority at which the business is considered, you must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest at the commencement of that consideration, or when the interest becomes apparent.
- (2) Where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority which relates to or is likely to affect a person described in paragraph 8(1)(a)(i) or 8(1)(a)(ii)(aa), you need only disclose to the meeting the existence and nature of that interest when you address the meeting on that business.
- (3) Where you have a personal interest in any business of the authority of the type mentioned in paragraph 8(1)(a)(viii), you need not disclose the nature or existence of that interest to the meeting if the interest was registered more than three years before the date of the meeting.
- (4) Sub-paragraph (1) only applies where you are aware or ought reasonably to be aware of the existence of the personal interest.

- (5) Where you have a personal interest but, by virtue of paragraph 14, sensitive information relating to it is not registered in your authority's register of members' interests, you must indicate to the meeting that you have a personal interest, but need not disclose the sensitive information to the meeting.
- (6) Subject to paragraph 12(1)(b), where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority and you have made an executive decision in relation to that business, you must ensure that any written statement of that decision records the existence and nature of that interest.
- (7) In this paragraph, "executive decision" is to be construed in accordance with any regulations made by the Secretary of State under section 22 of the Local Government Act 2000(d).

Prejudicial interest generally

- 10.—**(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority you also have a prejudicial interest in that business where the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.
- (2) You do not have a prejudicial interest in any business of the authority where that business—
- (a) does not affect your financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in paragraph 8;
 - (b) does not relate to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to you or any person or body described in paragraph 8; or
 - (c) relates to the functions of your authority in respect of—
 - (i) housing, where you are a tenant of your authority provided that those functions do not relate particularly to your tenancy or lease;
 - (ii) school meals or school transport and travelling expenses, where you are a parent or guardian of a child in full time education, or are a parent governor of a school, unless it relates particularly to the school which the child attends;
 - (iii) statutory sick pay under Part XI of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992, where you are in receipt of, or are entitled to the receipt of, such pay;
 - (iv) an allowance, payment or indemnity given to members;
 - (v) any ceremonial honour given to members; and
 - (vi) setting council tax or a precept under the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

Prejudicial interests arising in relation to overview and scrutiny committees

- 11.—** You also have a prejudicial interest in any business before an overview and scrutiny committee of your authority (or of a sub-committee of such a committee) where—
- (a) that business relates to a decision made (whether implemented or not) or action taken by your authority's executive or another of your authority's committees, sub-committees, joint committees or joint sub-committees; and
 - (b) at the time the decision was made or action was taken, you were a member of the executive, committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee mentioned in paragraph (a) and you were present when that decision was made or action was taken.

Effect of prejudicial interests on participation

- 12.—**(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), where you have a prejudicial interest in any business of your authority—
- (a) you must withdraw from the room or chamber where a meeting considering the business is being held—
 - (i) in a case where sub-paragraph (2) applies, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence;
 - (ii) in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at that meeting;
 unless you have obtained a dispensation from your authority's standards committee;
 - (b) you must not exercise executive functions in relation to that business; and
 - (c) you must not seek improperly to influence a decision about that business.
- (2) Where you have a prejudicial interest in any business of your authority, you may attend a meeting (including a meeting of the overview and scrutiny committee of your authority or of a sub-committee of such a committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise.

REPORT



REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
CUSTOMER & OPERATIONAL SERVICES	COMMUNITY FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	APRIL 15 TH 2010	4

SHARED SERVICE ARRANGEMENTS THE HUMAN RESOURCE & PAYROLL SERVICES

Public item

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

Summary

The report provides a scheduled evaluation progress update on the arrangements and performance of the shared services in human resources and payroll with Blackpool Council.

Recommendations

1. That the committee considers the shared service evaluation presented in this report and supports the continued delivery of the human resource and payroll service under a shared service arrangement.
2. That the Link Officer for Fylde is required to ensure that the services continue to deliver value for money.

Portfolio Holder

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Partnerships and Community Engagement is Councillor Karen Buckley.

Report

1. It is a requirement of the partnership protocols in place at Fylde to provide an updated progress report and evaluation of any shared service arrangements. This report provides a progress update on the payroll and human resource services. Appendix 1 provides progress update details of the shared service arrangements in

the template format agreed by the former Performance Improvement Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

2. The main highlights from the evaluation toolkit presented in Appendix 1 include:

- The services are delivered at less cost than the in house service provision
- The added value in technology, skills and knowledge are elements that Fylde would never have been able to fund
- The performance of the services is very good with targets being met and high levels of customer satisfaction
- Access to reports and management information has led to improved decision making and policy development
- Value for money from the services has improved year on year with better services delivered at less cost
- Savings have been achieved from economies of scale through the procurement of training and other services i.e. recruitment advertising
- The regional profile of the organisation has been enhanced through successful shared working with a unitary authority that was ground breaking
- Improved working relationships with officers at Blackpool has led to quid pro quo working arrangements that benefit both authorities
- Additional services provided for the organisation and individual employees i.e. taxation advice

3. The payroll service has been delivered by Blackpool for just over six years and has proved to be a success from day one. The cost of the service is still over £66,000 per annum less than it was in 2003/04 and the team responsible for the service are knowledgeable, skilled and very customer focused.

4. The Human Resource service has been delivered by Blackpool since April 2008 and each year the cost of the service has been reduced. Policy gaps have been identified and new policy development to improve the organisational management of the Council. The Human Resources Team has an extensive range of specialists that Fylde can access as part of the arrangement saving thousands of pounds on consultancy advice and support.

5. A recent development at Blackpool has been to bring the payroll and human resource services under the same direct line management which will result in greater efficiencies in future through synergy between the staff and the computerised systems.

6. Working relationships between the staff who deliver the human resource and payroll service and employees at Fylde are very good. The seamless working together has meant that neither Authority has had any reason to quote the service

level agreement and to date there have been no disputes over the service provision. It is fully expected that this relationship will continue to get stronger and the working together will further improve. However, the Link Officer has a responsibility to ensure that Fylde is securing the best value for money and as such will continually challenge the existing service providers and compare them with alternative market providers and service delivery models.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.
Legal	There are no direct legal implications arising from the report.
Community Safety	There are no direct community safety implications.
Human Rights and Equalities	There are no direct human rights and equalities implications arising from the report.
Sustainability	There are no direct sustainability implications arising from this report.
Health & Safety and Risk Management	There are no direct health and safety or risk management implications arising from the report.

Report Author	Tel	Date	Doc ID
ALLAN OLDFIELD	(01253) 658576	MARCH 22 ND 2010	

List of Background Papers		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection

List of appendices

Appendix 1: Shared Service Evaluation Toolkit – Human Resources & Payroll

Appendix 1: Shared Service Evaluation Toolkit

SCRUTINY EVALUATION TOOL – SHARED SERVICES (To be completed by the Lead Officer)	
How Does the Shared Service Work?	
What service(s) are involved?	Human Resources & Payroll
Who are the partner members?	Blackpool Borough Council
Who employs the staff?	Blackpool Borough Council
Where are the staff based?	Westgate House Blackpool
How long has the arrangement been in existence?	Payroll – Six years Human Resources – Three years
Is there a formal Administrative or Service Level Agreement in place?	Yes
If there is an officers working group, how often does it meet?	Yes – Bi-monthly
If there is a Management Board, how often does it meet?	Yes – Approximately every 8 weeks
Who represents the Council (officer and/or Member) and what is their role?	Allan Oldfield – Customer & Operational Services Director is the Link Officer.
What does the shared service achieve?	
What performance indicators are used?	Number of complaints made against service provision Response time to enquiries Accuracy of service data & payments Percentage of calculation errors Sickness absence Recruitment process deadlines Performance measures are set for individual projects or improvement work included in the Service Development Plan agreed each year i.e. support and advice on restructure work and workforce planning. Feedback from managers and staff that work regularly with the human resources and payroll team is use to monitor performance and working relationships.
What targets are set?	Targets set include: Zero complaints against the service provision Percentage of development plan delivered 100% accuracy of salary payments & expenses Set deadlines for various stages of the recruitment process i.e. X number of working days
What is the service's performance track record? How does the service perform against its targets?	There have been no complaints about the service provision over the last 12 months. The agreed Development Plan has been delivered during the year. There have been no errors in the payment of salaries that are a result of the actions by the service provider. The policy review programme for the year has been delivered by the HR Team. Service costs have been reduced by 11% over the last 2 years. Recruitment deadlines have been met on almost every occasion with exceptions being reviewed and remedial action taken. Recommended improvement actions by internal audit have all been delivered. Additional support and resources have been provided to training and development and equality work at no extra cost to the authority. Service provision changes are implemented when requested i.e. changes to HR Vision, sickness reporting and staff support for Fylde work.

Has a risk register been developed for the service which includes both internal and external risks and is this register shared between the partners?	Risk assessments are incorporated as part of the Service level Agreement and carried out as part of the annual Service Development Plan work. In 2009 the new People Strategy included a dedicated risk assessment.
How is performance reported to the partner organisations or other stakeholders?	Regular reporting at Management Team and partner meetings with the Link Officer and the Head of the Human Resource Service at Blackpool. Grapevine and the Team Brief system are used to report updates and progress to all staff. The largest section of the intranet is dedicated to the policy, procedures and performance data for the human resource service.
What are the costs and benefits of the shared service arrangements?	
What is the financial cost to the Council?	The payroll service was delivered in 2009/10 for over £66,000 less than the cost of the service in 2003/04. The benefits of electronic payslips and online payment claims have been realised along with a dedicated computerised management system. The Human Resource service cost in 2009/10 was 8% less than the previous year and 9% less than the in house service provision. A further 3% reduction will be realised in 2010/11. The Council has benefitted from access to training at reduced cost, a dedicated HR management system that is linked to the payroll system and specialists in a large number of HR fields i.e. policy, equality, dignity at work, absence management, employment law etc. The cost of the online advertising of vacant posts has been reduced by procuring the service in partnership with Blackpool.
What is the value of any contribution in kind by the Council?	None
What is the value of any financial contribution made by other partners?	None
What is the value of any in-kind contribution made by other partners?	Blackpool often provide additional advice, services and support outside of the service level agreement on an ad hoc basis because of the strong working relationship that has been developed with the team i.e. employment tribunal advice and support and leadership coaching and support. Access to training that is delivered for Blackpool staff has been made free of charge on occasions to Fylde staff.
If the shared service arrangement enables the council to provide the same service at less cost, how much saving does the Council make?	The Council saves approximately £80,000 across HR and payroll compared to the previous in house service delivery costs. The services are also more expansive and advanced than the in house services and offer a wider range of skilled and knowledgeable employees achievable through economies of scale.
If the shared service arrangement enables the Council to provide an improved service at the same cost, what is the service improvement?	Additional training, access to skilled specialists, new technology, additional reporting, procurement economies, policy development, bespoke support and advice, taxation service and improved regional profile.
If the shared service arrangement enables the council to provide an improved service at additional cost, what is the service improvement and what is the additional cost?	The services are not delivered at an additional cost.

REPORT



REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
GOVERNANCE & PARTNERSHIPS	COMMUNITY FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	15 APRIL 2010	5

LANCASHIRE LINK

Public Item

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

Summary

Angela Norris, Community Engagement Officer at Lancashire LINK Team, (North Zone) will be in attendance at the meeting to give a presentation on the work of Lancashire LINK.

The report provides a brief overview of the current work.

Recommendation

That the committee accept the report and proffer support for the activities.

Portfolio Holder

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Social Wellbeing - Councillor Cheryl Little.

Report

1. What is a LINK or Local Involvement Network?

Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) aim to give local people a stronger voice in how their health and social care services are delivered.

It is run by local individuals and groups and independently supported – the role of LINKs is to find out what people want, monitor local services and to use their powers to hold the people who run them to account.

Each Council (that provides social services) has been given funding and is under a legal duty to make contractual arrangements that enable LINK activities to take place.

2. How will it work in Lancashire?

There will be a separate LINK for each Council in Lancashire that provides social services:

A LINK for the Blackburn with Darwen Council, a LINK for the Blackpool Council and a LINK for Lancashire County Council. Each LINK will be slightly different because it will be set up in a way that best suits the local community.

3. What is the Lancashire LINK?

The Lancashire LINK will be a network of local people, organisations and groups that want to improve the health and social care services in the area covered by Lancashire County Council.

This includes the whole of the county of Lancashire except Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool, which will have separate LINKs for their residents.

Because the Lancashire LINK will cover a large geographical area, there will be local groupings covering the following areas:

- North Lancashire
- Fylde, Lancaster, Morecambe Bay and Wyre
- Central Lancashire
- Chorley, Preston, South Ribble and West Lancashire
- East Lancashire
- Burnley, Hyndburn, Pendle, Ribble Valley and Rossendale

The Lancashire LINK will give everyone in the community – from individuals to voluntary groups – the opportunity to express their views and relate their experience of local health and social care services. It will provide a new way to make sure that the people responsible for purchasing, providing and managing local health and social care services know what is working well, what isn't and what would make services better.

The Lancashire LINK won't take over from the groups already working in and for the community, but will be a way of bringing people and groups together. The Lancashire LINK will be shaped around the needs and interests of the local community.

4. What will the Lancashire LINK do?

LINKs have been given certain powers that should make it easier for everyone's voice to be heard and ensure that their views about local services are listened to and answered.

The Lancashire LiNk will be involved with a wide range of issues and will carry out a variety of tasks and activities.

Its main job will be to:

- Give everyone the chance to say what they think about their local health and social care services
- Establish what is working well and what is not working well.
- Give people the opportunity to check how health and social care services are planned and run.
- Provide feedback on what people have said about services so that things can change for the better.

5. Further Information

An opportunity will be available at the conclusion of the presentation to ask the Community Engagement Officer for Lancashire LiNk Team any questions.

Risk Assessment

This item is for information only and makes no recommendations. Therefore there are no risks to address.

Report Author	Tel	Date	Doc ID
Lyndsey Lacey	(01253) 658504	6 April 2010	

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	There are no direct financial implications arising from the report
Legal	There are no direct legal implications arising from the report
Community Safety	There are no direct community safety implications arising from the report
Human Rights and Equalities	There are no direct human rights and equalities implications arising from the report
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	There are no direct sustainability and environmental implications arising from the report
Health & Safety and Risk Management	There are no direct health and safety or risk management implications arising from the report

REPORT



REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
GOVERNANCE AND PARTNERSHIPS	COMMUNITY FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	15 TH APRIL 2010	6

LSP ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT GROUP UPDATE

Summary

The LSP Environmental Enhancement Theme Group has been requested to provide a report covering the last twelve months, giving examples of actions and delivery achieved or facilitated, by the group during that period.

Recommendations

1. To accept the attached report and verbal update.
2. To proffer support for the activities of the LSP Environmental Enhancement Theme Group in its on-going endeavours.

Cabinet Portfolio

The item falls within the following Cabinet portfolio:

Portfolio Title: Environmental Wellbeing

Councillor Name Cllr David Eaves

Report

LSP Environmental Enhancement Theme Group Report

1. The groups has met on a regular basis over the twelve months and has benefited from a recent restructure with Andrew Loynd now Chair of the group. The group is now more action and delivery led with performance management processes in-place.
2. Over the last twelve months the group has been responsible for organising and running 'Greening Your Victorian Home' event at Lytham Hall . This event was a success with over 80 attendees, which included many local residents. Representatives from Regional Organisation and public sector bodies also attended. The group has also facilitated the FLoWE project by providing the funding for the aerial thermal imaging survey. The results of which are due later this year. The individual domestic surveys were facilitated by the loan of the camera from the Lancashire Partnership. This camera has subsequently been used to carry out surveys of local hotels and guest houses, through which additional advice has been provided. In partnership with Fylde Borough Council's Housing Team work is on-going to engage landlords of HMOs to install insulation in hard to treat properties.
3. Full support, from the group, is provided to the Sand Dunes Officer employed by the Wild Life Trust but hosted by Fylde Borough Council, to develop and deliver a sand dunes management action plan. This has included promoting the natural characteristics of the sand dunes, carryout restoration works and building community capacity by organising community clean-ups and running a series of awareness raising events.
4. Work on the development and enhancement of community growing, via allotments and public open space provision, is now well underway. The group has financially supported 9 schools with a total of 12 schools now having created allotment areas. Support has been given to community growing at St Cuthbert's Church Lytham, The Ormerod Trust St Annes, St Annes URC and The Willows Church Kirkham. Wrea Green has been given a small grant to assist their allotment development. We are currently working to see how we can facilitate the Warton allotment development. The growing area at the back of Ashton Gardens now has a fully operational poly tunnel and raised beds for disability access. This area of community growing will help support the development of the Fylde Food Cooperative.
5. As well as the actual delivery of projects the group facilitates community endeavours by supporting and promoting funding bids to the LSP Executive. One such bid accepted for funding was £12,000 to the 'Make Waddy Wonderful' (Waddington Road playing field re-development).

Report Author	Tel	Date	Doc ID
Andrew Loynd and Christine Miller	(01253) 658441 (01253) 658527	26 th March 2010	

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	None
Legal	None
Community Safety	None
Human Rights and Equalities	None
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	Promotes
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None

REPORT



REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
GOVERNANCE & PARTNERSHIPS	COMMUNITY FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	15 APRIL 2010	7

PERFORMANCE EXCEPTION REPORT

Public Item

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

Summary

The report provides an update on activity around areas of under performance as identified and discussed at the 4th March 2010 of the People and Communities. No data has been included in the body of the report or as an appendix as this will be provided when the full data set is available and provided to the Committee at the 27th May 2010 meeting.

Recommendation

That the committee scrutinise the activity updates and make recommendations for any further updates required.

Portfolio Holder

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Partnerships and Community Engagement is Councillor Karen Buckley.

Report

Number of affordable homes delivered (gross) (NI155) as at 30th March are 40 completed during 09/10.

We were on track to meet the target of 55 however the following issues have arisen. Units expected on Heyhouses have been seriously delayed due to Lancashire County Council not issuing a Section 278 notice to enable the highways work to be completed.

Just 10 units on the development were completed by 22nd March 2010. The remaining units will now be counted in 2010/11. Units expected at Mythop Rd, Weeton have been delayed due to the weather and will now be delayed further due to issues with the services connections.

Regarding Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'minor' applications (NI157b) – Paul Rossington (newly appointed Development Officer within Planning Services) comments "There is no doubt that the 'interim Housing Policy' has had and will continue to have an impact upon minor planning application statistics as far as speed of decision making is concerned.

The requirement to negotiate and finalise Section 106 obligations has affected both the Borough Council's out-turns within the 8 week target time, and the applicants ability to play a positive role in this same, time and information based process. The impact of this necessary planning and legal work is likely to continue to depress the speed of decision making."

The other factor in the determination of "minor" applications is that the Council devotes as much time as possible to the issue of "adding value" to what are, more often than not, sensitive and contentious local proposals. The use of the term "minor" is often misunderstood in this context as they are not householder, and rarely insignificant, applications."

The Committee was provided with a full report regarding Number of households living in temporary accommodation (NI156) at the last meeting and progress will be provided upon completion of the devised action plan or other relevant points.

Improved street and environmental cleanliness: levels of detritus (NI195b). The evaluation of tenders for new vehicles is currently being undertaken and orders should be placed in the next few weeks. Delivery of the new mechanical sweepers is likely to be July/ August 2010 and this will obviously help to significantly improve detritus levels.

The percentage of Council employees trained in customer care (FYS17) is due to be deleted and no longer monitored as due to cut backs on training budgets and support resources the ability to deliver the courses has been removed. All training requirements will be identified as part of the Personal Development Appraisals carried out annually

The percentage of overdue Freedom of Information requests (FYS13) has increased to 11.43% (10% when last reported) This though comprises of only 4 requests that slipped over the 20 day period and one of those was due to slippage on the part of Gary Pangburn (Legal Officer) compounded by him taking a week's leave. Should that be removed from the equation the figure is down to 8.57% and thus moving in the right direction.

Risk Assessment

This item is for information only and makes no recommendations. Therefore there are no risks to address

Report Author	Tel	Date	Doc ID
Darius Ward	(01253) 658624	19 th February 2010	

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	There are no direct financial implications arising from the report
Legal	There are no direct legal implications arising from the report
Community Safety	There are no direct community safety implications arising from the report
Human Rights and Equalities	There are no direct human rights and equalities implications arising from the report
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	There are no direct sustainability and environmental implications arising from the report
Health & Safety and Risk Management	There are no direct health and safety or risk management implications arising from the report

Community Focus Scrutiny Committee



Date	4 March 2010
Venue	Town Hall, St Annes
Committee members	Councillor Keith Hyde (Chairman) Councillor Thomas Threlfall (Vice-Chairman) Maxine Chew, Leonard Davies, Barbara Douglas, Tony Ford, Kathleen Harper, Ken Hopwood, Linda Nulty, Dawn Prestwich
Other Councillors	Karen Buckley
Officers	Allan Oldfield, Clare Platt, Tracy Scholes, Paul Walker, David Gillett, Christine Miller, Lyndsey Lacey, Darius Ward
Members of the Public	none

1. Declarations of interest

Members were reminded that any personal/prejudicial interests should be declared as required by the Council's Code of Conduct adopted in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000.

2. Confirmation of minutes

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Community Focus Scrutiny Committee held on 7 January 2010 as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

3. Substitute members

The following substitution was reported under Council procedure rule 22.3:

Councillor Leonard Davies for Councillor John Singleton

4. Finance Service Level Agreement- Value for Money Overview

Tracy Scholes (Director of Governance and Partnerships) presented a report on a Value for Money review of the financial management contract that the Council has with Preston City Council.

Circulated with the agenda was a summary document which provided an overview of the current contract terms with Preston City Council, comparison costs of the contract with current market place rates/ direct employment of personnel, qualitative issues together with an examination of the outputs delivered by the contract since its commencement in 2008.

Mrs Scholes (who acts as the client officer) indicated that, in her opinion, the shared service arrangement with Preston City Council is providing good value for money based on the market rate comparisons, the comparative costs of employing our own staff and the outputs delivered through the contract

Mrs Scholes suggested that the contract to date had resulted in a higher level of compliance for the council and stronger financial control, more robust financial management and overall improved performance of the finance function.

Councillor Linda Nulty enquired about staffing levels within the finance team based at the Town Hall and the number of qualified staff within the section. She also enquired about the implementation of various processes and procedures that had been carried out by the Preston team and whether the preparation of such documentation was mandatory or deemed good practice. Mrs Scholes addressed these points.

After the debate the committee RESOLVED to recommend to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Efficiency and Director of Governance and Partnerships that the following measures be implemented to ensure that the contract continues to deliver value for money:

- (i) A quarterly statement being submitted by the Deputy Section 151 Officer (Assistant Director - Preston CC) confirming that the terms of the contract had been met.
- (ii) Comparison with market rates being carried out annually.
- (iii) Benchmarking against other Lancashire Districts being carried out annually.
- (iv) Performance being measured against external assessment including UoR and external audit reports.
- (v) Performance being measured regularly against compliance criteria.
- (vi) Feedback from the external auditors being actively sought.
- (vii) Feedback from leading Members being actively sought.

5. General Fund Budget monitoring Report 2009/10 Position as at Quarter ended 31 December 09

Tracy Scholes (Director of Governance and Partnerships) together with other relevant Directors provided members of the committee with an overview of the General Fund 'hot spots' under and over spending for the quarter ended 31 December 2009.

The report provided details of the actions being taken to address the hot spots and an update in respect of the savings targets agreed by members for 2009-10 as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Mrs Scholes explained that Appendix A of the report detailed the significant variances over £10k highlighted by budget monitoring undertaken during the year to 31 December 2009.

Mrs Scholes further reported that Appendix B of the report detailed the in-year budget savings forecast position for the year against the targeted savings set by Council at its Budget meeting on 3rd March 2009 (as amended by the subsequent MTFS updates)

The report highlighted particular budget areas of concern that impinged on the Council's general income and areas that required further attention relating to costs for the 3rd quarter.

Members of the committee sought clarification on various matters including: corporate restructure proposals with particular reference to Building Control, Development Control and Operational Services. Members also enquired about capitalisation, concessionary fares, disabled facilities grant fees, legal services fees, Wyre and Fylde waste schemes, agency staff arrangements and sickness and absences monitoring. The relevant Directors addressed each matter at the meeting.

After detailed consideration of this matter and following a recorded vote as set out below, the committee RESOLVED to note the current position and the comments outlined in the report.

Approval of the recommendation (10) Councillors Keith Hyde, Thomas Threlfall, Maxine Chew, Leonard Davies, Barbara Douglas, Tony Ford, Kathleen Harper, Ken Hopwood, Linda Nulty, Dawn Prestwich

Refusal of the recommendation (0)

Abstentions (0)

6. Performance Exception Report

Darius Ward (Corporate Performance Officer) Tracy Scholes (Director of Governance and Partnerships) and Councillor Karen Buckley (Portfolio Holder for Partnerships and Community Engagement) presented a report detailing

the performance exceptions for data reported up to December 2009. The report highlighted both good and poor performance to date measured against the targets set for the current financial year.

By way of introduction, Mr Ward made reference to the current performance management system, Escendancy. In doing so, Mr. Ward outlined that Performance Plus, an alternative performance management system was currently being considered.

In terms of under performance, the report highlighted the following areas: Freedom of Information requests, customer care training, net additional homes provided, number of households living in temporary accommodation, living in temporary accommodation, processing of 'minor' planning applications and street and environmental cleanliness (detritus and mechanical sweeping) .

The areas highlighted in the report for over performance related to: web site hits, serious violent crime processing of planning 'major' planning applications, time taken to process housing benefits and street and environmental cleanliness(levels of litter and fly posting)

Councillor Buckley made reference to the new format of the performance data table which was circulated with the agenda. She added that it gave a clear indication as to whether the matter was on target and the direction of travel.

Councillor Ford enquired about the nature of Freedom of Information requests and whether most of these requests received were deemed frivolous. Other questions from members related to fly posting, management of the local economy, processing of planning applications and customer care. Each issue raised was addressed by the relevant Director.

Following discussion it was RESOLVED to provide an updated report to the next meeting of the committee on those areas identified within the performance data table which outlined under performance with a flag up made about direction of travel of the indicator

7. Homeless Households in Temporary Accommodation- Update on Performance against Target

David Gillett (Housing Manager) presented an updated report on the number of households in temporary accommodation arising from homelessness and progress made towards achieving the nationally set target of no more than 6 households in temporary accommodation.

In brief, the report made reference to the homelessness legislation and the national target. In addition, it outlined the local situation including the number of temporary units of accommodation available to the council, details of households in temporary accommodation for the current year and the previous two years, and the number of homelessness presentations and housing advice to the Council.

Mr Gillett stated that currently the Council had 5 families in temporary accommodation and although the national target was extremely challenging, it was hoped that this would be achieved by a variety of measures including:

- Provision of advice services directly through the Councils Housing advice officer or in partnership with external organisations i.e. Face 2 Face YMCA
- Provision of a rent bond scheme financially supported through the Council to Face 2 Face YMCA
- A reduction in the number of Homelessness presentations through Homelessness prevention work (mediation services etc)
- Provision of an Invest to save budget to assist households to access the private sector.
- The elimination of the use of temporary accommodation through the provision of a Supported Housing scheme which would deliver a comprehensive support service to homeless households.
- Working with our partner RSL's to ensure homelessness is addressed within their priorities and own homelessness strategies.

Councillor Nulty enquired about the supported housing scheme. Councillor Ford asked about the government grants made available to the Council aimed at homelessness prevention. Mr Gillett addressed these points.

Following consideration of this matter the committee RESOLVED to note the contents of the report and the action being taken to address performance in relation to the temporary accommodation target.

8. LSP Economic Development Theme Group

Christine Miller (Head of Partnerships) provided an overview of the current work of the LSP Economic Development Theme Group. Attached to the report was a copy of the Economic Development Theme Group Action Plan.

Councillor Ford asked about available resources to support the 2020 programme and suggested that the recently appointed Community Development Officer would be able to offer any necessary support.

IT WAS RESOLVED to note the report and proffer support for the activities outlined in the Action Plan.

9. Scrutiny Review of Enforcement Capacity and Resources

Paul Walker (Director of Strategic Development) and Clare Platt (Director of Community Services) presented a progress report on the scrutiny review of enforcement capacity and resources which had been agreed by Cabinet in November 2007.

The report made reference to previous scrutiny reports on the matter. In addition, it included details of progress made in relation to development control, licensing, litter/waste and dog fouling enforcement.

Circulated at the meeting was a copy of the geographic split of the Development Management Area Teams. Minor amendments to the blue and green teams split of duties were reported at the meeting.

Mr Walker indicated that two further officers within Operational Services would be trained and authorised to deal with waste related enforcement issues.

The Committee RESOLVED to note the report.

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