

DECLARATION OF INTEREST - CHECKLIST FOR ASSISTANCE OF MEMBERS – 2007 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

Name: Councillor

Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Executive O&S Committee

Date:03/12/09

Item No:                   Item Title:

Nature of Interest:

**A Member with a personal interest in any business of the Council must disclose the existence and nature of that interest at commencement or when interest apparent except:**

- Where it relates to or is likely to affect a person described in 8(1)(a)(i) or 8(1)(a)(ii)(aa), you need only disclose the existence and nature when you address the meeting on that business.
- Where it is a personal interest of the type mentioned in 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.
- Where sensitive information relating to it is not registered in the register, you must indicate that you have a personal interest, but need not disclose the sensitive information.

A Member with a prejudicial interest must withdraw, **either** immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence where 4 or 6 below applies **or** when business is considered and must not exercise executive functions in relation to that business and must not seek to improperly influence a decision.

Please tick relevant boxes

Notes

	<b>Overview and Scrutiny only</b>		Notes
1.	I have a personal interest* but it is not prejudicial.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>You may speak and vote</i>
2.	I have a personal interest* but do <u>not</u> have a prejudicial interest in the business as it relates to the functions of my Council in respect of:		
(i)	Housing where I am a tenant of the Council, and those functions do not relate particularly to my tenancy or lease.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>You may speak and vote</i>
(ii)	school meals, or school transport and travelling expenses where I am a parent or guardian of a child in full time education, or are a parent governor of a school, and it does not relate particularly to the school which the child attends.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>You may speak and vote</i>
(iii)	Statutory sick pay where I am in receipt or entitled to receipt of such pay.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>You may speak and vote</i>
(iv)	An allowance, payment or indemnity given to Members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>You may speak and vote</i>
(v)	Any ceremonial honour given to Members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>You may speak and vote</i>
(vi)	Setting Council tax or a precept under the LGFA 1992	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>You may speak and vote</i>
3.	I have a personal interest* and it is prejudicial <b>because</b> it affects my financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in 8 overleaf <b>and</b> 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 my judgement of the public interest  <b>or</b> it relates to the determining of any approval consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to me or any person or body described in 8 overleaf <b>and</b> 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 my judgement of the public interest	<input type="checkbox"/>  <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>You cannot speak or vote and must withdraw unless you have also ticked 4 or 7 below</i>  <i>You cannot speak or vote and must withdraw unless you have also ticked 4 or 7 below</i>
4.	I have a personal and prejudicial interest in the business but I can attend to make representations, answer questions or give evidence as the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>You may speak but must leave the room once you have finished and cannot vote</i>
5.	I must regard myself as having a personal and prejudicial interest in the business because it relates to a decision made (whether implemented or not) or action taken by the Cabinet or another of the Council's committees or sub-committees and, at the time the decision was made or action was taken, I was a member of the Cabinet, committee or sub-committee and I was present when that decision was made or action was taken	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>You cannot speak or vote and must withdraw unless you are a Cabinet member attending under section 21(13) of the LGA 2000 when you may speak to answer questions</i>

6.	I must regard myself as having a personal and prejudicial interest in the business because it relates to a decision made (whether implemented or not) or action taken by the Cabinet or another of the Council's committees or sub-committees and, at the time the decision was made or action was taken, I was a member of the Cabinet, committee or sub-committee and I was present when that decision was made or action was taken, <b>however</b> I am attending the meeting for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business as the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for this purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>You may make representations, answer questions or give evidence but must leave the room once you have finished and cannot vote</i>
7.	A Standards Committee dispensation applies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>See the terms of the dispensation</i>

\* **“Personal Interest”** in the business of the Council means either it relates to or is likely to affect:

- 8(1)(a)(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;
- (iii) any employment or business carried on by you;
- (iv) any person or body who employs or has appointed you;
- (v) 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;
- (vi) 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);
- (vii) 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);
- (viii) the interests of any person from whom you have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £25;
- (ix) any land in your authority's area in which you have a beneficial interest;
- (x) 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**

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.

**“a relevant person”** means

- (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 8(1)(a)(i) or (ii).

**“body exercising functions of a public nature”** means

Regional and local development agencies, other government agencies, other Councils, public health bodies, council-owned companies exercising public functions, arms length management organisations carrying out housing functions on behalf of your authority, school governing bodies.

A Member with a personal interest who has made an executive decision in relation to that matter must ensure any written statement of that decision records the existence and nature of that interest.

NB Section 21(13)(b) of the LGA 2000 overrides any Code provisions to oblige an executive member to attend an overview and scrutiny meeting to answer questions.

**EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**AGENDA ITEM: 6**  
**HELD: 1 OCTOBER 2009**

Start: 7.30pm

Finish:9.50pm

**PRESENT:**

Councillor Bailey (Chairman)  
Hammond (Vice Chairman)

Councillors Baldock Grice  
Mrs. Blake Griffiths  
Carson McKay  
Cropper O'Toole  
Duffy R.A. Pendleton  
Mrs. Evans Pope  
Gartside J. Roberts  
W.G. Roberts

In Attendance Grant Leader  
Councillor:

Officers Executive Director Housing and Property Maintenance Services (Mr B Livermore)  
Head of Leisure & Cultural Services (Mr J Nelson)  
Group Accountant (Mr M Kostrzewski)  
Environmental Protection Manager (Mr A Hill)  
Principal Solicitor (Mr T Broderick)  
Senior Member Services Officer (Mrs S Griffiths)

Also Present Representatives from the Leisure Trust:  
  
John Bullock – Chairman of the Trust  
Mark Snaylam- Contracts Manager (SERCO)

**18. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Vickers.

**19. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were no changes to membership of the Committee.

**20. URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business.

**21. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

It is noted that the Code of Conduct in relation to personal and prejudicial interests of Cabinet Members when they have taken a decision is overridden by Section 21(13) of the Local Government Act 2000.

1. Councillor Grimes declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item no. 7 (Leisure Trust Update) in view of him being appointed by Council to serve on the Leisure Trust Board and left the Chamber during the discussion period following the presentation from the Board.
2. Councillor Bailey declared a personal interest in item no. 12 (Reform of Council Housing Finance) in view of his employer providing secretariat support to the Association of Retained Council Housing.
3. Councillors Bailey, Mrs. Blake, Cotterill, Cropper, Mrs. Evans, Gartside, Grant and Pope declared personal interests in relation to relevant lines in the budget in respect of items 16 & 17 (Capital Programme Outturn 2008/2009 and Capital Programme Monitoring 2009/2010) in view of their (or their spouse's) membership of Parish Councils.
4. Councillor Cotterill declared a personal interest in item no. 7 (Leisure Trust Update) in relation to references to Homestart West Lancs. as he is a member of their management committee.
5. Councillor Baldock declared a personal interest in item no. 7 (Leisure Trust Update) in relation to references to the North Meols Leisure Centre as a member of a Parish Council using the facilities.

**22. DECLARATIONS OF PARTY WHIP**

There were no declarations of a party whip.

**23. MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 2 July 2009 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

\*At this point in the meeting the Chairman adjourned the meeting to facilitate questions from all present in the Chamber following the presentation by representatives of the Leisure Trust.

**24. LEISURE TRUST UPDATE**

The Chairman introduced representatives from the Leisure Trust who gave a presentation on the following

- An introduction from the Chairman of the Trust
- The trustees and a profile of their responsibilities
- An overview of the contract which runs to March 2010
- Facilities at Nye Bevan, Park Pool, Skelmersdale, Burscough and North Meols Leisure Centre and membership/user numbers
- Income and patronage – a 3% increase in income and a 9% increase in patronage for 2008. 16% increase in patronage from 2004-2008
- Operational highlights including – price reduction in key areas from January 2009; 60+ free swimming; increased leisure card membership; working with community groups; utility consumption savings; Quest accreditation; funded programmes; continued investment in staff development; closer links with PCT; community based special events
- Challenges including – energy costs; increasing patronage with down turn in market; moving operation from good to great; “skills pledge”; positive difference to communities; engagement with partners; “slow down” of Skelmersdale Town Centre development; ageing facilities
- Opportunities including – investment into facilities; web centric marketing; 2012 legacy and improved links with sports development; 5 hour offer for sport funding through Sport England and Lottery

In concluding his presentation the Operations Manager indicated that the way forward for the Trust would be to increase patronage, to continually improve the facilities with a capital investment of £¾ m for 2009-2010 and to continue developing staff and closer links with community groups.

Comments and questions were raised in respect of the following:

- The reduction in patronage to the two centres in Skelmersdale and the reasons for it
- A breakdown of the 11% increase in under 16's swimming
- Heating problems at Skelmersdale Sports Centre and North Meols Leisure Centre
- Management information systems – refine data on patronage
- Council's policy on the use of sunbeds
- Press release on Council website
- Concern over the energy costs and whether it was bought via a consortium
- The GP referral scheme extended to Southport GP's
- Sunbed usage – a personal choice to use them
- Swimming for obese children
- Unhealthy contents of vending machines

The Contracts Manager went on to provide a response to the above comments/questions.

The ensuing debate highlighted the following further comments/questions in relation to:

- Sports development and what will happen following the Council's Organisational Downsizing and the cessation of the SSCF funding
- Relationship between West Lancashire Community Trust and SERCO
- Implications of application for charitable status by West Lancashire Community Leisure Trust

The Contracts Manager and the Head of Leisure & Cultural Services provided a response to the above comments/questions.

The Chairman indicated that he felt the cleanliness of Park Pool had improved, but reported concern in relation to a number of items in particular the checking of lockers; locker keys/clips; audio system in health suite; Jacuzzi; wristbands and exterior of Burscough Sports Centre.

\*At this point in the meeting the Chairman re-convened the meeting and Councillor Grice left the Chamber.

- RESOLVED:
- A. That the representatives from the Leisure Trust be thanked for their presentation and for their attendance.
  - B. That the comments raised be noted
  - C. That the Executive Manager Community Services be requested to report to the Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the proposed application for charitable status by the West Lancashire Community Trust.
  - D. That the Executive Manager Community Services be requested to report to the Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the implications to leisure services arrangements with the Trust following the cessation of the SSCF funding.

**25. CALLED IN ITEMS**

There were no called in items.

**26. RELEVANT MINUTES OF CABINET**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 15 September 2009.

- RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 15 September 2009 be noted.

**27. KEY DECISION FORWARD PLANS 1 AUGUST - 30 NOVEMBER, 1 SEPTEMBER - 31 DECEMBER 2009 & 1 OCTOBER 2009 - 31 JANUARY 2010**

Members noted that no items had been placed on the agenda from the Key Decision Forward Pan for the above-mentioned periods.

**28. CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DIVISIONAL ENFORCEMENT POLICIES**

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Manager Community Services as circulated and contained on pages 319-356 of the Book of Reports in which he sought the Committee's comments on the new Corporate Enforcement Policy and the revised Community Services Enforcement Policy. The recommendations from Cabinet who had considered this item on 15 September 2009 were included within the report.

During consideration of this item Members raised comments/questions on the following:

- Enforcement of empty properties
- Role of PCSOs and number of notices issued by them
- ASBOs
- Out of hours monitoring of noise pollution
- Food safety inspections

RESOLVED: (A) That the report be noted and Council be requested to consider an additional sentence to recommendation 3.3 as follows:-

“Any wholesale changes in guidance or legislation resulting in major changes to the policy to be brought back for approval”.

(B) That the Executive Manager Community Services be requested to submit a report on the Council's Noise Management Policy to a future meeting of the Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**29. REFORM OF COUNCIL HOUSING FINANCE**

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Manager Housing and Property Maintenance Services as circulated and contained on pages 357 – 380 of the Book of Reports seeking the Committee's views on the Government's consultation on reform of Council Housing Finance.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

**30. REPORTS OF THE COUNCIL SECRETARY AND SOLICITOR**

Consideration was given to the report of the Council Secretary and Solicitor as circulated and contained on pages 381 – 425 of the Book of Reports.

**31. RISK MANAGEMENT**

The Committee considered the updated Risk Management Policy and Strategy together with the position on key risks facing the Council.

During the ensuing discussion Members raised comments/questions in relation to the following items on the Key Risks Register:-

- HR Division – OD Initiative- threat to services
- HR Division – Post JE Consequences – identify industrial relations as a risk
- OD effect on undertaking future risk management

RESOLVED: That the updated risk Management Policy and Strategy together with the Key Risks Register be noted.

**32. FINANCIAL OUTTURN**

The Committee considered the financial outturn position for the last financial year.

During the ensuing discussion Members raised comments/questions on the following:

- Insurance reserve
- Price of purchasing “Right to Buy” properties
- Impact of “Right to Buy” on General Revenue Account

RESOLVED: That the outturn position be noted.

**33. REVENUE MONITORING 2009-10**

An early assessment of the financial position on the Revenue Accounts in the new financial year was presented to the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the financial position of the Revenue Accounts be noted.

**34. CAPITAL PROGRAMME OUTTURN 2008/2009**

The Committee considered a summary of the capital outturn position for the 2008/2009 financial year.

During the ensuing debate Members raised comments/questions in relation to

- Uptake of Parish Council Capital Schemes
- Concern over underspend of Capital programme



RESOLVED: That the final position on the Capital Programme for the 2008/2009 financial year be noted.

**35. CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING 2009/2010**

The Committee considered an overview of the current progress on the Capital Programme.

RESOLVED: That the current progress of the Capital Programme be noted.

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CHAIRMAN



**CABINET****HELD:****AGENDA ITEM: 8  
17 NOVEMBER 2009**

Start:

7.30pm

Finish:

8.10pm

**PRESENT**

Councillor Grant (Leader of the Council, in the Chair)

Councillors	Forshaw	<u>Portfolio</u>
	Fowler	Planning and Transportation
	Mrs Hopley	Community Services and Health
	Owens	Housing
	Westley	Deputy Leader & Regeneration and Planning
		Finance and Performance Management

In attendance	Furey	R Pendleton
Councillors:	Griffiths	

Officers	Chief Executive (Mr W Taylor)
	Deputy Chief Executive (Mr L Abernethy)
	Assistant Chief Executive (Ms K Webber)
	Executive Manager Housing and Property Maintenance Services (Mr R Livermore)
	Executive Manager Community Services (Mr D Tilleray)
	Head of Leisure & Cultural Services (Mr J Nelson)
	Treasurer (Mr M Taylor)
	Legal Services Manager (Mr T Broderick)
	Estates & Valuation Manager (Ms R Kneale)
	Assistant Member Services Manager (Mrs J Denning)

**60. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Ashcroft, Human Resources Portfolio and Councillor Greenall, Street Scene Management Portfolio.

**61. SPECIAL URGENCY (RULE 16 ACCESS TO INFORMATION PROCEDURE RULES)/URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no urgent items.

**62. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following declarations of interest were received:

Agenda Item	Report Title	Councillor	Interest	Reason
5(d)	Budget Prospects	Westley	Personal	With reference to Lancashire County Council Pension Fund as a Member of Lancashire County Council

Agenda Item	Report Title	Councillor	Interest	Reason
5(e)	Revised Capital Programme and Mid Year Review 2009/2010	Fowler, Grant and Westley	Personal	With reference to Parish Councils as they are Members of Scarisbrick Parish Council, Aughton Parish Council and Halsall Parish Council respectively.
		Owens and Westley	Personal	With reference to Conservation Area Enhancements Scheme as they reside in a Conservation Area.
5(f)	Review of Revenue Grants to Voluntary Organisations	Westley	Personal & Prejudicial	With reference to Victim Support – Lancashire as his daughter is a volunteer for the Witness Service.
		Fowler	Personal	With reference to Disability Helpline as his son is a user of the service.
5(i)	Burscough Community Woodlands	Westley	Personal	As a Member of Lancashire County Council

**63. MINUTES**

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting of Cabinet Held on 15 September 2009 were received as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

**64. MATTERS REQUIRING DECISIONS**

Consideration was given to reports relating to matters requiring decisions, as contained on pages 765 to 860 of the Book of Reports.

**65. BUS SHELTERS IN WEST LANCASHIRE**

Councillor Forshaw introduced the report of the Executive Manager Community Services which set out the decision by Clear Channel Limited, formerly known as Adshel Limited, to terminate their current agreement with the Council on 31 March 2010 for the erection and maintenance of certain bus shelters within the Borough and the impact of this decision.

Members agreed that the opportunity of gaining revenue from advertising and assignment of any relevant benefits accruing under the contract should be explored.

In reaching the decision below, Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it and accepted the reasons contained in it.

- RESOLVED: A. That it be noted, Clear Channel Limited has given notice to this Council to terminate the current agreement with effect from 31 March 2010.
- B. That the Executive Manager Community Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation, be authorised to enter into an agreement with Clear Channel Limited to transfer the ownership of the bus shelters, identified at Appendix A to the report, to the Council with effect from 1 April 2010.
- C. That the Executive Manager Community Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation, be authorised to enter into a maintenance agreement with a suitable contractor for the maintenance of Council owned bus shelters.
- D. That consideration be given to the allocation of the additional funding of £15,000 over and above that of the £12,800 which is already provided for bus shelter maintenance from 1 April 2010 as part of the budget setting process for 2010-2011.
- E. That the Executive Manager Community Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation, be authorised to investigate the use of materials other than glass for replacement shelter panels.

**66. LITTLE DIGMOOR PLAY AREA**

Councillor Fowler introduced the report of the Executive Manager Community Services which reviewed the action undertaken to reduce anti-social behaviour at the multi-use games area and teenage shelter in Abbeystead, Little Digmoor.

In reaching the decision below, Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it and accepted the reasons contained in it.

- RESOLVED: A. That the play equipment, multi use games area and teenage shelter remain in situ and that Council officers continue to work with the Police and MAPS team to resolve anti social behaviour issues.
- B. That a further report on progress be submitted to Cabinet in 6 months.

**67. REVENUE BUDGET MID YEAR REVIEW**

Councillor Westley introduced the report of the Council Secretary and Solicitor which provided a projection on the financial position of the General and Housing Revenue Accounts to the end of the financial year.

In reaching the decision below, Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it and accepted the reasons contained in it.

- RESOLVED: A. That the financial position of the Revenue Accounts be noted, including the approved uses of reserves and balances.
- B. That call in is not appropriate for this item as it is to be submitted to the next meeting of the Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3 December 2009.

**68. BUDGET PROSPECTS**

Councillor Westley introduced the report of the Council Secretary and Solicitor which provided an initial assessment of the budget prospects for future years.

In reaching the decision below, Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it and accepted the reasons contained in it.

- RESOLVED: A. That the Council's challenging budget prospects for future years are noted, including the combination of limited resources and spending pressures.
- B. That call in is not appropriate for this item as it is to be submitted to the next meeting of Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3 December 2009.

**69. REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND MID YEAR REVIEW**

Councillor Westley introduced the report of the Council Secretary and Solicitor which sought approval of the Revised Capital Programme 2009/2010 and provide an overview on the progress against the Revised Capital Programme at the mid-year point.

In reaching the decision below, Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it and accepted the reasons contained in it.

- RESOLVED: A. That the Revised Capital Programme, including the additional expenditure and virements contained within it, be approved for consideration by Council.
- B. That the progress against the Revised Capital Programme at the mid-year point be noted.
- C. That call in is not appropriate for this item as it is being referred to Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3 December and Council on 16 December 2009.

**70. REVIEW OF REVENUE GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS**

Councillor Fowler introduced the report of the Council Secretary and Solicitor which detailed the recommendations of the Funding of Voluntary and Other Organisations Cabinet Working Group at a meeting held on 2 November 2009.

In reaching the decision below, Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it and accepted the reasons contained in it.

RESOLVED: That subject to the budget to be set on 24 February 2010, funding be made available to the following organisations as indicated:

- A. Age Concern – Lancashire  
Funding continue at current level (£12,136) per annum by way of a 3 year Service Level Agreement subject to confirmation that grant will be used within West Lancashire.
- B. Citizens Advice Bureau – West Lancashire  
Funding continue at current level (£48,425) per annum by way of a 3 year Service Level Agreement subject to
  - i) successful audit by Citizens Advice
  - ii) satisfactory annual review and financial statements
  - iii) service maintained at current Service Level Agreement level
- C. Council for Voluntary Service – West Lancashire  
Uplift of grant to £32,779 (increase of £7,542) per annum by way of a 3 year Service Level Agreement subject to confirmation of continued funding by Lancashire County Council. Growth to be funded from unallocated resources within the Strategic Fund Budget 2010/11.
- D. Dial-A-Ride Association  
Funding continue at current level (£39,603) per annum by way of a 3 year Service Level Agreement subject to successful tender bid to Lancashire County Council for Community Transport Services.
- E. Disability Helpline  
Funding continue at current level (£5,920) per annum by way of a 3 year Service Level Agreement.
- F. South & West Lancs. Foodbank  
Funding continue at current level (£1,130) per annum by way of a 3 year Service Level Agreement subject to submission of business plan, annual report, health & safety policy and equal opportunities policy.
- G. Relate – Lancashire and Cumbria  
Uplift of grant to £3,545 (increase of £1,000) per annum by way of a 3 year Service Level Agreement subject to receipt of satisfactory financial statements. Growth to be funded from unallocated resources within the Strategic Fund Budget 2010/11.
- H. Victim Support – Lancashire  
Funding continue at current level (£4,854) by way of a 3 year Service Level Agreement subject to receipt of satisfactory financial statements.

**71. ORGANISATIONAL RE-ENGINEERING UPDATE**

Councillor Westley introduced the report of the Assistant Chief Executive which provided an update on the completed Organisational Re-engineering (OR) projects to date, together with information regarding the progress of implementation plans. The report detailed the level of cash and efficiency savings resulting from OR, together with the improvements to both service delivery and customer accessibility as identified as part of each project.

In reaching the decision below, Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it and accepted the reasons contained in it.

- RESOLVED: A. That the positive progress and successful outcomes of each OR review to date, together with the subsequent cash and efficiency savings identified be noted.
- B. That the Assistant Chief Executive, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, Treasurer and Executive Manager (as appropriate), be authorised to select, undertake and implement Organisational Re-Engineering Projects

**72. COMPLAINTS MONITORING**

The Leader introduced the report of the Assistant Chief Executive which provided data on complaints received by the Council from April 2008 to March 2009.

In reaching the decision below, Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it and accepted the reasons contained in it.

- RESOLVED: A. That the latest figures in relation to level of complaints to the Council in 2008/09 be noted.
- B. That call in is not appropriate for this item as it is being considered at the next meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 2 December 2009.

**73. BURSCOUGH COMMUNITY WOODLANDS**

Councillor Fowler introduced the joint report of the Executive Manager Community Services and the Executive Manager Planning, Regeneration and Estates which detailed a scheme operated by Lancashire County Council called Woodlands from Waste, outlined its possible application in Burscough, and sought authority to progress discussions regarding the proposed development of a Burscough Community Woodland.

In reaching the decision below, Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it and accepted the reasons contained in it.



- RESOLVED: A. That the Executive Manager Community Services be authorised to continue discussions with Woodlands from Waste and in conjunction with the Executive Manager of Planning, Regeneration and Estates and the Council's Secretary and Solicitor, progress investigations into the proposed creation of community woodland on the Platts Lane and Mill Dam Lane closed landfill sites in Burscough.
- B. That a further report be presented to a future meeting of Cabinet with the results of the investigations.

**74. KEY DECISION FORWARD PLAN - QUARTERLY REPORT ON SPECIAL URGENCY DECISIONS - 1 JULY - 30 SEPTEMBER 2009**

The Leader introduced the report of the Council Secretary and Solicitor which advised that one decision had been made during the last quarter in respect of Access to Information Procedure Rule 16 (Special Urgency).

- RESOLVED: That it be noted that Access to Information Procedure Rule 16 (Special Urgency) was exercised once during the quarter ending 30 September 2009.

**75. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED: That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of that Act, as set out on the agenda, and as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption under Schedule 12A outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

**76. MATTERS REQUIRING DECISIONS**

Consideration was given to reports relating to matters requiring decisions, as contained on pages 861 to 916 of the Book of Reports.

**77. BLAGUEGATE ALL WEATHER FOOTBALL PITCHES**

Councillor Fowler introduced the report of the Executive Manager Community Services which sought authority to engage a partner organisation for the redevelopment and lease of Blaguegate Astro turf and shale pitch at Liverpool Road Skelmersdale.

In reaching the decision below, Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it and accepted the reasons contained in it.

- RESOLVED: A. That authority be given to the Executive Manager Community Services, in consultation with the Council Secretary and Solicitor, Executive Manager Planning, Regeneration and Estates, the Portfolio Holder for Community Services and the Portfolio Holder for Finance, to identify a suitable commercial partner; negotiate and enter into a community use agreement and lease with that commercial partner, for the development of the Astro turf, shale pitch area and associated car park and changing rooms at Blaguegate playing fields, for a minimum lease period of 30 years and to take all other necessary steps and obtain all appropriate consents.
- B. That an exemption to Rule 7 of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules be provided to allow the Council to enter into this agreement without conducting the formal tender exercise required by Rule 7, for the reasons specified in paragraph 5.3 of the report.
- C. That call in is not appropriate for this item as it has been referred to Council and there is a need to progress matters and maintain the interest of developers to achieve progress within the time lines detailed in paragraph 6.2 of the report.

**78. HOME CARE LINK: INVESTMENT OPTIONS FOR THE CONTROL CENTRE**

This item was deferred for consideration at the Special Meeting of Cabinet on 16 December 2009.

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THE LEADER



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**Report of: Executive Manager Community Services**

**Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor A Fowler**

**Contact for further information: Mr A. Hill (Extn. 5243)  
(E-mail: a.hill@westlancs.gov.uk)**

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**SUBJECT: NOISE MANAGEMENT POLICY**

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Wards affected: Borough wide

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To advise Members of the status of the Council's Noise Management Policy, as requested during the meeting of the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2009.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS TO EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

3.1 That the report be noted

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**4.0 BACKGROUND**

4.1 Members will recall that on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2009, during a discussion on Enforcement Policies, a request was made for a report to be brought before the Committee in relation to the Council's Noise Management Policy.

4.2 The Noise Management policy was approved by Council in July of 2007. The document was produced following the publication of a joint DEFRA / Chartered Institute of Environmental Health Neighbourhood Noise Management Guide. The policy was, in fact, based on this national guidance. The aim of that guide was to "encourage and enable even better and more consistent standards of practice among enforcement authorities".

- 4.3 The Noise Management Policy is available on the Council's website within the environmental protection pages. The document introduces the concept of noise and details the types and numbers of complaints that we deal with. There is also information concerning the Division and the staffing levels and staff training issues. Full details of how to complain to us are included and our procedures are provided in some detail. Background information on the legislation and how we enforce it is also included and the policy also formalised when we would consider a complaint resolved.
- 4.4 It is worth noting that most of our noise procedures are already part of an ISO 9001:2000 Quality System and the many of the complaints dealt with using these procedures are audited to ensure consistency.

## **5.0 CURRENT POSITION**

- 5.1 Since the policy was adopted it has not resulted in any major changes in the way noise complaints are dealt with. It allows us to deal with noise complaints effectively and offer a good service to the public. In formalising when we class a complaint as "resolved", the policy has allowed us to close some long standing complaints, where the amount of resources being utilised was disproportionate to the scale of the problem.
- 5.2 The Environmental Protection Section continues to deploy recording equipment and/or use officer visits where problems arise out of office hours. This continues to be successful in the vast majority of cases. There has been no demonstrable need for further resources aimed at tackling night noise problems.

## **6.0 ISSUES**

- 6.1 The policy is due to be formally reviewed next year, although it is not envisaged at this stage that there will be anything other than administrative changes made. For example, by next year the Section will no longer be based within Westec House and will be located at Stanley Depot. This will improve our response time to "urgent" daytime noise issues in Skelmersdale. Additionally the relevant "District to Borough" changes will be required.

## **8.0 PROPOSALS**

- 8.1 There are no proposals for change being considered to the policy and it is hoped we can continue to offer an effective service to our residents through it's implementation.

## **9.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS/COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

- 9.1 The effective resolution of noise problems can lead to improved mental health and a reduction in stress levels of the individuals concerned.

## **10.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are no financial/resource implications.

## **11.0 RISK ASSESSMENT**

11.1 The Council has a statutory duty to respond to noise complaints and the possession of a Noise Management Policy should ensure that complaints are dealt with effectively and consistently.

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### **Background Documents**

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

There is no evidence from an initial assessment of an adverse impact on equality in relation to the equality target groups.

### **Appendices**

None





**AGENDA ITEM:11**

**CABINET: 17 November 2009**

**EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW AND  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:  
3 December 2009**

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**Report of: Council Secretary and Solicitor**

**Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor D. Westley**

**Contact for further information: Marc Taylor (Extn. 5092)  
(E-mail: Marc.Taylor@westlancs.gov.uk)**

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**SUBJECT: REVENUE BUDGET MID YEAR REVIEW**

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Borough wide interest

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 This report provides a projection on the financial position on the General and Housing Revenue Accounts to the end of the financial year.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET**

2.1 That the financial position of the Revenue Accounts be noted including the approved uses of reserves and balances.

2.2 That call in is not appropriate for this item as it is to be submitted to the next meeting of the Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**3.0 RECOMMENDATION TO EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

3.1 That the financial position of the Revenue Accounts be noted.

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**4.0 BACKGROUND**

4.1 In February 2009 the Council approved budgets for the Housing and General Revenue Accounts for the 2009-2010 financial year. It is good practice that monitoring reports are produced on a regular basis to ensure that Members are kept informed of the financial position of these accounts. This is the second monitoring report for the year and is based on information available in October 2009.

## **5.0 GENERAL REVENUE ACCOUNT**

- 5.1 The Council has set a revenue budget of £16.322m for the financial year. In total current projections forecast that net expenditure will be around £215,000 below this target, which represents a small variance of around 1.3%.
- 5.2 The projections have been calculated on a prudent basis, and experience from past years suggests that the overall position is likely to improve over the remainder of the year. Consequently it can be confidently expected that the Council will achieve a surplus by the year end. This will continue our strong track record of managing our financial performance to ensure that the outturn position is in line with the budget.
- 5.3 Employee costs form a significant proportion of the Council's total budget and consequently are very important from a budget management perspective. The difference between the actual and budgeted pay awards for 2008-09 and 2009-10 was 1.25%. This reduction in the cost of the pay award will produce a saving in the order of £200,000 for the year, and this is the main reason for the overall favourable variance on the GRA.
- 5.4 The budget contains a corporate target for staff efficiency savings of £251,000. The active management of staffing levels by divisional managers combined with savings on senior management restructuring agreed in July will mean that this target will be significantly exceeded.
- 5.5 The budget also contained a part year employee savings target for OD of £200,000. The actual savings that will be made this year will be dependent on the implementation date of individual budget items but the initial progress that has been made will ensure that this target is exceeded by the year end.
- 5.6 This year's budget included an increase of £207,000 to meet anticipated additional costs arising from the Job Evaluation (JE) process. At its meeting in September, Council agreed to implement new harmonised employee terms and conditions with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> August. The implementation process for these new arrangements is now underway but the financial impact is not yet clear. In addition there is also the potential for staff to submit equal pay claims once JE has been completed, and consequently this area will need to be kept under close scrutiny.
- 5.7 The external income that the Council generates can be one of the most volatile areas of the budget, with income going up and down due to factors outside our direct control. This area is particularly volatile at the moment given the state of the economy and the credit crunch. However at the current time income levels, while under pressure, are currently performing close to budget in most areas.
- 5.8 The main exception to this position is in relation to planning application income which is significantly below budget up to the end of September. This position could improve if any large scale applications come through but at the current time there are none in the pipeline. Income in relation to Building Regulation income is however performing just ahead of its budget target.



- 5.9 Projected income levels on the Community Related Assets (CRA) portfolio are also below budget as a result of the recession. Occupancy levels have reduced and despite every effort being made it has proved difficult to attract new tenants. The CRA reserve can however be used to manage the outturn position for this service area.
- 5.10 During the course of the year there has been a significant increase in the cost of printer consumables as a result of changing market conditions and consequently there is likely to be an adverse variance on this budget heading. A number of measures have been put in place to address this situation including stocking up before anticipated price increases, using more cost effective printers and printing methods, and encouraging a culture where documents are only printed where essential.
- 5.11 The Appendix to this report provides further details on the performance of individual divisions.

## **6.0 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT**

- 6.1 The Council set a gross expenditure budget for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) of £21.093m.
- 6.2 Members will be aware that following the agreement of the Budget the Government introduced a scheme to reduce the average rent increase from 6.2% to 3.1% in return for a compensating reduction in our HRA subsidy contribution. Following assurances from the Government that there would be no cost impact to the HRA, the rents were reduced retrospectively on 5<sup>th</sup> October, and the benefit of this reduction has been passed on to our tenants.
- 6.3 An actuarial review of the contributions needed to be made by the HRA to the Council's Insurance Fund has now been completed and has established that a significant reduction in costs can be achieved. In addition there will also be favourable variances as a result of the stagnation in Council House Right to Buy Sales, management action to control void levels, a reduced pay award settlement and continued active management of staffing levels and vacancies.
- 6.4 There are however a number of spending challenges within the HRA. In particular, essential health and safety issues continue to place pressure on the Repairs and Programme Maintenance Budgets. No more so than within Central Heating Maintenance and Servicing where it has been found necessary to install flame out devices and replace heating elements in our properties at a significant cost.
- 6.5 Budgets have been realigned to meet the issues set out above following discussions with the Housing Portfolio Holder. Taking into account the net effect of all of these factors it is expected that the HRA will generate a small surplus at the end of the financial year.

## **7.0 RESERVES AND BALANCES**

- 7.1 The Council is facing a very challenging medium term financial position as are most other local authorities. The GRA budget for the year was set including a package of measures that will provide the necessary savings to achieve a balanced budget over the medium term through a measured and managed process that will minimise the impact on services. There was however a need to use reserves in the short term to support the budget. The District Auditor was consulted on this financial strategy and endorsed it before it was agreed.
- 7.2 The Council started this year with a very healthy financial position with reserves and balances of £12.266m for the GRA and £2.617m for the HRA. However a significant proportion of these reserves are either committed or earmarked for specific purposes and so are not available for general use. For example these reserves include the £3.350m that is held in the Insurance Fund to cover potential insurance liabilities.
- 7.3 The Council's budget approved the use of £1.218m from reserves to support the GRA's financial position. The main elements of this funding were £0.680m from the Budget and Efficiency Savings reserve (this is a one off measure as it was recognised that OD would take some time to implement) and £0.347m from the Local Authority Business Growth Incentive reserve (which provides funding for the GRA over a medium term time scale).
- 7.4 The OD initiative agreed by Council in July recognised that there would be potential exit costs of £1.477m arising from staff redundancies, and provided funding for this from the Restructuring Reserve. The latest estimate for OD exit costs is broadly in line with this figure. This approach represents good value for money as the total level of OD savings will mean that the payback period for the exit costs will be less than one year.
- 7.5 Taking these 2 factors together there will be around £2.7m taken from GRA reserves this year. The overall level of reserves however remains healthy and above the level required for prudent financial management.
- 7.6 Over 12 months ago the Council lodged claims with Revenues and Customs in relation to the VAT charged on certain income in the early 1990s. Recent case law (the Fleming case) had established that the Council could have retained this income rather than accounting for it as VAT. After pursuing this case vigorously a settlement has now been reached with Revenues and Customs for £0.885m including interest and net of fees. As this is a windfall amount it has not been included in the projected outturn. It is intended that part of this funding will be used to develop new capital schemes and this is covered in the Revised Capital Programme report elsewhere on this agenda. It is also intended that £4,000 will be used to fund the cost of cleaning up Dyers Brook. The use of the balance of this funding will be determined when the Council sets the budget in February.

7.7 When the HRA budget was approved it was agreed that £0.601m would be taken from reserves and balances to support it. The Housing and Finance Portfolio Holders have also approved the transfer of £60,000 from working balances to meet the demands placed on the Central Heating Maintenance and Service Budget.

7.8 However the overall level of reserves however remains healthy and above the level required for prudent financial management. In addition the projected favourable variance on the HRA could also be added back into working balances at the year end.

## **8.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS/COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

8.1 There are no direct sustainability implications arising from this report.

## **9.0 RISK ASSESSMENT**

9.1 The formal reporting of performance on the General and Housing Revenue Accounts is part of the overall budgetary management and control framework that is designed to minimise the financial risks facing the Council.

9.2 The projected variances contained in this report reflect current estimates of the likely difference between spending / income and budget for the full financial year. These estimates are based on current data and are subject to change during the remainder of the year as new information becomes available. In particular external income levels are at risk from any further down turn in the economy.

## **10.0 CONCLUSIONS**

10.1 Both the GRA and the HRA are on course to achieve their budget targets. The level of reserves and balances also continues to be satisfactory and above the minimum levels required for prudent financial management. This continues the trend of strong financial performance achieved by the Council over many years.

10.2 The downturn in the economy and the credit crunch has reduced external income levels but the Council is well placed to deal with these challenges. Where the financial issues that have been identified in this mid year review are expected to persist into the future they will be taken into account in the budget setting process for 2010-11.

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### **Background Documents**

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

There is no evidence from an initial assessment of an adverse impact on equality in relation to the equality target groups.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – General Revenue Account Projected Outturn Position

**APPENDIX 1  
GENERAL REVENUE ACCOUNT PROJECTED OUTFURN POSITION**

Budget area	Net Budget £000	Variance from Budget £000	Variance %
Assistant Chief Executive	2,908	-90	-3.1%
Community Services	5,031	-100	-2.0%
Housing and Property Maintenance	864	-25	-2.9%
Human Resources	-3	-15	See note
Legal Democracy & Financial Management	2,898	-70	-2.4%
Planning, Regeneration & Estates	1,584	0	0.0%
Street Scene	5,943	-50	-0.8%
Divisional Subtotal	19,225	-350	-1.8%
Central Budget Items	-2,903	135	4.7%
<b>TOTAL BUDGET REQUIREMENT</b>	<b>16,322</b>	<b>-215</b>	<b>-1.3%</b>

Table Notes

The budget figures for each Division have been updated to include capital accounting adjustments and the allocation of central budget items to divisions. These are technical accounting adjustments that do not affect the bottom line budget requirement, which has remained unchanged during the year at £16.322m.

The Human Resources division has a relatively small net budget requirement because it is a support service and consequently recharges most of its costs to other service areas.

General

It should be recognised that some areas of the budget are within the Council's control, for example the filling of vacant posts to achieve salary savings. However other areas such as external income can be volatile where we are exposed to market forces. In addition some service areas are demand led where it can be difficult to directly control expenditure.

Assistant Chief Executive – Favourable variance £90,000

The main variance for the division relates to savings on staffing costs from the lower than expected pay award and the active management of staff vacancies. There is also expected to be a further full year's savings effect from the closure of the cash offices. However it is expected that there will be an adverse variance in IT as a result of a number of factors including increased costs for software licences, printer consumables and internet costs, although in the latter case this reflects the increased usage of the internet which is a very cost effective access channel.

Since the economic downturn started during the course of last year there has been a considerable increase in benefits expenditure, and payments are continuing to rise at the current time. Over £30m in Benefits will be paid out this year, and this is a demand led service that is not within the direct control of the Council. While the majority of this expenditure is funded by government grant a small element of these payments must be picked up by the Council and consequently this budget heading is likely to be over spent at the year end.

The Council participates in the Lancashire wide travel concession scheme for the elderly and disabled. A new set of County wide reimbursement rates were introduced this year to pay bus operators for the cost of concessionary journeys. However these rates have been legally challenged by the bus operators and it is consequently not possible to forecast with certainty the outcome in this area.

#### Community Services – Favourable variance £100,000

There is projected to be a significant favourable variance for the division, and the largest single contributory factor to this position is managed savings on staffing and savings on the pay award.

The budget for off street car park income was raised this year and while actual income levels have increased they are currently not fully achieving the target level. Income levels for parking charge notices are also below target. However a saving is now being made following the transfer of responsibility for on street car parking back to the County Council.

There are a number of projected variances in other service areas but these will not have a significant net effect on the bottom line for the division.

#### Housing and Property Maintenance – Favourable variance £25,000

The active management of staffing levels and vacancies has generated a significant favourable budget variance within the division.

However there is an adverse variance on repairs and maintenance costs for some of the Council's buildings that reflect their poor condition and ongoing maintenance issues. Water rates costs have also increased as a result of a change in billing practices by the water company although these bills are now being checked to ensure that they have been calculated correctly.

#### Human Resources – Favourable variance £15,000

The HR team has a number of critical work issues to contend with this year including JE and OD, and a plan on training and other issues will need to be formulated in the latter part of the year. However financial performance is being managed stringently and a small favourable overall variance is anticipated.

#### Legal Democracy and Financial Management – Favourable variance £70,000

The division has achieved an overall favourable variance through making savings on employee costs through senior management restructuring and the active management of staff vacancies. Various other minor net savings are anticipated based on current levels of expenditure

Income from Local Searches, which had been reducing in previous years, has now stabilised and is on course to achieve its budget target for the year.

#### Planning, Regeneration and Estates – Net nil variance

The targets for both Planning Application income and Community Related Asset rents are under severe pressure. Officers are working hard to mitigate this position and are looking to contain the financial situation within the overall divisional budget. Most notably the adverse variances on income have been offset by savings on staff costs due to the late or non-filling of vacant posts and due to the lower than expected pay award.

#### Street Scene – Favourable variance £50,000

The division is performing within its budget targets and going forward it is anticipated that the overall financial performance will be favourable. Recycling income budgets are under pressure as a result of market conditions but the position on the fuel budget is broadly in line with the target for the year. Some grounds maintenance income valuations tend to be finalised towards the back end of the financial year and this area will be kept under review.

#### Central budget items

This heading covers a range of corporate budgets including savings targets, treasury management, and capital charges. Central savings targets for staff efficiency, Gershon efficiency improvements and savings from Organisational Re-engineering are all held in this area. The actual savings that are made in relation to these items are contained within Divisions. Consequently savings made elsewhere will help to offset the adverse variances on these budget items.

Interest rates have fallen significantly over the last 12 months and there has been an unprecedented level of uncertainty in the financial markets. However treasury management performance continues to be strong and the target interest rate of 3 month LIBID has been exceeded. At around this time last year the Council was able to lock into a number of relatively long term investments that paid high interest rates. However these investments will mature over the next few months and there is little likelihood that the base rate will increase from its current very low level of 0.5%. Consequently income levels in future months are likely to be less buoyant.







**AGENDA ITEM: 12**

**CABINET: 17<sup>th</sup> November 2009**

**EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE: 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2009**

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**Report of: Council Secretary and Solicitor**

**Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor D. Westley**

**Contact for further information: Marc Taylor (Extn.5092)  
(E-mail: Marc.Taylor@westlancs.gov.uk)**

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**SUBJECT: BUDGET PROSPECTS**

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Borough wide interest

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To provide an initial assessment of the budget prospects for future years.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET**

2.1 That the Council's challenging budget prospects for future years are noted, including the combination of limited resources and spending pressures.

2.2 That call in is not appropriate for this item as it is to be submitted to the next meeting of Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS TO EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

3.1 That the Council's financial position be noted.

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**4.0 BACKGROUND TO THE GRA BUDGET POSITION**

4.1 At this point in time last year the Council faced a very difficult financial position with a budget gap approaching £1m after having already taken over £0.7m worth of savings. A combination of reduced external income due to the recession and real term cuts in government grant support were reducing the resources available. At the same time there were a number of additional spending pressures including pension costs, job evaluation, energy costs and benefits spending. These factors were not unique to West Lancashire but face local authorities across the country.

- 4.2 To address this situation it was agreed that funding would be taken from reserves to provide time to implement an Organisational Downsizing initiative. This initiative will generate £1.25m savings for the GRA which will resolve the budget issues for 2009-10 and provide a significant level of additional savings for 2010-11.
- 4.3 By recognising the difficult financial position at an early stage and taking decisive action the Council is now significantly ahead of the curve compared to most other authorities and has a clear and deliverable financial plan in place.
- 4.4 This report sets out an initial assessment of the Council's budget prospects for future years given the information that is currently available. At this early stage in the budget process there is still a significant amount of uncertainty and work to be completed, and further reports will be made to Members as the position becomes clearer. In due course the Council will set its budgets for 2010-11 at its meeting in February 2010.

## **5.0 FUTURE GOVERNMENT GRANT SUPPORT**

- 5.1 The government has previously announced that the grant increase the Council should receive in 2010-11 will be 0.6%. However it will not be clear until early December when the Provisional Finance Settlement is published as to whether this figure is realistic.
- 5.2 In subsequent years the poor state of public sector finances means that the prospects for grant settlements are bleak, and the government may decide to make dramatic reductions in the funding it provides. A 1% reduction in general grant is equivalent to £95,000 and so significant cuts in grants in future years could require large scale savings to be made. Consequently if in future years there are 10% plus reductions in government grants (as many commentators believe may take place) then this will have a major impact on the Council.
- 5.3 There is also the possibility that changes in responsibilities for functions, and in particular the potential transfer of responsibility for travel concessions to the County Council, could have a significant detrimental impact in 2011-12. An early consultation paper published by the Government on the transfer of concessionary travel set out a number of different options that would have an adverse impact of between £0.3m and £1.0m depending on the specific approach chosen. Similarly potential changes to the HRA finance system could have a major adverse effect on the GRA although the way in which the new system would work in practice is far from clear.
- 5.4 Developments in these areas will be monitored closely over the next few months and the Council may well need to work with other local authorities to lobby the government to protect its financial interests.

## **6.0 GRA BUDGET PRESSURES**

- 6.1 The level of the pay award will be a key factor in future budget rounds. Each 1% increase will cost around an additional £160,000 but typically the pay award will not be determined until some time after the budget is set. Both the Labour and Conservative parties have recently made statements about controlling / freezing public sector pay and this may lead to relatively low settlements in future years but this is not guaranteed.
- 6.2 As a result of the recession external income levels for 2009-10 were reduced across a range of areas including planning fees and charges, treasury management, land charges and CRA portfolio income. The total reduction was £751,000 and it is likely that income levels will continue to be depressed for some time and may even deteriorate further in the short term. While income levels will start to recover at some point the timing and the extent of this recovery is far from clear, and this factor is outside the direct control of the Council. In this respect it is important that the budgets that are set for future years are produced on a prudent basis and do not rely on overly optimistic income assumptions.
- 6.3 The Council has benefited from £2.160m of LAGBI grant funding in recent years (reward grant from the government for increases in the business rate base). However changes in the way this scheme operates mean that all authorities in future will receive significantly less funding. LABGI monies are being used at a rate of £347,000 per year to support the bottom line budget position and are projected to run out part way through the 2012-13 financial year. At this point an alternative funding source will need to be found or matching savings made.
- 6.4 Unfortunately while resources are likely to be strictly limited over the next few years the Council will face a number of spending pressures at the same time. In particular employee costs are likely to rise sharply in 2011-12 as a result of a 0.5% increase in national insurance rates, an anticipated increase in pension costs following an actuarial review of the pension fund, and the ongoing effect of job evaluation.
- 6.5 Divisional Managers are also currently reviewing potential budget issues including the impact of changes in legislation and unavoidable and essential increases in costs. These factors will also need to be built into the budget and information on these issues will be produced over the forthcoming months.

## **7.0 OVERALL GRA POSITION**

- 7.1 The difficult overall financial position that the Council will face in setting future year's budgets largely reflects national or global issues that are not within its direct control. Most local authorities will also find themselves facing similar issues.
- 7.2 However in the areas that the Council can control it has a strong track record of delivering efficiency improvements. In particular the Council achieved £0.622m of cashable efficiency savings last year and is forecast to achieve a further £0.647m of value for money savings in the current year, which is in excess of 3% of the revenue budget per year. This track record has enabled Council tax increases to be delivered at or below the rate of inflation for many years.

- 7.3 Many commentators believe that an armageddon in public sector finances will take place over the next few years. Recent statement by the main political parties have also highlighted this issue and to put this into context a 10% cut in government grants would produce a loss of income to the Council of around £950,000.
- 7.4 Officers will work closely with Members over the next few months to ensure that the best possible budget can be set given the financial constraints. However it is likely that there will be very limited opportunities for growth and that a significant level of savings will be required in future years. Consequently the budget that is set for next year needs to take into account the difficult medium term position facing the Council. In addition the Council needs to maintain sufficient reserves and balances so that it can deal with its financial pressures in an efficient and effective manner.
- 7.5 Consequently there will be a need to deliver further significant savings on top of the OD savings that have already been achieved. In considering future budget rounds there are a number of initiatives underway or that could be considered to deliver savings including:
- The development of the waste transfer station (previously agreed by Cabinet and Council)
  - Outsourcing of the HR function (Council agreed to explore this option at its meeting in July)
  - Organisational Reengineering Reviews in Environmental Health and Private Sector Housing that are now almost completed
  - The new parking enforcement arrangements that were implemented at the start of September
  - Market testing of the garage function at the depot that is currently underway
  - Potential further senior management restructuring
  - Potential sources of partnership funding, such as performance reward grant, that could possibly be used to finance new or existing schemes
  - A general increase in fees and charges in line with inflation

## **8.0 CAPITAL PROGRAMME PROSPECTS**

- 8.1 For many years the main source of internal funding to support the capital programme has been capital receipts generated by Council House sales. The pattern of these sales has meant that it could be anticipated that at least £1m of funding would be generated by this method each year. Other asset sales (most noticeably land sales) also contributed resources to the programme but this has not been a regular element in the past.
- 8.2 More recently the number of Council House sales has decreased rapidly. The reduction in sales is probably due to a combination of factors including the economic downturn, difficulties in tenants obtaining a mortgage, limits on the maximum discount for right to buy sales, and possibly that the majority of tenants that want to buy their homes have already done so. To put this into perspective, in 2007-08 91 Council houses were sold but in the current year to date the number of sales is just 2 (although there are a number of applications that are currently being processed).

8.3 The Council has sufficient receipts generated from previous asset sales to fund the capital programme for 2009-10 and 2010-11. However if the current very low level of receipts persists – and this is a significant possibility - then a funding gap will emerge in 2011-12. It is however very difficult to predict the pattern of asset sales as it is such a volatile area.

8.4 There are a number of different strategies that can be used to deal with this scenario including:

- Re-profile capital schemes into later years
- Use alternative funding sources such as the Housing Capital Allocation and Major Repairs Allowance to replace funding from capital receipts for Housing Private and Public Sector schemes
- Take out prudential borrowing to fund capital schemes (although this will have an impact on the revenue budget)
- Provide more funding for the programme from revenue contributions and reserves
- Further develop and exploit opportunities to attract external funding – the successful bid for social housing grant to build new Council Houses at Elmstead is a good example of this approach
- Reprioritise the existing capital programme to focus on essential and unavoidable expenditure

8.5 Officers will review these options in conjunction with Members during the budget process. However, while this is a significant financial issue, given the medium term nature of the capital programme this situation can be dealt with over a number of years rather than requiring urgent action at this time.

## **9.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS / COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

9.1 There are no direct sustainability implications arising from this report.

## **10.0 RISK ASSESSMENT**

10.1 The budget setting process is part of the overall budgetary management and control framework that is designed to minimise the Council's financial risks. This process is resource intensive for both Members and Officers but ensures that a robust and achievable budget is set.

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### **Background Documents**

There are no background documents (as defined in section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

There is no evidence from an initial assessment of an adverse impact on equality in relation to the equality target groups.

### **Appendices**

None



**AGENDA ITEM: 13**

**CABINET: 17 November 2009**

**EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW &  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:  
3 December 2009**

**COUNCIL: 16 December 2009**

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**Report of: Council Secretary and Solicitor**

**Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor D Westley**

**Contact for further information: Mrs K Samosa (Ext. 5038)  
(E-mail: karen.samosa@westlancs.gov.uk)**

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**SUBJECT: REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND MID YEAR REVIEW 2009/2010**

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Wards Affected: Borough wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To agree the Revised Capital Programme 2009/2010 and provide Members with an overview on the progress against the Revised Capital Programme at the mid-year point.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET**

2.1 That the Revised Capital Programme, including the additional expenditure and virements contained within it, be approved for consideration by Council.

2.2 That the progress against the Revised Capital Programme at the mid-year point be noted.

2.3 That call in is not appropriate for this item as it is being referred to Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Council.

## **3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS TO EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

3.1 That the Revised Capital Programme and progress against it at the mid-year point be noted.

## **4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL**

- 4.1 That the Revised Capital Programme, including the additional expenditure and virements contained within it, be agreed.
  - 4.2 That progress against the Revised Capital Programme at the mid-year point be noted.
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## **5.0 BACKGROUND**

- 5.1 The Capital Programme is set on a three-year rolling basis and the Programmes for 2009/2010, 2010/2011 and 2011/2012 were approved by Council in February, 2009.
- 5.2 In accordance with the Capital Strategy, the Capital Programme is subject to revision at the mid-year point to ensure that it is based on the latest available information and to make monitoring of the Programme more meaningful. It enables Managers to review their schemes with the most up to date information and to review the resources available. It also provides a base upon which to build future Capital Programmes.
- 5.3 Members are kept informed of the financial position of the Capital Programme through regular monitoring reports. The last such report was presented to Cabinet in September 2009 and to Executive Overview and Scrutiny in October 2009 and reported on a Capital Programme of £16.576m for 2009/2010.

## **6.0 REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

- 6.1 Divisional Managers have reviewed their respective schemes and have made changes as a result of more up to date information that has become available. The reviews incorporated a number of considerations including:
  - re-profiling the phasing of schemes
  - changes to external funding availability
  - levels of anticipated funding required
  - anticipated levels of demand
- 6.2 Divisional Managers have also made budget virements to enable the Programme to progress and to re-align schemes to reflect spending profiles.
- 6.3 The Revised Capital Programme totals £12.413m for 2009/2010 and is analysed by Division in Appendix A along with a summary of the revised capital resources available. Changes made to the Programme show an overall reduction of £4.163m. This is mainly due to reprofiling of approvals into 2010/2011 of £4.392m and other net adjustments of £0.229m. The changes are analysed in Appendix B.
- 6.4 The Revised Programme includes an increase of £0.27m for new/additional expenditure in 2009/2010 and a further £0.06m over the medium term that will be funded from the VAT refund that is explained in the Revenue Mid Year Report elsewhere on this agenda. This funding will be used to develop the following schemes:



- Coronation Park, Skelmersdale (£90,000)
- Replacement play area at Manor Road Park, Burscough (£25,000)
- Extension to Richmond Park, Burscough scheme (£65,000)
- Replacement play equipment at Halsall Lane Park (£40,000)
- WiFi in Ormskirk Town Centre and Chapel Gallery (£2,000)
- Allotment Improvements (£18,000)
- Conservation Area grants (£90,000 over three years)

6.5 Members were advised in September of a successful bid for a grant of £0.807m for a Housing Development Scheme at Tanhouse that will cost £1.721m in total. Work is due to take place between March 2010 and March 2011. This has not yet been included in the Revised Programme as officers are continuing discussions with the DCLG and Homes and Community Agency to try and ensure the scheme is funded in the most advantageous method for the Council. Once this issue is finalised the scheme will be included in the Programme and details reported back to Members.

## **7.0 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE**

7.1 Generally, capital schemes are profiled with relatively low spending compared to budget in the early part of the financial year with increased spending as the year progresses. This reflects the fact that many new schemes have considerable lead in times, for example, because of the need to undertake the tendering process and award contracts at the start of the scheme. Other schemes are dependant on external partner funding and schemes can only begin once their funding details have been finalised. Other schemes include contract retentions or contingencies that will only be spent some time after completion of the contract. Most schemes then progress and spend in line with their approval by the year-end.

7.2 This pattern has been repeated in the current year with £2.398m (19%) of expenditure having been incurred by the mid-year. This is lower than the £3.448m (29%) at the same point in 2008/2009 and £3.678m (29%) in 2007/2008.

7.3 Members were advised in the previous monitoring report of additional funding that was made available to the Council after the budget was set. This included £1m additional MRA funding that has been brought forward from the 2010/2011 Programme and which needs to be spent in the current financial year along with £0.407m of additional Regional Housing Allocation funding. Expenditure plans for both are included in the revised programme and it is expected that this funding will be spent before the year end. There is also currently around £0.75m of other committed expenditure due to take place over the coming months.

7.4 Taking account of the additional funding plans, committed expenditure, and the new housing development, shows an increase in the percentage spend against the revised programme to 23%.

7.5 Appendix C provides the Divisional Managers' comments on the progress of schemes against the Revised Programme. Housing Public and Private Sector schemes represent 73% of the overall programme and consequently progress in these areas will largely determine the overall spending position at the year end.

- 7.6 The Council has taken the opportunity to form a partnership with Lancashire County Council to build a waste transfer station at Stanley Depot. The estimated cost of the scheme is in excess of £1.5m. The County Council are building the new transfer station at no cost to the Borough Council which means that the scheme is not included in the Borough's Capital Programme. The Borough Council, however, will benefit significantly from this enhancement to its asset.

## **8.0 CAPITAL RESOURCES**

- 8.1 There are sufficient resources identified to fund the Revised Capital Programme as shown in Appendix A.
- 8.2 The main area of the capital resources budget that is subject to variation is in relation to capital receipts. These are the useable proceeds from the sale of Council assets (mainly houses under Right to Buy legislation) that are available to fund capital expenditure. These receipts can vary significantly depending on the number and value of assets sold.
- 8.3 The previous monitoring report identified that, due to reasons beyond the control of the Council, only 2 sales had been achieved at the beginning of August against the target of 30 for the year. There have been no further sales to date.
- 8.4 This income position is being closely monitored and the medium term capital programme will be reviewed to address the situation. The Council has a large Capital Programme and consequently any income variations can be managed over a medium term timescale. This is particularly due to there being sufficient capital receipts having already been realised to fund the programme for the current and next years. This issue is discussed further in the Budget Prospects Report elsewhere on this Agenda.

## **9.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS/COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

- 9.1 The Capital Programme includes schemes that the Council plans to implement to enhance service delivery and assets. Individual project plans address sustainability and Community Strategy issues and links to Corporate Priorities. The Capital Programme also achieves the objectives of the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities by ensuring capital investment plans are affordable, prudent, and sustainable. This report provides an updated position on project plans and shows progress against them.

## **10.0 RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 10.1 Capital assets shape the way services are delivered for the long term and, as a result, create financial commitments. The formal reporting of performance against the Capital Programme is part of the overall budgetary management and control framework that is designed to minimise the financial risks facing the Council. Schemes within the Programme that are reliant on external contributions or decisions are not started until funding is secured and other resources that are subject to fluctuation are monitored closely to ensure availability. The capital receipts position is scrutinized on a regular basis and managed over the medium term to mitigate the risk of unfunded capital expenditure.

## **11.0 CONCLUSIONS**

- 11.1 The Capital Programme is subject to revision around the mid-year point to ensure that it is based on the latest available information and to make monitoring of the Programme more meaningful. It provides the opportunity of reviewing available resources and a basis upon which to build future Programmes.
- 11.2 The Capital Programme has been revised to £12.413m for 2009/2010. Members are asked to consider and approve the Revised Capital Programme, including the additional expenditure and virements contained within it, as a new basis against which Capital Schemes can be monitored.
- 11.3 Expenditure against the Revised Capital Programme at the mid-year point is £2.398m. This represents 19% of the Programme for the year which is a reduction on previous years' comparable figures.
- 11.4 It is expected that sufficient capital resources will be available to fund the current year's programme. However, the significant reduction in capital receipts being generated from asset sales means that the medium term capital programme will need to be reviewed in depth as part of the budget setting process.

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### **Background Documents:**

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

There is no evidence from an initial assessment of an adverse impact on equality in relation to the equality target groups.

### **Appendices:**

- A 2009/2010 Revised Capital Programme Expenditure and Resource Budgets and Mid Year Performance
- B Summary of Changes to 2009/2010 Capital Programme
- C Divisional Manager Comments at Mid-Year



**2009/2010 REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME  
EXPENDITURE AND RESOURCES BUDGET  
AND MID YEAR PERFORMANCE**

	Budget Approval	Actual	
	£'000	£'000	%
<b><u>Divisional Expenditure</u></b>			
Parish Capital Schemes	64	27	42%
Assistant Chief Executive	281	76	27%
Property Management	909	143	16%
Street Scene	40	0	0%
Planning, Regeneration and Estates	679	296	44%
Community Services	1,433	221	15%
Private Sector Housing	1,641	280	17%
Public Sector Housing	7,366	1,355	18%
<b><u>Expenditure Total</u></b>	<b>12,413</b>	<b>2,398</b>	<b>19%</b>
<b><u>Financed by:</u></b>			
Capital Receipts			
General	2,039		
Land Sales	150		
Transitional Pooling	1,089		
Specific Capital Grants	864		
Housing Allocation	959		
Major Repairs Allowance	5,757		
Internal Contributions			
Housing Revenue Account	819		
General Revenue Account	736		
<b><u>Resources Total</u></b>	<b>12,413</b>		



**2009/2010 REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME**  
**SUMMARY OF CHANGES**

SCHEME	Previously Reported Programme	Amendment to Approval	Revised Approval	Reason for Revision
	£'000	£'000	£'000	
<b>Budget Reported to Cabinet 15th September 2009</b>	<b>16,576</b>			
<b>Reprofile to/from future programmes</b>				
Abbotsford Regeneration	3,455	<b>-3,255</b>	200	Delay in planning application and signing of development agreement.
Skelmersdale Town Centre Project	200	<b>-50</b>	150	Delays on Town Centre project.
Corporate Property	619	<b>-190</b>	429	Investment plan revised and several projects will now be carried out in the next financial year.
Free Tree Scheme	3	<b>-2</b>	1	Ensure continued grant support in subsequent Programmes.
Preservation of Buildings at Risk	7	<b>-2</b>	5	Ensure continued grant support in subsequent Programmes.
Christmas Lights, Ormskirk	16	<b>-16</b>	0	Expenditure not anticipated in the current year.
Parish Councils	114	<b>-50</b>	64	Delays on starting and completion of parish capital schemes.
E-Government <sup>1</sup>	194	<b>-25</b>	169	Continued rollout of the GIS system and further development of the CRM system scheduled for the next financial year.

**2009/2010 REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME**  
**SUMMARY OF CHANGES**

SCHEME	Previously Reported Programme	Amendment to Approval	Revised Approval	Reason for Revision
	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Liverpool Road Playing Pitch	0	15	15	Transfer of unallocated approval from 2010/2011 Playground Improvement Programme to fund additional works.
Clearance Programme <sup>2</sup>	213	-159	54	Unallocated programme. May be required to assist with Empty Property Initiative.
Housing Renewal Loans	858	-658	200	Home Loan Scheme started late in the year.
		<b>-4,392</b>		
<b>Additional Expenditure Funded from VAT Refund</b>				
Coronation Park, Skelmersdale	0	90	90	Enhancements to park.
Replacement Play Area - Manor Road Park, Burscough <sup>3</sup>	0	25	25	Replacement play area.
Richmond Park, Burscough <sup>4</sup>	78	65	143	Extension to existing scheme.
Replacement Play Equipment - Halsall Lane Park, Ormskirk	0	40	40	Replacement play equipment.



**2009/2010 REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME**  
**SUMMARY OF CHANGES**

SCHEME	Previously Reported Programme	Amendment to Approval	Revised Approval	Reason for Revision
	£'000	£'000	£'000	
WiFi Ormskirk Town Centre and Chapel Gallery	0	2	2	Installation of WiFi zone.
Allotment Improvements	0	18	18	Improvements to Council allotment sites.
Conservation Area Enhancements	19	30	49	Grants for environmental enhancement schemes in accordance with conservation proposals. £30,000 is also to be added to each of the <b>2010/11</b> and <b>2011/12</b> Programmes.
		<b>270</b>		
<b>Other Adjs</b>				
Replacement Play Area - Manor Road Park, Burscough <sup>3</sup>	25	40	65	Additional Play Builder funding secured to match the Council's contribution from the VAT refund.
Office Refurbishment	512	<b>-32</b>	480	Removal costs transferred to revenue to reflect the nature of the expenditure.
Investing in Business	148	<b>-77</b>	71	Budget based on estimated demand which has now been finalised and is lower than anticipated. Scheme due to end March 2010. Any grant funding not spent will not be re-claimed.

**2009/2010 REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME**  
**SUMMARY OF CHANGES**

SCHEME	Previously Reported Programme	Amendment to Approval	Revised Approval	Reason for Revision
	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Inspire Project	301	-136	165	Budget based on estimated demand which has now been finalised and is lower than anticipated. Scheme due to end March 2010. Any grant funding not spent will not be re-claimed.
Gorsey Place	122	-59	63	Tender less than budget. Unused funding to remain in the Industrial Portfolio for alternative use.
Cycling Projects	13	52	65	Expanded route at Whitemoss funded from S106 monies.
Richmond Park, Burscough <sup>4</sup>	143	48	191	Scheme extended and funded from S106 monies.
E-Government <sup>1</sup>	169	-10	159	Unallocated to projects and no longer required. Funding returned to Capital Pot.
Clearance Programme <sup>2</sup>	54	46	100	Contribution towards Programme from Riverside Housing.
Disabled Adaptations	490	157	647	Extension of programme to meet demand. Funded from HRA.
Communal Areas <sup>5</sup>	362	-70	292	Transfer of expenditure to the HRA to reflect the revenue nature of the plans.
		-41		

**2009/2010 REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME**  
**SUMMARY OF CHANGES**

SCHEME	Previously Reported Programme	Amendment to Approval	Revised Approval	Reason for Revision
	£'000	£'000	£'000	
<b>Significant Virements</b>				
Skelmersdale Town Centre	150	<b>-150</b>	0	) Budget moved to reflect nature of expenditure.
Nye Bevan Roof	0	150	150	
Electrical Upgrades	291	<b>-190</b>	101	)
Heating Systems	644	<b>-102</b>	542	)
Replacement Kitchens and Bathrooms	1,072	<b>-22</b>	1,050	) Realignment of budgets to reflect target
Replacement Windows	1,459	109	1,568	) framework costs received through tendering
Re-Roofing	310	59	369	) plus essential health and safety works.
Sheltered Upgrades	607	100	707	)
Communal Areas <sup>5</sup>	292	41	333	)
Structural Works	602	5	607	)
		<b>0</b>		
<b>Total Amendments</b>		<b>-4,163</b>		
<b>Revised Capital Programme</b>			<b>12,413</b>	

**Note:** There will be an additional £20,000 costs incurred on project managing the additional Leisure schemes. These costs are excluded from the Revised Capital Programme due to the nature of the expenditure.

**References** <sup>1 2 3 4 5</sup> indicate schemes with more than one amendment.



**REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2009/2010**  
**DIVISIONAL MANAGER COMMENTS**  
**AT MID YEAR POINT**

<b>Parish Capital Schemes</b>
The spending on grants to Parish Councils is determined by the progress that Parishes make on individual schemes and is not within the direct control of the Council. In overall terms, progress is slow and options are being explored to encourage Parishes to spend their allocations more quickly.
<b>Assistant Chief Executive</b>
The rollout of Electronic Document Management is dependent of the outcome of Organisational Re-engineering projects and the ICT Infrastructure Scheme is dependent upon the demand for replacement and upgrade. The EGovernment Programme is progressing and projects will continue into the next financial year.
<b>Street Scene</b>
An order has been placed for the Vehicle Tracking System and delivery is expected in 2009. The budget is then expected to be fully utilised in the year.
<b>Planning, Regeneration and Estates</b>
Both Investing in Business and Inspire budgets were based on estimated demand for grants which are reimbursed by NWDA. This demand has been finalised and is lower than anticipated. Both schemes are due for completion by the end of the financial year. Outline planning consent has been granted for Abbotsford Regeneration enabling this scheme to progress to the detailed design stage. The Burscough Town Centre scheme is complete as is the Re-Roofing at Gorsey Place although invoices are still awaited. Works on the Investment Centre Car Park are progressing and will be completed by the end of the year. The budget for Skelmersdale Town Centre is to be used to fund the replacement roof of Nye Bevan Pool and has been transferred to Community Services. An expanded cycle route at Whitemoss has been completed and the remaining budgets for the Free Tree Scheme, Conservation Area Enhancements and Preservation of Buildings at risk are committed.

**REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2009/2010**  
**DIVISIONAL MANAGER COMMENTS**  
**AT MID YEAR POINT**

**Community Services**

Works are ongoing on the Contaminated Land, Environmental Health System, Play Engagement, and Community Environmental Action schemes. Orders have been placed for Richmond Park, where the pavilion is due for installation in November, and at Coronation Park, where the entrance feature is also due for installation in November. Orders have also been placed for Play Area Improvements and Big Lottery funding is awaited on this scheme. The Leisure Trust contract is continuing and outstanding refurbishment works at the Gallery are still to be finalised. Minor floodlighting works are still to be undertaken at Liverpool Road Playing Pitch before the final Football foundation payment will be received. The funding of the anticipated overspend on this scheme will be identified from underspends on other schemes as details are finalised. Market stalls have been purchased for Moor Street and stalls for Aughton Street will be assessed when the works on the Clock Tower/Aughton Street are complete.

**Housing Private Sector**

The Disabled Facility Grants are on target to deliver the full Programme for the year. Renovation Grant approvals are committed and the Loans Scheme agreement has recently been signed and loans are now being processed. The timing of expenditure on the Clearance Programme is uncertain due to the need to complete legal procedures. Officers are in discussions with DCLG regarding the use of the Affordable Housing budget for the Elmstead Regeneration Project.

**Housing Public Sector**

There has been a slow start to some schemes within the procurement framework due to negotiations on target costs. These have now been agreed with contractors and budgets have been realigned to reflect these costs. Most schemes are scheduled to finish by the end of the financial year although there is likely to be retentions on some contracts. One Bathroom contract has been delayed until next year and completion of works to Marlborough Court may extend to June 2010. Installation proposals are awaited for the Beechwood Court lift and tenders have been received for structural works in Old Skelmersdale as have quotations for structural works at Whitburn.

REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2009/2010  
DIVISIONAL MANAGER COMMENTS  
AT MID YEAR POINT

**Corporate Property**

Investment plans have been revised and the remaining schemes, including the Office Refurbishment, are progressing.