

EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM: 6

HELD: 1 JULY 2010

Start: 7.30pm

Finish:

PRESENT:

Councillor: O'Toole (Chairman)

Councillors:	Mrs Atherley	Hennessey
	Mrs Blake	Mawdesley
	Coyle	Ms Melling
	Cropper	Moran
	Evans	Nolan
	Furey	R A Pendleton
	Gartside	Pope
	Grice	Pratt
	Hanlon	

In attendance:

Councillors: Cotterill (Leader of the Labour Group)
Grant (Leader)
Mrs Hopley (Portfolio Holder Housing)
Westley (Portfolio Holder Finance and Performance Management)

Officers: Executive Manager Housing and Property Maintenance Services
(Mr B Livermore)
Interim Head of Planning Policy & Environment (Mr I Gill)
Access to Services and Performance Manager (Mr S Walsh)
Legal Services Manager (Mr T P Broderick)
Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer (Mrs C A Jackson)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of the Councillor Forshaw, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation.

2. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, Members noted the termination of membership of Councillors G M Roberts and Tattersall and the appointment of respectively Councillors Mrs Atherley and Ms Melling for this meeting only, thereby giving effect to the wishes of the Political Groups.

3. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

4. 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.

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1. Councillor Grant declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Item 7 (Call-In Item – Performance Award Grant) as Leader and Chairman of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) as the reason for call in made reference to the funding processes undertaken by the LSP and left the Chamber during the discussion of this item.
2. Councillor Cropper declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Item 7 as a Member of the LSP Executive Committee stating that as he had served on that Committee that had made the recommendation referred to and left the Chamber during discussion of this item.
3. Councillor Westley declared a personal interest in Item 7 as a Member of Lancashire County Council and Member of the Funding Management Group of the LSP. Councillor Westley left the Chamber during discussion of this item.
4. Councillor Cotterill declared a personal interest in Item 7 as a Member of the Funding Management Group of the LSP. Councillor Cotterill left the Chamber during discussion of this item.
5. Councillor Mrs Blake declared a personal interest in Item 7 as Vice-Chairman of the LSP.
6. Councillor O'Toole declared a personal interest in Item 7 as a Member of the LSP.
7. Councillor Hennessey declared a personal interest in Item 7 referring to her employment in the NHS and her membership of the Health & Well-Being Thematic Group.

5. DECLARATIONS OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of a party whip.

6. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 31 March 2010 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

7. CALLED IN ITEM

Consideration was given to the following called in item, as circulated and contained on pages 7 to 18 of the Book of Reports.

8. PERFORMANCE REWARD GRANT

Consideration was given to the report of the Council Secretary and Solicitor advising that a decision of Cabinet in relation to the above item (minute 20 refers) had received a call in requisition signed by five Members of the Committee. The report set out the reason given for the call in, together with the alternative decision put forward by the 5 Members concerned on the requisition notice.

A Member sought comments particularly on the process undertaken by the Local Strategic Partnership's Executive to recommend for Performance Reward Grant (PRG) funding the 'Supporting and Strengthening CCTV' project and the function of the Funding Management Group.

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In response the Access to Services & Performance Manager drew attention to the comments from the Assistant Chief Executive, set out at paragraph 4.1 (a) and (b) of the Call-In Report, which laid down the dissolution of the Funding Management Group, together with the suggested amendments of the role of the LSP Executive in relation to PRG following a review of the LSP Constitution.

In respect of the suggestion that a more clear transparent process for the allocation of PRG funding is needed, it was noted that the Secretariat had been devised with a view to being open, transparent and fully engaging with partners but welcomed suggestions about how the Executive could further improve the openness and transparency of the process and asked that comments, if any, be passed to them before 7 July 2010.

The Chairman reported that the Deputy Leader of the County Council had since provided an update based upon information released from Government on the whole grant system and once this was disseminated this too would help to provide a clearer picture of the position regarding PRG.

During the ensuing discussion Members raised questions/queries relating to the following items:-

- Revenue and Capital within the settlement
- Scoring Criteria
- Allocation of the CCTV monies
- Other Projects.

In response reference was made to the Minutes of a previous meeting of the LSP which had discussed the approach to allocating PRG monies and the Access to Services & Performance Manager made an undertaking to provide copies of the Minutes when these were available. However, the Committee was also reminded that due to the withdrawal of at least half of the Government funding that the LSP would again need to decide how the reduced allocation would be spent and this process would recommence at its next meeting in July.

RESOLVED: That this Committee does not wish to ask for a different decision in relation to this item.

9. KEY DECISION FORWARD PLANS - 1 MAY - 31 AUGUST, 1 JUNE - 30 SEPTEMBER & 1 JULY - 31 OCTOBER 2010

At the request of a Member of the Committee the item "A Revitalised Demand-Responsive Transport System for Skelmersdale", that had originally been listed on the 1 May and 1 June Key Decision Forward Plan (KDFP) for consideration by Cabinet at its meeting on 15 June 2010, but which, as notified to Members of the Committee, had subsequently been removed from the 1 July Plan, had been placed on the agenda for discussion.

The Interim Head of Planning Policy & Environment explained the reason why the item had been removed from the KDFP stating that match funding for the initiative (Kickstart) had not been secured. He further explained that the Transport Thematic Group had recently met to discuss how this matter should now be taken forward and that

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discussions would be taking place with Lancashire County Council (LCC) in an effort to explore other funding streams and alternative schemes. He concluded that once the latter had been undertaken a report would be brought to Cabinet.

During the ensuing discussion Members raised questions/queries relating to the following items:

- The positioning of the Business Plan.
- The availability of the “two mini-buses”
- Transport Service Tender Exercise and possible link with Dial-A-Ride
- A Transport Delivery Scheme in Skelmersdale
- Use of 106 monies to assist.

In response an explanation of the tender exercise processes and the use, safeguarding and retention of the allocated 106 monies was provided.

RESOLVED: A. That the response by the Interim Head of Planning Policy & Environment be noted.

- B. That it be noted that a report in relation to a demand responsive transport system for Skelmersdale would be submitted to Cabinet later in its cycle once the exploration of other funding alternatives and discussions, particularly with LCC, had concluded.

10. RELEVANT MINUTES OF CABINET

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 16 June 2010. Members raised questions/comments on Minute 21 – Review of Graffiti Reporting and Management Arrangements in respect of:

- responsibility for delivery
- the availability of the Task Group’s report
- Single point reporting and “hot-line” facility through the web-site.
- Education and other initiatives to dissuade counter graffiti “vandalism”.

RESOLVED: That it be noted that the Executive Manager Street Scene will provide an Article on the operation of the new arrangements in relation to Graffiti Reporting and Management Arrangements.

11. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE PLAN AND SUITE OF INDICATORS 2010/11

Consideration was given to the report of the Assistant Chief Executive as contained on pages 33 to 77 of the Book of Reports which sought the views on the scope, content and strategic focus of the draft Corporate Performance Plan 2010/11 and which provided an update on the progress that had been made towards achieving the Corporate Priorities in 2009/10. The report detailed the outturns for 2009/10 and targets for the next three years and sought approval for the draft Corporate Performance Plan 2010/11 and the Suite of Performance Indicators to be adopted as the Council’s performance management framework and strategic plan for 2010/11.

Comments were received in respect of:

- Council Tax collection performance indicator
- Staff Absences (working days lost due to sickness) indicator
- Processing of “Major” and “Minor” planning applications indicators
- Previously developed land that has been vacant or derelict for more than 5 years
- Use of leisure and cultural facilities (swims and visits) indicator
- Children and young people’s satisfaction with parks and play areas indicator
- The objective for 2010/11 in relation to “. . . minimise levels of Council Tax and housing rent”
- The initiative for 2010/11 in relation to “pursuing a range of efficiency and cost cutting measures”
- The reference to alternate weekly collection “across the Radburn designed estates of Skelmersdale”.
- The target for 2010/11 referencing affordable homes in West Lancashire.

RESOLVED: A. That the contents of Appendices A and B to the report and comments raised be noted.

B. That it be noted that the contents of Appendices A and B and the progress in achieving the 2009/10 Corporate Priorities will be updated and revised before consideration of these documents by Council.

C. That subject to the revised information referred to in B above, the draft Corporate Performance Plan 2010/11 and Suite of Performance Indicators (Appendices A and B) be recommended to Council for adoption as the Council’s performance management framework and strategic plan for 2010/11.

12. THE REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL HOUSING IN ENGLAND FROM APRIL 2010

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Manager Housing and Property Maintenance Services which advised that the Regulatory Framework became effective, subject to the necessary Statutory Instrument being made by Government on 1 April 2010. Members were informed that a further report would go to Cabinet seeking to agree the standards and any local offers, together with governance arrangements once discussions with tenants in relation to the deliver of the regulatory requirement had concluded.

Members raised questions/comments in relation to the following:

- The possibility of the abolition of the Tenants Services Authority (TSA) and the effect on the proposals coming forward.
- The work proposed to be undertaken by the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the governance arrangements for tenant services.
- Strategic discussions via Tenants Forum meetings in terms of the “Standards” being introduced by the TSA.

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RESOLVED: That the report and comments raised be noted.

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Chairman