

**BUDGET AND
PERFORMANCE PANEL**

4.30 P.M.

10TH JUNE 2008

PRESENT:- Councillors Roger Sherlock (Chairman), Tina Clifford, Jean Dent,
Keran Farrow, Sarah Fishwick, Mike Greenall, Ian McCulloch,
John Whitelegg and Peter Williamson

Officers in attendance:-

Roger Muckle	Corporate Director (Finance and Performance)
Jane Alder	Head of Information and Customer Services
Mark Davies (part)	Head of City Council (Direct) Services
Liz Stokes	Corporate Performance Manager
Stephen Metcalfe	Principal Democratic Support Officer
Jon Stark	Democratic Support Officer

1 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

The Chairman invited nominations for the Vice-Chairman of the Budget and Performance Panel for the Municipal Year 2008/09.

It was proposed by Councillor Greenall and seconded by Councillor McCulloch:-

“That Councillor Whitelegg be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Budget and Performance Panel for the Municipal Year 2008/09.”

It was also proposed by Councillor Williamson and seconded by Councillor Clifford:-

“That Councillor Fishwick be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Budget and Performance Panel for the Municipal Year 2008/09.”

Upon being put to the vote 5 Members voted for Councillor Whitelegg and 3 Members voted in favour of Councillor Fishwick, whereupon the Chairman declared Councillor Whitelegg Vice-Chairman of the Panel for the Municipal Year 2008/09.

Resolved:-

That Councillor Whitelegg be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Budget and Performance Panel for the Municipal Year 2008/09.

2 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29th April 2008 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIRMAN

The Corporate Director introduced an item of urgent business regarding participation in the Lancashire Improvement and Efficiency Partnership – Team Lancashire. The item

was regarded as urgent due to the requirement to nominate participants in advance of the events, one of which was due to take place prior to the next meeting of the Panel.

It was reported that attendance was required by one Panel Member at the launch event of the sub-regional Lancashire Improvement and Efficiency Partnership, or Team Lancashire, on 10th July 2008 and by two Members at the regional North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnership event, with a date to be rescheduled.

Resolved:-

- (1) That Councillor Sherlock attends the Lancashire Improvement and Efficiency Partnership event to be held on Thursday, 10th July 2008.
- (2) That Councillors Fishwick and Greenall attend the North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnership roadshow on a date to be confirmed.

4 LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REPORT 2007/08

The Head of City Council (Direct) Services (CC(D)S) delivered a presentation on the results of the Local Environment Quality pilot study carried out by Environmental Campaigns (ENCAMs) on behalf of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). Members were advised that the study measured standards of cleanliness across a variety of criteria allowing comparison with the measurements for the same study carried out at each Council across the country.

It was reported that results for the City Council very closely matched the national averages, however it was evident that a number of criteria were being assessed as 'unsatisfactory' or 'poor'. Members were advised that measures such as a review of the cleaning schedules carried out by CC(D)S had been introduced since the study had been carried out and Officers were confident a repeated study would show improvement in a number of areas.

It was agreed that the Lancashire Locals be requested to consider being presented with the results of the study to make them aware of the findings as Lancashire County Council was noted as the responsible Highway authority. Members expressed a desire for the County Council to work more closely with the City Council on cleanliness issues in view of their shared responsibility for the service.

Resolved:-

That Lancashire Locals be requested to add the presentation and findings of the Local Environment Quality Study to a forthcoming Agenda and also be requested to consider methods of closer joint working and more effective communication between the City and County Councils on matters of dual responsibility such as cleanliness and environment quality.

5 4TH CORPORATE PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

The Corporate Director (Finance and Performance) introduced a report providing the Panel with an update on the 4th Quarterly Corporate Performance Monitoring, including agreed actions from Performance Review Team Meetings, as set out by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for performance management. It was reported that seven

actions had been agreed in respect of the fourteen indicators which had been identified as underperforming.

Members were advised that the Annual Report (formerly the Best Value Performance Plan) would be available for the Panel's consideration at its meeting on 15th July 2008, and progress reports would also be available for Members on the actions set to address the underperforming indicators.

It was reported that the Capital Receipts deficit had reduced significantly as the target had been adjusted at revised estimate time for 2007/08 and some anticipated receipts had been rescheduled into 2008/09. Members were also advised that the completion date for the transfer of Luneside East had been marginally missed due to a delay with a partnership body but the transfer had now been completed. It was reported that the Council had an empty dwellings policy, which also dealt with privately owned properties, and this was in the process of revision with the renewal of the Council's Housing Strategy.

The Corporate Director (Finance and Performance) then outlined the details of the Corporate Financial Monitoring Report for Quarter 4 and informed Members that there was a projected underspend of approximately £400k. However, it was noted this may be subject to further amendment following the full outturn report. It was reported that Cabinet would be considering the outturn report at its meeting on 29th July and Members were requested to consider holding an additional Panel meeting on the afternoon of that day so that consideration could be given to that report and also the outstanding report on Festivals and Events.

Resolved:-

- (1) That the report and actions taken by Cabinet Member with responsibility for Performance Management be noted.
- (2) That the Panel notes that the Annual Report (formerly the Best Value Performance Plan) will be available for consideration at the meeting scheduled for 15th July 2008.
- (3) That an additional meeting be arranged commencing at 4.30pm on Tuesday, 29th July 2008 at Lancaster Town Hall to consider the Revenue and Capital Outturn report, considered by Cabinet on the same date, and the Festivals and Events report.

6 CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRES UPDATE

The Head of Information and Customer Services introduced a report on the initial performance of the new Customer Service Centres (CSCs) which opened in October 2007. It was reported that the centres opened on time and on budget and positive feedback had been received from both staff and customers.

Members were advised that there had been a steady increase in footfall at both centres since opening, particularly in Morecambe, although Morecambe Town Hall still only represented 27% of the total footfall across both sites. It was reported that additional services were being transferred to the Morecambe centre in addition to Citizens' Advice Bureau staff working from there, such as the Pension Service, the Council's homeless services and case workers from SAL's Place in conjunction with Lancashire Constabulary.

Members were advised that the abandonment rate of telephone calls was at 4%, despite the increase in call volume of 28%, which compared to an abandonment rate of over 20% experienced by CC(D)S prior to their inclusion in the Customer Service Centres. It was reported that Officers were investigating alternative arrangements to further reduce the amount of cash being transacted at the CSCs. Members were advised that all the Council's frontline services were undergoing a 'mystery shopper' exercise to evaluate the level of customer service being offered and the results would be available in autumn 2008.

Resolved:-

That the report be noted.

7 WORK PROGRAMME REPORT

The Democratic Support Officer introduced a report to update Members with regard to the Work Programme of the Panel. Members were advised of the items that would be available for their consideration at the meeting on 15th July 2008 and also of a number of upcoming training events that they may wish to attend.

Resolved:-

That the report be noted.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 6.08 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Jon Stark, Democratic Services - telephone (01524) 582132
or email jstark@lancaster.gov.uk**