

Subject: Public Realm Integration Project

Status: For Publication

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 25th November 2009

Report of: Chief Executive.

Portfolio

Holder: Portfolio Holder for Environment

Key Decision: Yes

Forward Plan General Exception Special Urgency

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 Inform Cabinet of the ongoing work in relation to the Lancashire County Council's Public Realm Integration Project.

2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

2.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities:-

- Delivering quality Services to our customers
- Delivering regeneration across the Borough
- Encouraging healthy and respectful communities
- Keeping our Borough clean, green and safe
- Promoting the Borough
- Providing value for money services

3. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

3.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:

- The cost implications and future management issues have yet to be quantified.

4 BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

4.1 The "public realm" is best described as "a fence to fence" service, covering e.g. highways, grass verges, trees and shrubs, street lights, signs, street furniture

and litter. These are issues that matter to local people and that are important in defining a positive sense of place.

4.2 In the current two-tier structure these services are delivered by both Lancashire County Council and the District Councils. Whilst this has the potential for disjointed delivery and a lack of accountability the reality is that the public don't care who delivers the services, only that they are to a good standard and provide value for money.

4.3 In recognition of this challenge, Team Lancashire sponsored a pilot project to improve integration between Lancashire County Council and Burnley and South Ribble Borough Councils. Whilst the pilot works with Burnley Borough Council focused on strategic planning issues, the South Ribble Borough Council pilot focused on Streetscene/public realm services. This pilot has been evaluated and is widely seen as being a success and it is intended to develop this work further and roll this out to all 12 District Councils.

4.4 The pilot work at South Ribble Borough Council focused on the 'clean and green agenda' and this is seen as phase one of the public realm project. Learning from the pilot made it clear though that this does not capture all the areas of interest/concerns from the District Councils and therefore the project is defined into the following phases:

- Phase 1 clean and green (as above).
- Phase 2 public realm management, including signage, street Furniture, street clutter and removal of obstructions.
- Phase 3 safe and sustainable communities with a focus on better integration of enforcement and inspection regimes.
- Phase 4 strategic planning.

4.5 The report is recommending that officers commence detailed discussions with the County Council in order to understand how the project will work and importantly to agree a process of member and wider stakeholder engagement. A further report will be presented to Cabinet in due course once the operational and financial implications are known. In addition it is intended to discuss with Green Vale Homes to assess if they can contribute to the project.

4.6 The project key milestones are as follows:-

Task	Time Scales - Months					
	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Discussions with LCC project officer to agree project understanding scope						
Calculation of Financial and operational issues						
Member engagement sessions						
Cabinet for decision to proceed with project						

COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

5. SECTION 151 OFFICER

5.1 As noted in the report any financial implications have yet to be quantified.

6. MONITORING OFFICER

6.1 Occupiers liability issues for the Council where we are the land owner are important considerations as well as monitoring the services delivered in terms of Health & Safety.

7. HEAD OF PEOPLE AND POLICY (ON BEHALF OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)

7.1 The report has no Human resource implications

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 The pilot project in South Ribble showed that improved co-ordination across a range of Highway, transport and environmental activities resulted in more efficient and customer focused service. In addition, working relationships and understanding between officers at County and District level were improved as traditional cultural barriers were removed. Furthermore, it is anticipated that these same benefits, along with the opportunity to improve the quality of services offered by Rossendale, would assist in delivering some of the recommendations of the Grass cutting task and finish group.

9. RECOMMENDATION(S)

9.1 That Cabinet agrees to the commencement of the Public Realm Integration Project.

9.2 A further report be presented in due course identifying the operational and financial consequences in relation to the Borough Council.

10. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

10.1 Portfolio Holder for the Environment

11. COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is a Community Impact Assessment required No

Is a Community Impact Assessment attached No

12. BIODIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment required No

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment attached No

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Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
LCC Public Realm Cabinet Report oct09	Henrietta Street
LCC Public Realm Cabinet Appendix oct09	Henrietta Street