

# Report to Council

Agenda  
Item:

**11(iii)(b)**

Meeting Date: 9th September 2014  
Public / Private Public  
Title: ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
PANEL - CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – CLLR NEDVED

The Panel met on the 14th August to scrutinise an interim report on Talkin Tarn Business Plan, update report on the Carlisle City Centre (Draft) Development Framework and update report on the Sense of Place Programme.

The Panel also agreed the Terms of Reference for the Litter Bin Review Task Group who had held their initial meeting on the 24th July. Cllr Dodd was appointed as Lead Member to the Task Group. The Panel received an invitation from Resources O&S Panel to nominate two Members to sit on the Member Empowerment and Involvement Task Group and Cllrs Caig and Nedved were appointed. Claimed Rights had been an agenda item at the last Panel meeting and Members were notified that Officers from Cumbria County Council had met with their solicitors on the 12th August to discuss the Memorandum of Understanding. Members were also supplied with the Carlisle Weed Spraying Programme for 2014 with a commitment for two applications with a third on the basis of need.

The Panel gave consideration to the most recent publication of Key Decisions and were informed of how to access the reports which were not on the agenda of the Panel – namely Adoption of North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan and the Development at Rosehill.

Members were advised that the Panel meeting on October 21st would be held at the Business Interaction Centre with emphasis on business support.

## **Talkin Tarn.**

The Neighbourhoods and Green Spaces Manager presented an interim report on the development of a business plan for Talkin Tarn Country Park which included the financial information and a SWOT analysis. This was building on and responding to work undertaken by a Task and Finish Group in the last Civic Year. The Business Plan would be submitted to the Panel in October. A visual presentation was provided which demonstrated changes and improvements at the Tarn. The Panel were advised on events, sporting activities, improvements at the Tea-room, marketing initiatives and the rare plants and wildlife that can be seen.

Members were informed that an estimated 120,000 people visited the Park each year and the expenditure for the 2013/14 year, including maintenance of the park and running the tea room, was £183,000. The parks contribution to central recharges brought the figure to £243,000. The total income was £248,500 leaving a surplus of £5,500 on the year. The average contribution per visitor is currently £1.00. Visitor numbers are slowly increasing however this is very weather dependent.

A request was made that the Panel would be provided with a copy of the Customer Satisfaction survey at a future meeting.

### **Carlisle City Centre (Draft) Development Framework.**

A report and presentation was provided by the Director of Economic Development updating Members on recommendations and key proposals within the draft City Centre Development Framework. Mr Argent, Consultant with GVA who had led on the retail capacity study was present to answer technical queries on the framework..

A five week consultation was underway until 1st September and Members were provided with a consultation leaflet providing in detail recommendations for all the character areas and the preferred option identifying retail needs.. These proposals would be fed into the emerging new Local Plan.

Each character area had been categorised according to their potential for future change guiding future development in Carlisle City Centre to 2030.

A lively discussion ensued with particular questioning of the Rickergate proposals and the implications for the Civic Centre and adjoining properties. The Panel considered the evidence for the proposed 200,000 sq ft additional retail capacity and looked at traffic considerations and online shopping. Other character areas identified in the report including Lowther Street car-park, the future use of the Citadel buildings and the proposed County Council offices in Botchergate were also discussed .

A report on the responses from the consultation would be submitted to the next Panel meeting and a full report submitted as part of the consideration of the Local Plan.

### **Sense of Place Programme.**

A report was submitted updating Panel Members on the Sense of Place programme, including the Ambassador Scheme, the Carlisle Story and the Prospectus for Carlisle as a promotional document.

Members were advised there were 59 organisations signed up to the Ambassador programme and a series of events had been held. Questions were raised relating to participation, cost of membership and whether this was affordable for small businesses. Members also wanted to know more about the effectiveness and achievements the Ambassador programme and the Economy,

Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder and Deputy Chief Executive fielded questions on tourism and business involvement.

The Panel were informed about the purpose and target audience for the Prospectus for Carlisle and noted that this had achieved national recognition.

The position of Place Manager, a post jointly funded by the City Council and the private sector, was advertised to work with the Ambassadors and local business however the recruiting Panel were unable to make an appointment.

Concern was raised whether the Ambassador programme as a result of the failure to appoint would lose momentum. however options for the role were being reviewed with ownership with the steering group. which the City Council was supporting. A further report would be submitted in March 2015.

Full details of the discussions to be found within the minute book.