

**Report of the
CORPORATE RESOURCES
O & S COMMITTEE**

**Chairman
Cllr B.O. EARP**

The first meeting of the Corporate Resources O & S Committee was held on the 14th June 2007 in the presence of six members of the Executive.

Cllr N. Lishman was appointed Vice Chairman for the 2007/8 Municipal Year.

The Head of Scrutiny requested that members give consideration to an in depth scrutiny subject, which they would undertake during the year, and send their suggestions to the Chairman or to him with the intention of a full discussion at the next meeting.

A major part of the meeting was the deliberation on the third and final draft of the City's Corporate Improvement Plan. Members were able to hold the Executive to account on Policy and Performance in addition to asking Corporate Directors/Officers questions on Facts and Figures. Minor alterations of the text to clarify and emphasize certain details were needed, and, resolved.

The Committee looked forward to a detailed Report, outlining progress by the Head of Revenues and Benefits, being submitted to the next meeting in September.

Information regarding the Authority's Appraisal Scheme was sought and the Head of Personnel and Development Services, Mr D. Williams complied. He gave details of the background and an analysis of the problem, (i.e. inadequate compliance with the requirement to participate in the scheme) and positive actions to redress the situation. After questions members resolved that they welcomed the report and looked forward to a further account in October which should incorporate their concerns.

The Head of Financial Services answered queries relating to the Provisional Outturn Reports. Additional comments: -

- i) Use of acronyms without explicit explanations deplored.**
- ii) The positions of variances and carry forwards would be more easily monitored if they were expressed as percentages.**
- iii) The underspend position, greatly improved.**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Performance Management was questioned as to his advice to the Executive regarding carry forward requests. The explanation given satisfied the Committee.

Relating to the Capital Outturn Report, members concluded that there was a requirement for a better Budget profiling in order to prevent and minimise slippage. Additional concerns apropos the VAT limit issue, and where possible, relevant work should be executed in house to mitigate the problem.

Members welcomed the draft Medium Term Financial Plan 2008/9-2010/11 (combining the Corporate Charging Policy) but expressed concern at the implications a delay in progressing the Shared Services agenda may have.

The draft Capital Strategy 2008/9 – 2010/11 was considered to be useful, and comprehensible, and the Committee looked forward to scrutinising the document in the near future.

With regard to the draft Asset Management Plan 2008/9 – 2010/11 members had serious concerns at the proposal to amend the current Policy to allow the Executive to make decisions on the disposal of land at less than the market value. The Committee opposed this motion and recommended that the Executive adhere to the terms set out in Minute Ex 115/07. The Director of Development Services was requested to report to a future meeting of the Committee on the review of the Council's Surplus Assets.

Carlisle Renaissance Funding Delivery Report had been submitted as an urgent item of business for this meeting to consider. However, as the meeting had already been in session for 3 hours and the details with most members for only 24/36 hours, it was resolved to delay this item on two counts. Firstly, the Corporate Director for Carlisle Renaissance was not in attendance and secondly, due to the very important and sensitive subject matter, it required more time.

Agreed that a special meeting be called for the 28th June 2007 at 10 a.m. to solely discuss this Agenda Item.

The meeting reconvened on the 28th June 2007 at 10a.m. to consider the Concept Proposal Funding Application for Carlisle Renaissance to the N. W. D. A. In attendance were the Corporate Directors of Corporate Services and Carlisle Renaissance.

Mr Ian McNichol gave a short presentation on "Where we are now" and "How are we to proceed".

A discussion ensued and questions were answered. Finally members resolved : -

- i) The Committee was of the opinion that the physical regeneration, linked to the economic and social regeneration, as well as the educational issues identified, was important to the future of Carlisle.**
- ii) The Committee also recognise that the economic growth within Carlisle cannot be sustained without a growth in population and wish to see efforts made to encourage that.**
- iii) Arrangements be put in hand to allow scrutiny of the Carlisle Renaissance initiative to take place, via a joint scrutiny combining the three O & S Committees OR the establishment of a stand alone Carlisle Renaissance Overview and Scrutiny Committee**