

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (SPECIAL)

WEDNESDAY 3 APRIL 2002 AT 3.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor Guest (Chairman), Councillors Bain, Jefferson, Morton (substitute for Councillor Blackadder), Parsons, J Prest and Styth.

CROS.39/02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Blackadder and Bradley.

CROS.40/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING DECLARATIONS OF "THE PARTY WHIP")

There were no declarations of interest or declarations of "the party whip" relating to any item on the Agenda.

CROS.41/02 CORPORATE PLAN WORKSHOP

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive submitted report TC.67/02 providing a background to, and summarising the outcome of, the recent Corporate Planning Workshop. The views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees were being sought with regard to various City Vision priorities which were considered appropriate for the Council to include in the Corporate Plan. This Committee's remit covered the priorities under the City Vision theme "Celebrating Carlisle."

A Member referred to the Workshop on the Corporate Plan held on 21 March 2002 to which an invitation to attend had been extended to all non-Executive Members of the City Council. He expressed disappointment that only eleven Members had participated in the Workshop.

Members of the Committee then considered the various priorities and made comments as follows:-

1. General

(a) Members considered that problems associated with fly tipping in dykes and grass verges on the outskirts of the City needed to be addressed.

It was also considered that entrances to some housing estates were dowdy and in need of environmental improvements.

(b) Reference was made to the fact that, in the summer months, hanging baskets were displayed on all the approaches to the City with the exception of the western approach. The Committee considered that this omission needed to be addressed.

(c) With regard to the City Vision priority of ensuring all children have a good start in life, a Member referred to the role Community Centres played in supporting young families through play groups, creches, etc. There were also private sector nurseries which could be targeted with leaflets about events for children being held by the City Council, for example at Tullie House.

2. Comments on "Celebrating Carlisle" City Vision Theme

(a) Key priority – *"Carlisle needs to have one strong, clear identity which is properly communicated and consistent across all sectors: tourism, inward investment, cultural sector and so on. Carlisle's rich inheritance and culture needs to be central to its external identity."*

Members considered that promotions such as the Open for Business campaign and the Border City campaign had proved to be successful and that further initiatives of this nature should be encouraged.

Members considered that the City Council needed to have one identity and that the use of the Sandcastle logo and the Coat of Arms logo was confusing. It was understood that this issue was being investigated through the Communications Best Value Review.

(b) Key priority – *"Make sure the gateways to the City Centre enhance Carlisle's image."*

Members considered that there should be better signage for Carlisle on the A routes into the City, at the extent of the rural area as well as within the urban area.

(c) Key priority – *"Have a vibrant river frontage on, for example, the Eden, Caldew, Petteril and Esk rivers which provides entertainment and leisure facilities."*

Members considered that the rivers in Carlisle could be exploited as tourist attractions with riverside cafes and leisure activities. The riverside frontage could be promoted with river walks.

d. Key priority – *"Encourage continued investment in our museums and ensure they are able to provide a relevant and comprehensive profile of Carlisle's past, present and potential future."*

A Member considered that the former cotton mill adjacent to Dixons Chimney could be converted into a working museum and that a barge could be placed on the nearby River Caldew, perhaps as a floating restaurant.

It was considered that the private sector and the education sector, eg the Art College, could become involved in such an initiative.

(d) Key priority – *"Celebrate Carlisle via a variety of civic events."*

Members considered that the public were keen on civic events and that they should be encouraged. There were problems at Bank Holidays with the limited bus services and Stagecoach and other transport providers could be approached with a view to improving services when events were on. It was also considered that events should be promoted more extensively to maximise public interest.

A Member referred to the variety of events held at Carlisle Racecourse on race days which may also benefit from more extensive promotion.

(e) Key priority – *"Have a football club of which we can be proud."*

Members referred to the fact that Carlisle United and Carlisle racecourse gave Carlisle national prominence and that sporting activities in Carlisle should be encouraged.

(f) Key priority – *"Develop Carlisle as a learning City."*

Members considered that this should be a priority as it could act as a catalyst for expansion of Carlisle in the future. Consideration could be given to combining all the Colleges in Carlisle to have a University for Carlisle.

Members considered that there should be more activities aimed at students in Carlisle.

Members also considered that local people who have been successful in their field should be invited to promote Carlisle events and perform book signings etc in Carlisle.

g. Key priority – *"Have excellent, high class hotel and conference facilities."*

Members considered that the availability of the City Council's own facilities at Tullie House, Brampton Business Centre, etc should be promoted.

Members did not consider that the City Council could be a provider of hotel and conference facilities but could seek to work in partnership with hotel operators to encourage them to come to Carlisle.

(h) Key priority – *"Develop dedicated regional theatre and arts facility in Carlisle."*

Members referred to the Green Room and Stanwix Arts Theatre which operated successfully in Carlisle. Members considered that there may be merit in carrying out further research into whether further theatre facilities could be viable in Carlisle, perhaps learning from the successful theatre in Keswick.

It was recognised that private finance and sponsorship was needed to enable a theatre to be provided by the City Council.

RESOLVED – That the above comments be referred to the Executive at their meeting on 15 April 2002.

(The meeting ended at 3.55 pm)

