

INFRASTRUCTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
(SPECIAL MEETING)

WEDNESDAY 12 MAY 2004 AT 10.00 AM

PRESENT: Councillor C Rutherford (Chairman), Councillors Aldersey, S Bowman, Crookdake, Dodd, Earp, Im Thurn and Martlew

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Glover attended the meeting as an observer.

IOS.60/04 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of the Town Clerk and Chief Executive and Councillor Bloxham, Environment, Infrastructure and Transport Portfolio holder.

IOS.61/04 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Dodd declared a personal interest, in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Members, in respect of the Amenity Lighting Programme and specifically the suggested programme of works to be jointly funded with Carlisle Housing Association. He stated that his interest was in respect of his role as a City Council appointed Member of the Carlisle Housing Association Board.

IOS.62/04 CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Ms R Rooney, Committee Support Officer and Ms L Barker, Member Support Officer, to the meeting.

**IOS.63/04 CORPORATE/PERFORMANCE PLAN AND
CARLISLE CITY COUNCIL – PRIORITIES FOR THE
FUTURE**

The Executive on 26 April 2004 (Minute Reference EX.077/04) had forwarded the draft Corporate/Performance Plan to all three Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The Head of Strategic and Performance Services presented Report SP.16/04, enclosing the draft Corporate/Performance Plan. The Council's statutory requirements for this year's Performance Plan have been incorporated into the draft Corporate Plan.

Ms Williams, Policy and Performance Officer, presented the Plan and requested the Committee's observations, which would be reported back to a special meeting of the Executive on 24 May 2004.

The Executive on 26 April 2004 (Minute Reference EX.078/04) had also forwarded to all three Overview and Scrutiny Committees, a report on Carlisle City Council priorities for the future. The Head of Strategic and Performance Services presented report CE.12/04, summarising the outcome of recent work to establish priorities for the future. These priorities were intended to give clear direction to the organisation and to comply with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) Inspection report.

Ms Hook drew Members' attention to page 11 of the report, which stated that the Corporate Management Team had considered all the information and to give greater focus, had proposed that the following aims be recommended as the priorities for the next three years:

- Develop Carlisle's regional status
- Develop Carlisle's infrastructure
- In partnership, alleviate deprivation and social exclusion
- Achieve excellence in core Council services

Ms Hook then asked for the Committee's observations, and specifically their feedback on the four proposed priorities for the next three years. She commented that the acceptance of these priorities would inevitably mean that if they were to be the focus, this may have an impact on other areas and Members were asked to bear this in mind when considering the priorities.

Members agreed that given the clear links between the Corporate/Performance Plan and the Priorities for the Future report, the matters should be considered and commented on together. The Committee then discussed the two documents and commented as follows:

- a. Page 4 – Aim: "Develop Carlisle's infrastructure" – concerns were raised about how the objectives could be measured and there were questions about the definition of "supporting infrastructure". Ms Hook responded that more work would need to be undertaken on making objectives measurable, particularly in areas where the Councils' role may include lobbying. Progress with the objectives, would be reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

In relation to "supporting infrastructure", she confirmed that this covers a broad range of infrastructure, including roads, rails, IT e.g. Broadband and utilities.

- b. There is a need for research into the "ten year supply of industrial land and supporting infrastructure" and also into the changes in the City in terms of transport infrastructure. There should be forward looking planning for transport in the City, including the investigation the requirement for any new roads .
- c. The Council must ensure the Corporate/Performance Plan relates to other Plans and Strategies e.g. the Local Transport Plan and the Housing Strategy.
- d. Members queried whether the Council's priorities would supersede or supplement City Vision. Ms Hook advised that the Corporate Plan supports City Vision and sets out how the Council can achieve City Vision priorities, whilst concentrating on those areas in which there can be most impact.

- e. Page 5 – Aim: "Promote good, sustainable access and transportation in and around the City". The objective should be amended to read "Support the practical delivery of the Local Transport Plan 2005 and influence the development of Local Transport Plan 2."

In relation to this aim, a Member commented that there was no reference to the exploration of new concepts in transport delivery. In addition, the importance of traffic assessment in planning was stressed.

- f. Page 5 – Aim: "Encourage waste minimisation and recycling." In response to Members' questions about litter collection and education of the public in not littering, Ms Hook advised that these could be actions under the aim of Reducing the Fear of Crime.

There was discussion on waste minimisation measures including lobbying the Government on Waste Packaging Regulations, publicity campaigns to educate the public on exploring alternatives to landfill sites e.g. incinerators, use of sewage as a fuel.

It was suggested that there could be two additional objectives under this aim, namely:

- Minimise the amount of waste produced using a range of means
 - To examine alternatives to landfill sites
- a. Page 5 - Aim: "Conserve and develop our built heritage and natural environment for local people and visitors" There was discussion on the interpretation and definition of this aim, which covers a number of different areas of the Council. Members suggested that the objectives listed did not relate well to the aim.

Members discussed infrastructure on housing estates and conservation of the natural environment and suggested that the following additional objectives should be included under this aim:

- Improve roads and pavements in residential areas
- Conserve green spaces

Members suggested that these proposed objectives could be measured through satisfaction surveys and measuring use of amenities.

- a. Members commented that there was no aim relating to the City Council's own environmental performance. They highlighted not only energy efficiency measures, but also the Council's environmental performance in relation to the Procurement Strategy.

After discussion it was suggested that under the Aim of "Conserve and develop our built heritage and natural environment for local people and visitors", the following additional objective could be added:

- * Improve the Council's in house energy efficiency practices.

In addition, Ms Hook commented that she could put something separate under the "Sound Council Management" section to addresses other aspect of the Council's own in-house environmental performance.

- b. Page 5 – Aim: "Utilise planning regulations to ensure sustainable developments". It was suggested that the following additional objective could be added:
 - To ensure that all new build is energy efficient
- a. Page 6 – Aim: "Ensure the provision of suitable housing" should be amended within the addition of "suitable and affordable housing.
- b. In response to a Member's question about provision for disabled people, Ms Hook advised that this is addressed under the Aim of "Increase community engagement and access to local services".
- c. Ms Hook commented that pursuing some of the proposed objectives may, due to resource constraints, have an impact on other areas of work. Members responded that external sources of funding and information could be pursued to fund new concepts and initiatives.
- d. In relation to the 4 aims recommended as priorities for the next three years, Members commented that "Achieve Excellence in core Council services" should be the highest priority. They suggested that this specific Aim should be included within the Corporate/Performance Plan.

RESOLVED – That the comments of the Committee as outlined above be forwarded to the Executive, in response to the consultation on the Corporate/Performance Plan and the Carlisle City Council Priorities for the Future report.

IOS.64/04 JOINT CARLISLE AND EDEN COMMUNITY STRATEGY

The Executive on 5 April 2004 (Minutes Reference EX.076/04) had forwarded a report on the re-drafted joint Carlisle and Eden Community Strategy to all three Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The Head of Strategic and Performance Services presented reported SP.11/04 enclosing the re-drafted joint strategy.

The draft strategy had been revised to have a greater focus on high level strategic issues facing both Carlisle and Eden. There was also no longer a joint Carlisle/Eden action plan, instead there would be two area based action plans which would be developed by each of the Authorities and the partners once the Strategy was finalised. The Committee's observations on the revised Strategy were requested.

In response to a Member's question about where the Joint Community Strategy fits in with City Vision, Ms Hook responded that, in her view, City Vision is Carlisle City Council's Community Strategy, and it will feed into the Joint Carlisle and Eden Community Strategy.

Members then discussed and commented as follows on the Strategy:

- a. A Member commented that there were no references to the disabled, particularly in relation to housing and fear of crime. Members suggested that the aim on page 11 in relation to housing could be amended to refer to "whole life" housing. In relation to safe environment, reference should be made to the "Building out Crime" provisions.

Ms Hook undertook to get the appropriate words from the relevant specialists.

- b. In response to a Member's comment about the reference on page 11 – Housing to "A proportion of housing should be affordable", Ms Hook advised that she would add a sentence to set this in the context of the increase in house prices and the housing stock transfer in Carlisle. This could be highlighted as a specific Carlisle issue.
- c. Page 12 – Environment – the word "improved" should be added as follows: "We are committed to pursuing improved cleaner streets and open spaces in our urban areas, making them attractive places to live and work in."
- d. Members queried whether the statement on page 12 – Environment - "The Local Strategic Partnership recognises the need to reduce, reuse and recycle all forms of waste and also to use energy recovered from waste" formed a commitment to a policy of incineration of waste. Ms Hook advised that the document was aspirational. It would not mean that policies could be pushed through without the agreement of the City Council. There would be a Constitution to accompany the Strategy and the Head of Legal Services had proposed a number of amendments to that Constitution to clearly state that the Council will decide on how it contributes to the Local Strategic Partnership. The Constitution would be appended to the Strategy when it is forwarded to the City Council.
- e. Page 13 – Transport – this should include a reference to the A69 and other vital routes and also to Carlisle Airport.

RESOLVED – That the comments of the Committee as outlined above be forwarded to the Executive.

IOS.65/04 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

COMMITTEES 2003/04

The Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer submitted the draft Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees 2003/04 (OS.03/04). He advised that the report was produced annually and is considered by the Management Committee and all three Overview and Scrutiny Committees, before it is referred to the City Council.

Members then discussed and commented as follows on the report:

- a. In future, when all three Overview and Scrutiny Committees are asked to consider and comment on the same report, consideration should be given to holding a joint session of all three Committees with questions and answers, followed by each Committee then meeting separately to make specific comments, where necessary.
- b. Once the Council's priorities have been set, this will enable Overview and Scrutiny Committees to develop their role in holding the Executive to account.
- c. A Member referred to the Work Programme and the delay in reporting on Abandoned Vehicles and Climate Change Strategy. The Head of Commercial and Technical Services advised that he was in the process of interviewing for an Abandoned Vehicles Co-ordinator. He anticipated that a report, embracing all the partners and issues, will be presented to the Committee in Autumn 2004.

- d. Members thanked Dr Taylor for all his work for the Committee and generally for Overview and Scrutiny.

RESOLVED – (1) That the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2003/04 be supported.

2. That it be noted that the Head of Commercial and Technical Services will be able to take part in the Committee's Review of the Abandoned Vehicles Policy in Autumn 2004.

IOS.66/04 AMENITY LIGHTING PROGRAMME 2004/05

The Head of Commercial and Technical Services presented report CTS.07/04 on the Amenity Lighting Programme for 2004/05. As part of its Revenue Budget for 2004/05, the City Council has allocated a total of £67,780 for the provision of improved amenity lighting in the district.

The report set out a proposed programme of work prepared after consultation with Members, the Police and Carlisle Housing Association and based upon requests received. The suggested Programme of works included City Council funded schemes, Jointly funded schemes, Carlisle Housing Association funded schemes and other sources of funding.

Members were asked to consider the Programme of Works and submit it to the Carlisle Local Committee and Executive for consideration.

In response to a Member's questions about funding from Carlisle Housing Association and Cumbria County Council, Mr Battersby advised that officers were pursuing definite decisions as a high priority. He outlined the contingency plan in place if the Carlisle Housing Association funding was not forthcoming. The Council would then have to address the next highest priorities on the master list, this would be done in consultation with the portfolio holder, the Crime and Reduction Disorder Partnership and the Community Policemen.

A Member for Castle ward raised a concern that, despite a petition to the Executive regarding the crime problems in Caldewgate and the need for CCTV, it had not been prioritised for lighting. He specifically requested funding for lighting in the Caldewgate area and suggested that if there was any slippage on the programme, this area should be considered. Mr Battersby advised that if there was slippage he would discuss this with the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and would remind them of the petition on Caldewgate.

Mr Battersby then responded to a Member's question about lighting in the Carlisle Road estate in Dalston and agreed to explore the replacement of bulbs if possible.

RESOLVED – (1) That the Executive be advised that the Committee agrees with the Programme of Works set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

(2) That the Executive be asked to submit the programme of works to the Carlisle Local Committee for consideration.

IOS.67/04 CARLISLE AREA TRANSPORT PLAN

The Head of Commercial and Technical Services reported that he, and the Chairman, had met with officers from the County Council regarding the updating of the Local Transport

Plan for Cumbria. He circulated a leaflet entitled "Planning Cumbria's Transport" and individual Members were encouraged to forward their comments to the County Council.

The matter would be considered in more detail at the next meeting of the Committee on 27 May 2004.

RESOLVED – That it be noted that this matter will be considered at the next meeting of the Committee on 27 May 2004.

(The meeting ended at 12.10)