

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 30 MAY 2002 AT 2.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor Jefferson (Chairman), Councillors Mrs Bradley, Dodd, Mrs S Fisher (substitute for Councillor Mrs Bowman), Guest, Knapton, Mrs Mallinson and Mrs Styth (as substitute for Councillor Mrs Rutherford).

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

OSM.38/02 WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Mr J Knight, Media Tutor, Cumbria Institute of the Arts, together with the eight first year journalism students who had accompanied him to observe the proceedings of the meeting.

OSM.39/02 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED - That Councillor Mrs E Mallinson be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.

OSM.40/02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mrs Bowman and Mrs Rutherford and the Town Clerk and Chief Executive.

OSM.41/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest affecting any item on the Agenda.

OSM.42/02 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings held on 14 March and 11 April 2002 were agreed as a correct record of the meetings and signed by the Chairman.

OSM.43/02 MINUTES OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

AND REFERENCES TO MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

(a) Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 4 April 2002

RESOLVED - That such Minutes be noted.

**(b) Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny
Committee of 3 and 18 April 2002**

Referring to Minute CROS.41/02 of the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 3 April 2002 (Corporate Plan Workshop), a Member asked that the College students attending the meeting be asked to submit their written observations on the Corporate Plan theme of developing Carlisle as a learning City.

A Member noted that expanding facilities for students/young people was suggested as an area for a subject review/inquiry programme in 2002/03.

The Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer suggested that the views of College students could be sought should such a review be selected in the work programme.

RESOLVED – That such Minutes be noted.

**(c) Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 and
25 April 2002**

RESOLVED – That such Minutes be noted.

OSM.44/02 WORK PROGRAMME FOR OVERVIEW AND

SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

The initial Work Programme for all of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees was submitted.

The Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer indicated that the programmes for each of the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees would be developed over the current cycle of meetings when the individual Committees would have workshop sessions to decide upon review/inquiry areas for 2002/03.

RESOLVED – That the initial Work Programme for the Overview and Scrutiny Committees be received.

OSM.45/02 MONITORING OF AND CHANGES TO

THE FORWARD PLAN

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive submitted report TC.87/02 informing Members of changes to the Executive's Forward Plan for the periods 1 April 2002 to 31 July 2002 since its publication on 18 March 2002, and 1 May 2002 to 31 August 2002 since its publication on 17 April 2002.

RESOLVED – That the modifications, deferrals and departures from the Forward Plan for 1 April 2002 to 31 July 2002 and 1 May 2002 to 31 August 2002 be noted.

**OSM.46/02 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SUBJECT/INQUIRY
PROGRAMME 2002/03**

The Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer presented report TC.96/02 detailing the outcomes of the consultation exercise carried out with Members, the Citizens' Panel and staff inviting suggestions for themes for Subject/Inquiry Reviews to include in the Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programmes for 2002/03.

To move the process forward, the Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer indicated that workshop sessions would follow the first formal meetings of the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees to select items for review. It was suggested that, in order to ensure work programmes were not too ambitious, each Committee should programme one large, one medium and one to two small reviews for the year. The outcomes of the selection process would be reported to the next meeting of this Committee at which time Members would be requested to formally agree the overall programmes for the year.

Whilst agreeing in principle with the process detailed by the Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer, Members made the following comments:-

- a. the final decision on which Overview and Scrutiny Committee should take the lead on cross cutting reviews would rest with this Management Committee.
- b. The need to set work programmes that were not too ambitious was recognised and the suggestion that each of the three Committees should carry out one large, one medium and one or two small reviews was endorsed.
- c. Concern was expressed at the "Comment" section in the lists of suggestions for review themes which contained Officer comments with no Member input. The Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer indicated that full details of the suggestions (which had been summarised in the report) would be presented at the workshop sessions and the final decision on which suggestions should be included in work programmes would rest with Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

RESOLVED – (1) That the process for producing an annual programme of Subject Reviews/Inquiries be agreed, subject to the above comments.

(2) That suggestions for reviews which are not selected for inclusion in work programmes be referred to the Executive, Chief Officers and Heads of Service with a view to appropriate matters being addressed in future policy development and service planning.

(3) That Chief Officers be authorised to raise consultation responses outwith the Authority's responsibility with appropriate partner organisations.

OSM.47/02 PERFORMANCE INDICATOR WORK PROGRAMME 2002/03

The Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer presented report TC.99/02 detailing a programme of Performance Indicator Reviews to be undertaken by the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

The Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer reminded Members that each Committee had agreed to include within its Work Programme for the year a particular focus on Performance Indicators where the Council's performance was less good. He added that the Committees would work with relevant Officers to understand each Indicator and the nature of the

Council's recent/current performance with a view, where appropriate, to producing an Action Plan to improve that performance.

Members expressed concern that the workloads arising from Performance Indicator Reviews were not even across the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Corporate Resources and Community having heavier workloads than Infrastructure.

The Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer indicated that these were rolling reviews and it was up to each individual Overview and Scrutiny Committee to decide the level of priority to afford them within their overall work programme.

Members considered that progress made on these Performance Indicator Reviews should be monitored and the issue revisited should sufficient progress be not maintained.

RESOLVED – That the Committee notes the composition of this important element of the work of Overview and Scrutiny and progress on these review areas be closely monitored by the Overview and Scrutiny Officers.

OSM.48/02 RURAL STRATEGY

The Economic Development Manager presented report EDU.9/02 providing details of the process and programme for scrutiny of the Rural Strategy.

The Economic Development Manager indicated that Action Plans were currently being developed which showed how the vision statements in the Strategy would be translated into projects and activities. An example of a typical Action Plan page was submitted for Members' information.

Management of the Strategy would be undertaken through the Officer Regeneration Group, chaired by the Head of Economic Development, until such time as an alternative arrangement was put in place following the organisational review. The Group would work to an annual cycle involving two reports (with differing themes) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committees in line with the timetable set out at Appendix 2 which Members were invited to approve.

The Economic Development Manager indicated that the Rural Strategy and Vision had been the subject of extensive consultation and he sought Members' views on whether representatives from Rural bodies should be invited to attend the Overview and Scrutiny Committees to participate in the Action Plan process.

In considering the matter, Members noted that the Constitution provided for Overview and Scrutiny Committees to invite people along to meetings to discuss issues of local concern on topics under discussion. The Economic Development Manager was requested to liaise with the Chairmen of the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees over inviting representatives of rural bodies to provide an input into the Action Plan process on the Rural Strategy.

RESOLVED – (1) That the format and cycle of two annual reports being submitted to each of the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees to monitor Rural Policy, beginning with the July 2002 Committee cycle, be agreed.

(2) That the Economic Development Manager be requested to liaise with the Chairmen of the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees over inviting representatives of rural bodies to

provide an input into the Action Plan process on the Rural Strategy.

OSM.49/02 RURAL STRATEGY – THE PENTALK NETWORK

The Chairman circulated at the meeting the Annual Report and Accounts, supplied by Councillor Crookdake, of the Pentalk Network which aimed to help the Cumbrian farming community to acquire IT skills.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted and referred to the Head of Communications for a possible press release to be issued on this initiative.

[The meeting ended at 2.45 pm]