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## **EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON 25 JULY 2013**

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### **EEOSP.51/13 OVERVIEW REPORT AND WORK PROGRAMME**

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer presented report OS.18/13 which provided an overview of matters related to the work of the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel. Details of the latest version of the work programme and Key Decision items relevant to the Panel were also included.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer reported that:

- The Notice of Key Executive Decisions had been published on 5 July 2013. The items that related to the work of this Panel were:
  - KD.01/13 – Purple Sacks Review – this issue had been considered by the Panel at their meeting on 8 May 2013 and would be considered again by the Executive at their meeting on 5 August 2013.
  - KD.019/13 – Agency Agreements for the Enforcement of On and Off Street Parking – the Executive would be asked to consider options in relation to potential new agency agreements with Cumbria County Council and Eden District Council for the enforcement of on and off street parking in their relevant areas at their meeting scheduled for 5 August 2013.
  - KD.018/13 – Play Area Review – this matter would be considered by the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel and had been included as an item for the Environment and Economy Panel in error.
- The following Minute Excerpts had been received from the Executive's meeting held on 1 July 2013 and were included in an appendix to the report:
  - Minute Excerpt EX.68/13 – Carlisle District Local Plan 2015-2030 – Preferred Options
  - Minute Excerpt EX.74/13 – 2012/13 Summary of Service Standards.
- Task and Finish Groups – The final report of the Talkin Tarn Task and Finish Group was presented to the Executive at their meeting on 31 May 2013. The Panel were asked to consider future dates for monitoring of the implementation of the recommendations and indicated that an update on the recommendations made by the Panel were attached to the report as an appendix.

- *Members were concerned that the recent spell of good weather may lead to some complacency regarding the recommendations.*

The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder advised that the Executive would look at the whole aspect of Talkin Tarn and believed that there would be an improvement in sales for the coming year. The franchise for the boats was going well and the income on the tea room had increased. The main issue now was how to promote the Tarn outside of the area. The Portfolio Holder believed that Brampton railway station was too far away from the Tarn for people to walk there and people in Brampton already knew about and used the area. The Portfolio Holder advised that she was meeting with bus companies on a different matter but that she would ask them to investigate how Talkin Tarn could be better routed by the bus companies.

- *Would it be possible to have a leaflet about the Tarn?*

The Director of Local Environment advised that she would look at the cost of producing leaflets and added that information was already included in the Carlisle Focus magazine. There was no budget currently available to produce a leaflet but she would look at how the production of leaflets could be financed.

- *A Member had visited Talkin Tarn and was disappointed in the condition of the area. He believed that was a result of not having an Officer on site at all times.*

The Director of Local Environment advised that there was a vacant post within the Green Spaces Team but it was not based at Talkin Tarn. There was also another vacant post in the Directorate and due to budget pressures within the Directorate a decision would have to be made about which post to fill. A review was underway that would inform that decision. The Director was aware that there were potholes on the road leading to the car park and advised that the work to repair the road was currently out to tender. Although there was no dedicated Officer on site the Director confirmed that the site was visited by an Officer on a daily basis.

- *There should be more marketing than just on the Council's website about Talkin Tarn but the area needed to be in a good state of repair when people visited. The Member suggested leaflets could be placed in newspapers in the North East.*

The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder believed that marketing was also required in the City and that local people should be encouraged to use the facility. One good marketing scheme was the "Love Where You Live" campaign which had been on the back of local buses.

- *What is the current situation regarding blue/green algae?*

The Director of Local Environment advised that it would never be possible to eradicate the algae altogether but it was currently at a safe level. The levels were monitored and warnings raised if the level became unsafe. The Director added that the current warm weather followed by heavy rain had provided the ideal conditions for the increase in the levels of the algae.

In response to a query from a Member the Director confirmed that there was nothing that the Council could do in relation to the condition of the former Tarn End Hotel as it was not in City council ownership.

➤ *Would it be possible to use the area for outdoor performances by schools?*

The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder advised that outdoor performances were held at Kirklington Hall and Lanercost but they were weather dependent. The Council had to be careful about what it promoted at the Tarn as it was primarily an area of beauty and tranquillity.

➤ *Would it be possible to re-energise the Friends of the Tarn group?*

The Director of Local Environment advised that she would consult with the Neighbourhoods and Green Spaces Manager on how best to do that.

➤ *Would it be useful to have more marketing about Talkin Tarn at Brampton station?*

The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder believed that if there were sufficient people getting off the train to go to the Tarn it may be useful but she believed that most people used the train to go to the North East and to get to school and work. People leaving the train at Brampton would need additional transport to take them to the Tarn.

➤ *With regard to the campsite, a Member was pleased that the Executive would consider that facility but reminded the Panel that initially it had been stated that all facilities at the Tarn would be free of charge. Since then charges for car parking had been introduced.*

➤ *The menu at the tea room needed to reflect what the people visiting Talkin Tarn wanted. It had been suggested that a discount in the tea room could be offered on the car parking ticket.*

The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder believed that it was difficult to please locals and visitors to the Tarn as their needs were different, and the emphasis of the tea room was to visitors. The Portfolio Holder suggested that the menu could be changed to attract locals to use the tea room more frequently.

The Director of Local Environment reminded Members that car parking was free at the Tarn during the morning so those visitors would not have a car parking ticket to get any discount in the tea room.

➤ *A lot of local people did not know about Talkin Tarn so more needed to be done locally. The Member suggested putting notices in Community Centres and church halls as well as notice boards in the City Centre.*

The Director of Local Environment confirmed that an update on the implementation of the recommendations would be submitted to the meeting in January 2014 and that Officers would look at marketing and the franchising of the tea room.

- Work Programme – The Overview and Scrutiny Officer presented the current work programme and advised that a number of issues for scrutiny had been suggested. These included back lanes, dog fouling, fly-tipping, recycling, cycling and an update on the Love Where You Live campaign. Members agreed that a task group should be established to consider recycling issues.

➤ *The Tourist Information Centre Task and Finish Group was already established and their work could be expanded to look at tourism in general.*

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer advised that a report on tourism would be submitted to the Panel at their meeting in September 2013 so it may be prudent to wait until that meeting to determine what issues would need to be considered by a Task and Finish Group.

➤ *A Member asked for an update on the University's Business Interaction Centre?*

The Deputy Chief Executive advised that there had been a request for consultation and the tasks had been completed. Officers were working on the report to identify the improvements that had been carried out. He confirmed that a report would be submitted to the Panel at the next meeting and suggested that Members may like a tour of the Centre to see the improvements.

RESOLVED –1) That, subject to the issues raised above, the Overview Report incorporating the Work Programme and Forward Plan items relevant to this Panel be noted.

2) KD.019/13 – Agency Agreements for the Enforcement of On and Off Street Parking – the Executive would be asked to consider options in relation to potential new agency agreements with Cumbria County Council and Eden District Council for the enforcement of on and off street parking in their relevant areas at their meeting scheduled for 5 August 2013.

3) That reports on the implementation of the recommendations from the Talk Tarn Task and Finish Group would be considered at the meeting of the Panel on 16 January 2014.

4) That the Executive be asked to consider looking at marketing of Talkin Tarn and consider a franchise for the tea-room.

5) That a report on the Business Interaction Centre be submitted to the next meeting of the Panel and a tour of the Centre by the Panel to see the improvements to date be arranged.

6) That Councillors Mrs Bowman, Bowditch, Nedved and Whalen volunteered to take part in a Task and Finish Group to look at recycling to determine how it had changed since it was introduced and how recycling differed between rural and urban areas.