

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

INFRASTRUCTURE

Report of
Chairman:

**COUNCILLOR
C RUTHERFORD**

Since the last report there has been one scheduled meeting, a call-in and two combined Overview and Scrutiny Meetings, one of which formed part of the call-in.

At the meeting on 31 July it was agreed that the scoping of the Supporting Communities Best Value Review should be undertaken by the newly reformed Review Team, together with Members of the Committee. The date of the first meeting to be early September. If this has taken place by the date of this Council, I can give a verbal update on any further progress.

The July Meeting commenced a Review into the Environmental Performance of the Council and was attended by Ms Debbie Critchley of Government North West. Ms Critchley was able to provide much detailed information which it is hoped will assist the Committee to prioritise areas for improvement.

Because of the lack of input from the County Council, the Committee has been unable to progress the Streetworks Review any further. We again ask the Executive to seek to resolve the issue of scrutiny co-operation with the County Council as soon as possible. A large amount of review work that falls within the remit of the Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee is linked to the County Council and relies on their co-operation. If this is not forthcoming any improvements we seek on behalf of the citizens of Carlisle in a number of areas may be severely limited.

Both the call-in and the combined Overview and Scrutiny Meetings related to the issue of Regional Government and the introduction of unitary authorities to replace the current two-tier system. The Committee requested that the Executive look again at their decision to submit a joint submission with Eden District Council to the Boundary Commission, giving Carlisle and Eden LSP as the preferred option. The Committee was also critical of the Executive who appeared to have prejudged the issue by making its decision before receiving the CRED Report on the viability of their preferred option. At the time of writing this report the Executive had not met and responded to the call-in.

The joint meeting of the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees, held on the 26 August, received a presentation by CRED on the report commissioned by the Executive. A first draft of the submission that the City Council intended to go to the Boundary Commission was also presented to Members. The draft outlined the Council's position re unitary status. Concerns were raised about the lack of detail in both papers, that the drafts seen would not be the same as those that would be presented to the Executive, the structure (or lack of structure) to the Overview and Scrutiny Meeting and the tight timescale all prevented Overview and Scrutiny from being effective.

Carole Rutherford
Chairman
Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee