

EXECUTIVE

MONDAY 10 MARCH 2014 AT 4.00 PM

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs Martlew (Deputy Leader, and Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder)
Councillor Mrs Bradley (Economy and Enterprise Portfolio Holder)
Councillor Ms Quilter (Culture, Health, Leisure and Young People Portfolio Holder)
Councillor Mrs Riddle (Communities and Housing Portfolio Holder)
Councillor Dr Tickner (Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder)

OFFICERS:

Deputy Chief Executive
Director of Governance
Director of Economic Development
Financial Services and HR Manager
Waste Services Manager

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs Bowman (Chairman of the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel)
Councillor Mrs Luckley (Chairman of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel)
Councillor Allison (Observer)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Glover (Leader / Chairman); the Town Clerk and Chief Executive, the Director of Resources, and the Director of Local Environment.

In the absence of the Leader, the Deputy Leader, and Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder took the Chair.

WELCOME

The Deputy Leader, and Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder welcomed all those present and, in particular, Mr Liam Gallagher (Waste Services Manager).

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest affecting the business to be transacted at the meeting.

PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED – That the Agenda be agreed as circulated.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Minutes of the meetings of the Executive held on 9 and 16 December 2013; and 15 January 2014 were signed by the Chairman as a true record of the meetings.

EX.23/14 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH – BUSINESS SUPPORT STRATEGY (Key Decision – KD.01/14)

Portfolio Environment and Transport

Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel Environment and Economy

Subject Matter

The Deputy Leader, and Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder submitted report LE.01/14 introducing the Environmental Health Services' Business Support Strategy.

The Deputy Leader, and Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder explained that the Government had in July 2013 revised the Regulators' Code to clarify the duty which non economic regulators, like Environmental Health, had in encouraging economic growth. She added that Regulators must have regard to the Code when developing their policies and operational procedures that guided their regulatory activities. Details of the requirements of the 2013 Regulators' Code were provided.

The Environmental Health Service had significant face to face contact with local business. It was therefore well placed to free up businesses from unnecessary regulation. In response to the revision of the Regulators' Code the Environmental Health Service had produced a Strategy (Appendix 1) outlining how it would comply with the Code. The Strategy detailed actions based on four business support themes:

1. We are open to work with businesses
2. Our services understand how businesses work
3. Our work to support businesses is targeted and effective
4. Our services are transparent and open to scrutiny

The Deputy Leader, and Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder stated that the Strategy was positive in nature and should give confidence to businesses that the Environmental Health Service was there both to protect but also help businesses. The service wished to work with businesses to find the best ways for them to grow in a legal, safe and sustainable way. The Strategy improved the processes of creating a trusting environment between business and the regulator.

The Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel had, on 27 February 2014, considered the matter and resolved:

"1) That Report GD.08/14 – Environmental Performance of the Council be noted.

2) That Members welcomed the strategy and commended Officers for their work in protecting the residents of Carlisle."

A copy of Minute Excerpt EEOSP.19/14 had been circulated.

The Chairman of the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel stated that the Panel was certainly very pleased to take the document. The Business Support Strategy was very important for the City and Members were happy to endorse it.

The Strategy would help, advise and support business, constituting a very positive way forward. Bearing in mind that the Environmental Health Service did take action as necessary, they did that well.

The Chairman added that the Environmental Health Service did a very good job in difficult circumstances.

In conclusion the Deputy Leader, and Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder moved the recommendation, which was seconded by the Culture, Health, Leisure and Young People Portfolio Holder.

The Director of Governance suggested that the recommendation be amended to read that the Executive “approve and endorse the Business Support Strategy”, which was agreed.

Summary of options rejected None

DECISION

That the Executive approved and endorsed the Environmental Health Business Support Strategy as attached at Appendix 1 to Report LE.01/14.

Reasons for Decision

Carlisle City Council had an important role both locally and nationally as a regulatory agency. Its Environmental Health Service undertook that role on its behalf for services ranging from food safety, health and safety, pollution control and infectious disease control. The Business Support Strategy outlined how the City Council’s Environmental Health Service intended to comply with the Regulators’ Code issued by Central Government

EX.24/14 CARLISLE AND EDEN COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL PLAN 2014/15
(Key Decision – KD.02/14)

Portfolio Communities and Housing

Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel Community

Subject Matter

The Communities and Housing Portfolio Holder reported (SD.02/14) that the Carlisle and Eden Community Safety Partnership (CSP) had developed their Draft Partnership Plan for 2014/15 (a copy of which was attached at Appendix 1) using data from the Community Safety Strategic Assessment (attached at Appendix 2).

The Portfolio Holder drew Members' attention to the crime figures which showed that the incidence of crime for Carlisle continued to fall year on year and therefore the City was still a relatively safe place. It should also be noted that the incidence of crime relative to Botchergate and the night time economy impacted upon the figures for the Castle and Currock Wards.

The Plan had been developed by the CSP's Leadership Group, with input from City Council Officers and herself.

The Portfolio Holder further emphasised that, whilst the Partnership Plan was presented as a developed document, it represented a 'live' work programme which would develop throughout the year and could be influenced and shaped via the City Council's representation on the CSP's Leadership Group.

In conclusion, the Communities and Housing Portfolio Holder moved that the Executive consider and note the report, prior to recommending it for wider consultation.

The Economy and Enterprise Portfolio Holder seconded the recommendation.

Summary of options rejected None

DECISION

That the Executive had considered and noted Report SD.02/14 and recommended it for wider consultation.

Reasons for Decision

To enable the report to be considered and recommended for wider consultation

EX.25/14 PUBLIC REALM: SIGNAGE AND INTERPRETATION
(Key Decision – KD.03/14)

Portfolio Cross Cutting

Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel Environment and Economy

Subject Matter

The Deputy Leader, and Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder submitted report ED.10/14 the purpose of which was to update the Executive on the current position with regard to the various Public Realm Projects around the City.

The Deputy Leader reminded Members that the City Council had in 2009 adopted as a supplementary planning document the 'Carlisle Urban Design Guide and Public Realm Framework'; which set out a public realm vision for the City and included indicative design/material palates for key areas of the City Centre. It identified issues regarding existing signage, street clutter and public realm which required refreshing. She added that current provision of signage and interpretation at key gateways and nodal points within the City Centre was variable and several areas required significant attention. There was also a perceived need to consider broader public realm improvements at several key points in the City. The project built on the successful public realm interventions focused on

the Roman Gateway route from Bitts Park to Tullie House, and on the public realm works on Castle Street.

A programme of public realm projects in development for the City was in place. Given that signage and interpretation impacted upon most it seemed logical, as a first stage, to develop a comprehensive signage suite that could be rolled out as part of the projects as they reached the implementation stage. In particular it would enable progress to be made on key public realm projects including comprehensive hard and soft landscaping at key City Centre areas e.g. Green Market, Old Town Hall area, Rickergate – in conjunction with wider City Centre public realm work e.g. Sainsbury's S106 implementation at Caldewgate/Shaddongate and at the Old Town Hall phase II.

It would also allow for gateway signage at vehicular entry points to the City. Existing signage several decades old was recently removed from several entry point locations as it was showing wear and tear associated with its age. Replacement signage would draw on the 'Sense of Place' model, adding to an enhanced public realm at selected arrival points.

The Deputy Leader, and Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder advised that, as part of the 'Carlisle Story', the Council's design and brand specialists (Peter Anderson Studios) had taken an initial look at Gateway Signage, based around the 'Carlisle Story' brand. Initial concepts were attached which gave a flavour of the style of signage proposed. Executive Members had viewed the concepts and were supportive. It was proposed that the next stage should be to develop a comprehensive signage and interpretation package, details of which were provided.

Another element of the package was a review of the existing signage assessing what was in place and also, more importantly, what was required. That would link into the proposed hubs, trails and site information.

The Deputy Leader added that, once the package was complete local sign makers would be procured to work up a range of designs that could be used in a variety of situations. Although there would be a number of cost options, the intention was to use good quality local materials. At the end of that stage the Council would have a range of fully costed options that should allow progress to be made on a number of key projects within the public realm programme.

In conclusion the Deputy Leader, and Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder moved the recommendations which were duly seconded by the Economy and Enterprise Portfolio Holder.

Summary of options rejected None

DECISION

That the Executive:

1. Noted the current position of the Public Realm Projects, and
2. Authorised the release of £25,000 identified within the Capital Programme to allow the development of a comprehensive signage and interpretation package.

Reasons for Decision

Given that signage formed an integral part of many of the key public realm projects, development of a comprehensive signage and interpretation package would allow progress to be made on a number of key projects within the public realm programme

EX.26/14 NOTICE OF EXECUTIVE KEY DECISIONS (Non Key Decision)

Portfolio Cross-Cutting

Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel Community; Environment and
Economy; and Resources

Subject Matter

The Notice of Executive Key Decisions dated 7 February 2014 was submitted for information.

Summary of options rejected None

DECISION

That the Notice of Executive Key Decisions dated 7 February 2014 be noted.

Reasons for Decision

Not applicable

EX.27/14 SCHEDULE OF DECISIONS TAKEN BY OFFICERS (Non Key Decision)

Portfolio Environment and Transport; Finance, Governance and Resources

Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel Community; and Resources

Subject Matter

Details of decisions taken by Officers under delegated powers were submitted.

Summary of options rejected None

DECISION

That the decisions, attached as Appendix A, be noted.

Reasons for Decision

Not applicable

**EX.28/14 REFERENCE FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY – RIVERSIDE
CARLISLE**
(Non Key Decision)

Portfolio Communities and Housing

Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel Community

Subject Matter

Pursuant to Minute COSP.12/14, consideration was given to a reference from the meeting of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 13 February 2014 when the Panel had considered Report (ED.09/14) presented by the Housing and Health Manager updating Members on joint working between Riverside Carlisle (now known as Riverside Cumbria) and the City Council.

The Panel had resolved:

- “1) That report ED.09/14 - Riverside Carlisle be noted.
- 2) That a further report be submitted to the Panel in six months.
- 3) That the Panel request that the Executive examine the Choice based letting scheme with regard to suitability for the people of Carlisle.”

A copy of the minute excerpt was circulated.

The Chairman of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel informed the Executive that, as could be seen from the Minutes, the session on scrutinising the Partnership had been very wide ranging. It provided an opportunity to meet and talk with Riverside's new Divisional Director about the challenges facing Housing Associations and their tenants, particularly in adjusting budgets in what were changing economic times.

The Panel felt generally that the report and the discussion produced a more positive picture than was anticipated this time last year; and that the work undertaken by both organisations in enabling a greater understanding by tenants of the Welfare changes had borne fruit.

For example, rent arrears had not risen as much as had been anticipated; only 9% of those were tenants affected by Welfare Benefit changes and Riverside were aiming to reduce that figure from 9% to 5%; only one tenant had been evicted in respect of under occupancy and 75 tenants had downsized satisfactorily with the help of Riverside's campaign to create more understanding of the changes.

Questions were asked about property voids. There had been an increase in the larger properties remaining vacant. Riverside advised the Panel that they would address that problem by adapting their Marketing Strategy and, no doubt, the Panel would want to hear about the outcome at their next meeting with Riverside in six months time.

With regard to the Choice Based Letting Scheme, Riverside would be focussing on making the Scheme better tailored to the changing demands. The Partnership enabled both

organisations to work together and with others in studying those challenges, and that would be another subject for scrutiny when the Panel next met Riverside.

The Chairman reiterated that the Panel recommended that, bearing in mind the need for the Choice Based Letting Scheme to suit Carlisle's present and future demands in terms of location, affordability and accessibility, the Executive look at those issues to ensure that all those factors were encompassed in the Council's Housing Strategy and Action Plan.

In response, the Communities and Housing Portfolio Holder noted the Panel's recommendations.

The Portfolio Holder further recommended that the Executive seek the views of Riverside Cumbria and other Registered Social Landlords on the suitability of the Choice Based Letting Scheme.

The Economy and Enterprise Portfolio Holder seconded the recommendation.

Summary of options rejected None

DECISION

1. That the recommendations of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel, as detailed within Minute Excerpt COSP.12/14, be noted.
2. That the Executive would seek the views of Riverside Cumbria and other Registered Social Landlords on the suitability of the Choice Based Letting Scheme.

Reasons for Decision

To respond to a reference from the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

EX.29/14 INTERNAL AUDIT CHARTER
(Non Key Decision)

Portfolio Finance, Governance and Resources

Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel Resources

Subject Matter

Pursuant to Minute AUC.15/14, the Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder submitted report RD.94/13 presenting a draft Internal Audit Charter (Appendix A) setting out the arrangements for the delivery of the Internal Audit service to Carlisle City Council.

It was a requirement of the mandatory Public Sector Internal Audit Standards that the Council had an Audit Charter in place, which had been approved by senior management and the Audit Committee.

Members' attention was drawn to the key elements of the Charter, together with the responsibilities of management, as outlined at Section 1.2 of the report.

Internal Audit helped the Council to accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes. The diagram attached at Appendix B illustrated the three lines of defence in ensuring that organisations were adequately managing their risks. Internal Audit formed the third line of defence alongside other independent external providers of assurance. Importantly, the role of Internal Audit was to provide the senior management and elected Members of the organisation with assurance that the arrangements within the first and second lines of defence were adequate and working effectively to manage risks.

The Audit Committee had, on 24 January 2014, considered the matter and resolved:

“(1) That the Audit Committee had considered the draft Internal Audit Charter and noted that the document would be updated annually and submitted for approval to senior management and the Audit Committee alongside the annual Audit Plan.

(2) That the Audit Committee considered that confidentiality was a key requirement for inclusion within the Charter.

(3) That, subject to the above, the draft Internal Audit Charter be referred to the Executive for approval.”

In conclusion, the Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder asked the Executive to approve the Internal Audit Charter, and note that the document would be updated annually and submitted to the Audit Committee alongside the annual Audit Plan.

The Economy and Enterprise Portfolio Holder seconded the recommendation.

Summary of options rejected None

DECISION

That the Executive approved the Internal Audit Charter, noting that the document would be updated annually and submitted to the Audit Committee alongside the annual Audit Plan.

Reasons for Decision

The Executive was required to approve internal audit protocols and policies

EX.30/14 AMENDMENT TO WAR MEMORIALS PROJECT
(Non Key Decision)

Portfolio Finance, Governance and Resources; Environment and Transport

Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel Resources

Subject Matter

Pursuant to Minute C.31/14(g) 5, the Deputy Leader, and Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder submitted RD.88/13 concerning amendment to the War Memorials Project.

The Deputy Leader reminded Members that, on 4 August 1914, the UK Government had declared war on Germany following that country's invasion of neutral Belgium. The war developed into a global conflict and continued until 1918, costing many millions of lives. Every community in Great Britain was affected and, in the years following the end of the war, memorials were erected to honour the dead and recognise the sacrifice made.

The Council wished to ensure that those memorials were in good condition and continued to honour and remember those who had given their lives for freedom. The 100 year anniversary was particularly important in that respect. The Council had already taken steps to ensure that the memorials in the direct care of the City Council were in good condition for the anniversary and now wished to extend that ambition to those memorials in the care of the wider community and provide assistance to bring those community memorials to a good standard in time for the 100 year Anniversary in August.

The Council had allocated £704,600 for revenue repair and maintenance to its buildings during the financial year 2014-15. The £20,000 required for work to those community memorials could be allocated from that budget.

In response to recent erroneous reporting on the radio, the Deputy Leader clarified that the Capital Programme for 2013/14 included provision of £67,000 for works to War Memorials. The £20,000 referred to above was therefore additional funding.

The Deputy Leader added that, as the memorials in question were not Council owned and not located on Council property it would be necessary to obtain the permission of the landowners to carry out the work. The landowners were mostly churches but some were in the care of Parish Councils. It was, therefore, proposed to write to the landowners requesting permission to carry out the work. The work would be carried out under a licence stating the extent and limitations of the work and indemnifying the Council against any future claims arising from the work.

Members' attention was further drawn to Appendix A which set out details of the memorials to be included in the amended War Memorials Project; with descriptions and photographs being provided at Appendix B.

In conclusion the Deputy Leader, and Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder moved the recommendations, which were duly seconded by the Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder.

Summary of options rejected None

DECISION

That the Executive:

1. Approved the allocation of £20,000 from the revenue maintenance budget for repair and cleaning of war memorials throughout the City Council District.
2. Granted approval to contact the owners of the memorials and request permission to carry out the repair and cleaning work. Alternatively assistance could be given to those who wished to arrange the work themselves, either financial or provision of cleaning materials, access equipment etc.

Reasons for Decision

To enable the Council to support local communities in preparation for the anniversary of the First World War by providing assistance with the cleaning and repair of community war memorials

EX.31/14 QUARTER THREE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2013/14 (Non Key Decision)

Portfolio Finance, Governance and Resources

Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel Community; Environment and
Economy; and Resources

Subject Matter

The Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder submitted report PC.4/14 updating the Executive on the Council's service standards which helped measure performance and customer satisfaction. Also included were updates on key actions contained within the Carlisle Plan.

Members' attention was drawn to Appendix 1 which provided details of each service standard. The table illustrated the cumulative year to date figure; a month-by-month breakdown of performance; and, where possible, an actual service standard baseline established either locally or nationally. The updates against the actions in the Carlisle Plan followed on from the service standard information attached at Appendix 2.

In conclusion the Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder moved the recommendation, which was seconded by the Culture, Health, Leisure and Young People Portfolio Holder.

Summary of options rejected None

DECISION

That the Executive had given consideration to the performance of the City Council, presented in Report PC.4/14, with a view to seeking continuous improvement in how the Council delivered its priorities.

Reasons for Decision

To seek continuous improvement in how the Council delivered its priorities

(The meeting ended at 4.17 pm)