

Report to: Council

Agenda
Item

12(ii)(b)

Meeting Date: 3 March 2015

Public/Private*: Public

Title: **Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel - Chairman's Report**
Councillor Reg Watson OBE

The Panel had wide ranging discussions on the budget. Concern was expressed at the huge cuts the Council has to make over the next five years. £4.686 million in total with £1.211 million this year and £3.4 million in later years.

The Local Government Association has calculated that by May 2015 the Council funding will be reduced by 40%, a tall order.

It is good to see that the Executive are keen to

- Freeze the car parking charges
- Continue with its plan to support the Arts Centre
- Provide extra funding for Council events to promote Carlisle on a permanent basis
- Fund the popular 'Clean Up Carlisle' initiative for at least a further two years.
- Additional funding for each Councillor of £1000 to support small scale community projects in their wards
- Also, no increases in Council Tax for 2015/16, the fifth year of Council Tax freeze.

The Panel was concerned about the increase in the sickness absence figures and has decided to scrutinise the figures quarterly.

Cllr R Watson OBE
Chairman