

AGENDA

Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Thursday, 14 April 2016 AT 10:00
In the Flensburg Room, Civic Centre, Carlisle, CA3 8QG

A preparatory/briefing meeting for Members of the Panel will be held at
9.15am in the Flensburg Room.

Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence and notification of substitutions

Declarations of Interest

Members are invited to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests, other registrable interests and any interests, relating to any item on the agenda at this stage.

Public and Press

To agree that the items of business within Part A of the agenda should be dealt with in public and that the items of business within Part B of the agenda should be dealt with in private.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

5 - 14

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2016.
[Copy Minutes in Minute Book Volume 42(5)]

To note the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2016.
(Copy Minutes herewith)

PART A

To be considered when the Public and Press are present

A.1 CALL-IN OF DECISIONS

To consider any matter which has been the subject of call-in.

A.2 OVERVIEW REPORT AND WORK PROGRAMME

15 - 40

To consider a report providing an overview of matters related to the work of the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel, together with the latest version of the Work Programme and details of the Key Decision items relevant to this Panel as set out in the Notice of Executive Key Decisions.

(Copy Report OD.09/16 herewith)

A.3 DECEMBER 2015 FLOOD UPDATE REPORT

41 - 58

(Cross Cutting)

The Deputy Chief Executive to submit a report updating the Panel on the progress of the ongoing flood recovery work.

(Copy Report SD.07/16 herewith)

A.4 UPDATE ON CLEAN CARLISLE

(Environment and Transport)

The Director of Local Environment to submit a report updating the Panel on the Clean Carlisle project.

(Copy report LE. /16 to follow).

A.5 TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE

59 - 68

(Economy, Enterprise and Housing)

The Director of Economic Development to submit a performance monitoring report relating to the Tourist Information Centre.

(Copy report ED.19/16 herewith)

**A.6 CARLISLE CITY CENTRE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK –
UPDATE**

69 - 76

(Economy, Enterprise and Housing)

The Director of Economic Development to report on progress with regards to implementation of the City Centre Development Framework.

(Copy Report ED.18/16 herewith)

PART B

To be considered when the Public and Press are excluded from the meeting

- NIL -

**Members of the Environment and Economy Overview and
Scrutiny Panel**

Conservative – Christian, Mitchelson, Nedved (Chairman),
Bloxham (sub), Mrs McKerrell (sub), Mrs Mallinson (sub)

Labour – Bowditch, Caig (Vice Chairman), Dodd, Ms Franklin,
Burns (sub), Ms Patrick (sub), Watson (sub)

Independent – Betton, Graham (sub)

**Enquiries, requests for reports, background papers,
etc to Committee Clerk: Jacqui Issatt - 817557**

ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

THURSDAY 3 MARCH 2016 AT 10.00AM

PRESENT: Councillor Nedved (Chairman), Betton, Burns (as substitute for Councillor Dodd (until 12.20pm) Bowditch, Christian, Mitchelson, and Ms Patrick (as substitute for Councillor Caig).

ALSO PRESENT Councillor Glover – Leader (from 10.25am until 12.20pm)
Councillor Mrs Martlew – Deputy Leader, and Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder (until 11.25pm)
Councillor Mrs Bradley – Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder (until 12.20pm)

OFFICERS: Director of Local Environment
Director of Economic Development
Neighbourhood Services Manager
Investment and Policy Manager
Policy and Performance Officer
Overview and Scrutiny Officer

EEOSP.10/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Caig, Dodd and Ms Franklin.

EEOSP.11/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

EEOSP.12/16 PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED – That the Agenda be agreed as circulated.

EEOSP.13/16 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED – The minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2016 were noted.

EEOSP.14/16 CALL-IN OF DECISIONS

There were no items which had been the subject of call-in.

EEOSP.15/16 OVERVIEW REPORT AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer presented report OS.06/16 providing an overview of matters relative to the work of the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer reported that the last Notice of Executive Key Decisions, which had been published on 5 February 2016, included the 2016/17 Budget Process (KD.33/15) which had been considered by the Panel at their November meeting. Members did not raise any questions or comments on the items contained within the Notice of Executive Key Decisions.

The Panel's Work Programme was attached to the report and Members were asked to note and/or amend the Programme as they saw fit.

The Scrutiny Chairs Group, on 4 February, resolved that each Panel have a standing Flood Update report added to their agenda, to receive an update on issues within the remit of that Panel. The Panel was to receive a report at its April 2016 meeting regarding the Council's asset recovery following the flood.

The Chairman welcomed the production of regular flood reports to the Panel and added that initial work towards a Task and Finish Group on the subject of the flood would be useful, he felt it was important to understand residents' experience of the flood, in particular issues related to insurance and contractors. He added reports from other agencies who had been involved the flood recovery work, for example the Environment Agency and Cumbria County Council, would not be available until sometime in the future, and suggested that a workshop might be held to consider the flood recovery work.

The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder felt that holding a workshop and Task and Finish Group on the subject of the flood was a good idea, however, they needed to be able to offer tangible outcomes that could influence flood response work in the future. She felt that the focus of the work should be to consider what work could be taken in relation to flood defence enhancement as a means of increasing the protection offered to residents and the city.

The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder suggested that an Informal Council meeting be held on the subject of the flood with officers from external organisations being invited to speak, this would provide Members with information that they could disseminate within their Wards.

The Director of Local Environment added that the Environment Agency was leading a Cumbria Flood Partnership which was a cross county initiative examining flood issues, and suggested that they be approached to attend the briefing.

The Scrutiny Officer noted that the first scheduled meeting in the new Civic Year coincided with that of the national referendum regarding Britain membership of the European Union. The Panel agreed the meeting should be moved to the following week and that the meeting would take place on 30 June 2016.

RESOLVED – 1) That the Overview Report (OS.06/16) incorporating the Work Programme and Notice of Executive Key Decision items relevant to this Panel be noted.

(2) That a workshop and Informal Council Briefing be arranged for Members with agencies involved in the flood.

(3) That the June meeting of the Panel be rescheduled to take place on 30 June 2016.

EEOSP.16/16 RETHINKING WASTE PROJECT

The Director of Local Environment submitted report LE.03/16 which updated the Panel on the progress of the Rethinking Waste Project and highlighted key issues for the project going forward.

The Director of Local Environment gave a presentation on the Rethinking Waste project that included the following areas; the impact of the flood on the Waste Team; updates on new refuse and recycling vehicle trials, recycling receptacles and the depot; the design principles of the new collection service; what markers indicated that the project had been successful; and what questions remained to be answered regarding the delivery of waste and recycling services in the city.

The trialling of new vehicles had produced variable results, the Rotapress refuse wagons had proved to be effective in terms of improving access and increasing payload. Trials of resource recycling vehicles had been conducted with all three market suppliers but results had been mixed, it was hoped that using the experience of other authorities and the soft market testing exercise, which would include feedback from staff, would allow the Council to identify the adaptations required to ensure they were fit for use in the city.

Emphasis was placed on the importance of regular communications with Members, staff, and residents regarding the progress of the project. A service improvement group had been established to seek the views of staff across neighbourhood services in general day to day service issues with a view to making ongoing adjustments where necessary to improve service standards and working conditions.

Two important meetings relating to the project were scheduled in March 2016; the Soft Market testing which would inform the redesign and specification of vehicles and receptacle types; and the Project Board meeting which would agree the detailed timetable for project completion. The Director of Local Environment summed up by detailing the project timescale, noting that a target date for April 2017 had been set for the project's implementation, although consideration would need to be given to the phasing of some changes.

The Chairman welcomed the report stating it provided a very clear update on the project, especially the changes regarding bringing in house the recyclates collection.

The Director of Local Environment thanked the Chairman for his comments and explained that the main factor in not bringing the collection of recyclates in house had been the reduction in the price received for collected recyclates which was related to the drop in fuel price. The depreciation in recyclate price meant expending capital sums on developing Bousteads Grassing as a bulk up recycling centre was not currently feasible; consequently, this aspect of the project had been shelved, however, should the price of recyclates return to previous levels, the proposal to develop Bousteads Grassing could be re-visited.

The Chairman felt that the report had not provided a defined timetable of the work required to meet the project implementation deadline, he asked when the Panel would see concrete proposals relating to the work timetable.

The Deputy Leader and Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder responded that the Rethinking Waste Cross Party Working Group had been involved in considering the detail

of the project up to its present stage, which had worked well, that was an approach she wished to see continued.

In considering the report and presentation Members raised the following comments and questions:

- *Was the April 2017 a realistic deliverable date for the project?*

The Director of Local Environment reminded Members that the current contract for green box recycling ended in June 2016 and that an extension to the contract could be negotiated for a further 12 months to June 2017. The project team felt that the project could be delivered earlier than this and so a shorted extension was being sought to take the contract to end March 2017. The new service had been timetable to commence in April 2017 and was to be taken for approval by the project board. The Director of Local Environment was confident that this date would be met.

- *Had co-mingling of recyclates been considered as an option for the recycling collection?*

The Director of Local Environment replied that the Council could incur charges in collections if recyclable materials were co-mingled, as they would require processing to separate the materials, either at the collection point or depot facility, and there may be costs related to the disposal of the material.

The Deputy Leader and Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder added that co-mingled recyclates may not meet the TEEP (Technically, Environmentally and Economically Practicable) requirements; therefore the project had made a decision to remain with source separated collections.

- *Had measures used by other Local Authorities to address problems with collection vehicles accessing back lanes been looked into?*

The Director of Local Environment explained that many of Carlisle's backlanes were unusual as they were often long which ruled out muster points, had only one entrance, and often did not have an adequate turning circle. Therefore, the selection of the vehicle to service the collections in back lanes was crucial as it needed to be able to operate effectively, efficiently and safely.

- *A Member felt that April 2017 was a long time to wait for residents who did not receive recycling collections to begin receiving them. He asked if the Council was meeting its legal requirement regarding the collection of recyclable materials.*

The Director of Local Environment replied that the Council collected at least two types of recyclable materials, from each household where the service was delivered, which was the minimum legal requirement. The green boxes receptacles collected paper and glass, and green bags were used to collect both plastic and card; there were only a small number of properties within the collection area that received no collection.

- *What plans had been developed to include new estates into the recycling collections?*

The Director of Local Environment explained that the Council was investigating ways of increasing the recycling collections to new estates, with green box collections being identified as a potential method which could be used; however, this area of work was still being progressed.

- *Did the Council have the resources to deliver the whole project by the implementation date, and had a two stage delivery process been considered?*

The Director of Local Environment explained that the vehicle replacement aspect of the project had been well considered, officers had an understanding of the vehicle design requirement, and project milestone dates had been agreed regarding procurement to enable the Council to meet the project implementation date of April 2017. The initial roll out of the new vehicles would be commenced in April 2017 with the new fleet being fully in place a few months later. She added that the deadline was useful to maintain momentum within the project, and she considered twelve months to be a reasonable timescale.

- *Had the decision regarding outsourcing of collections been reviewed to ensure it offered the best value for the service?*

The Director of Local Environment explained that getting best value for the Council had been an important consideration in the development of the project. Evidence supplied by the consultant engaged to benchmark the Council's collection services had indicated that the Council delivered a very efficient service and there would be no benefit to the authority in outsourcing the service. An in house collection and disposal service had been identified as offering the best value for money to the authority; the evidence provided by the consultant had informed this aspect of the project's decision making.

The Deputy Leader and Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder stated that the consultants had praised the efficiency and competence of the collection service delivered by the Council, adding that she felt the service was robust. At the time of the consultants assessment of the service setting up an in house disposal service had been deemed beneficial, and consideration had been given to developing Bousteads Grassing as a depot for process, but in addition to the reduced price for the sale of disposed recyclates, there had also been concerns about the depot's location near to a residential area. Therefore this aspect of the project had not been progressed; however, she reiterated that the Council could revisit this aspect of the project at a future time.

The Deputy Chief Executive added that another factor in reaching the decision to have an in house collection service was pressure on local government finances, outsourcing the service had been considered, but the in house option had been selected for a number of reasons, outlined in the report, and in financial terms it offered the Council a degree of flexibility for its Medium Term Financial Plan.

- *What strategy was in place for communicating the details of the plan to Members and the public?*

The Director of Local Environment replied that further work was needed in relation to the project, for example, the Soft Market Testing exercise and Project Board meeting, so that decisions could be taken which would shape the project. Following this work a meeting of the Rethinking Waste Cross Party Working would be arranged to develop a live communication plan to disseminate information to Members and residents.

- *A Member felt that it was important that Members were clear on the development and of the project and asked if an Informal Briefing for Members on the project was planned?*

The Deputy Leader and Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder felt that waste was a key Council Service and it was important that Members were briefed when substantial information on the project was available so they could share the information with residents. She reiterated the need for the Soft Market Testing exercise to be completed and the Project Board meeting to have taken place prior to any further communications being undertaken.

In response to a Member's request that Councillors be provided with a resume detailing the Project Board's agreed timetable for the project, the Deputy Leader and Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder agreed that a resume would be circulated to Members and the Project be included as a subject for an Informal Briefing to Members in the future.

The Chairman noted that the report indicated a rise in the Council's recycling rates as a result of the new service, from 45% currently, to 50% by 2020; he asked if the anticipated rise was due to the expansion of the collection to households which currently did not receive recycling collections?

The Director of Local Environment advised that the consultant report made a range of recommendations and with a weekly collection of recyclables, food waste collection and reduced waste capacity, there was potential to reach 65%. The current proposals for a fortnightly collection with the same refuse capacity was expected to achieve 50% by 2020, the increase would in part be realised by expanding the coverage of the service, along with improvements in service delivery. Additionally, in the future, the Council may consider expanding the type of recyclates collected to include textiles or other items; this would also increase the recycling collection rate.

- *A Member expressed concerns regarding the width of roads in new housing developments being too narrow and asked what steps the Council could take to ensure new roads were sufficiently wide to allow access to service vehicles?*

The Deputy Leader and Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder responded that this was an issue she hoped would be addressed as narrow roads made it difficult for the vehicles to access areas and increased the risk of damage being caused to the vehicles, as a result of colliding with street furniture or parked vehicles.

The Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder advised that the County Council as the responsible highways authority were responsible for stipulating required road width, and as a statutory consultee on planning applications, they ensured that the minimum distances were met.

The Director of Economic Development added that the Local Plan also made stipulations regarding road width and agreed to take the Panel's comments back to Planning Services for them to be considered.

The Chairman asked when the Panel would receive the next update report on the Project. The Director of Local Environment advised that the first meeting in the new civic year would be most suitable as it would allow time for the Soft Market Testing exercise to

be conducted and for the Project Board and Cross Party Working Group meetings to take place.

RESOLVED –(1) That the Panel welcomed report LE.03/16 and noted the progress made on the project.

(2) That the Panel receive a report on the Project at its June meeting.

(3) That a resume covering the agreed project timescale be circulated to Members following the next meeting of the Rethinking Waste Project Board.

(4) That an Informal Briefing on the project be delivered to Members.

EEOSP.17/16 CARLISLE SOUTH MASTERPLAN

The Director of Economic Development introduced the presentation on the Carlisle South Masterplan, advising the Panel that it was a long term project that would take around twenty-five to thirty years deliver in its entirety, however, the early stages of the masterplanning were important as they formed the foundations of the project.

The Investment and Policy Manager delivered a presentation on the Carlisle South Masterplan detailing the background and purpose of the Masterplan; the indicative area covered by the Masterplan; the Planning Strategy; the progress to date on the Masterplan and the next steps. He explained that the Masterplan would guide decisions on issues such as the location of development and infrastructure, connectivity and phasing. The Masterplan process would mirror that of the Local Plan and would engage in extensive consultation as it sought to meet the development needs of the city.

The fixed extent of the area covered by the Masterplan would be defined through the process of masterplanning, but would comprise land between junction 42 of the M6 and the A595. The Masterplan sought to meet the development needs of the city in terms of housing supply, employment land, supporting infrastructure, and a new southern link road as well as seeking to improve connectivity to West Cumbria.

A team from the Homes and Communities Agency's Advisory Team for Large Applications and Sites (ATLAS) had been secured to assist and advise the Council on taking the Masterplan forward, and consultants had begin work on identifying potential options for the southern road link.

In conclusion the Investment and Policy Manager advised that the next steps in the development of the Masterplan included defining a clear project plan, agreement of governance arrangements which may include a cross party group of Members, and the continuation of evidence gathering.

In considering the report and presentation Members raised the following comments and questions:

- *What proportion of the area shaded on the indicated map shown in the presentation would be needed to provide 10,000 homes?*

The Policy and Investment Manager replied that perhaps one third of the area indicated as potentially forming the Masterplan area would be required to build 10,000 homes. He cautioned Members that the Council had not agreed any plans to build 10,000 homes in

the area adding that the land which was shaded on the indicative map, the land in this area was of varying quality and as such would be suitable for a variety of uses.

- *A Member expressed concern that the area highlighted on the indicative map comprised a number of small villages, and he felt that it was important that the Council appreciated some residents wanted to live on the edge of the urban area, in a rural setting. He was concerned about the area proposed for development and asked why it was necessary that development took place on such a scale.*

The Deputy Chief Executive responded that as more people were living longer in their retirement, they were still contributing to the economy, but the increasing population numbers created issues of housing supply, the city's small size made it attractive to people, but it was also problematic in terms of provide for growth.

The Chairman noted that the M6 corridor was a significant part of the Local Enterprise Partnership development plans going forward, but he appreciated the concerns about striking the right balance between urban and rural areas.

- *Why had consultants been engaged to identify the southern relief route, what bidding process had been used, and when had this decision been taken place?*

The Policy and Investment Manager explained that the bidding process had been one of joint procurement with the County Council and had taken place the previous autumn using available infrastructure capacity funds. The decision to engage consultants had been taken as neither the city nor county councils had the capacity to undertake the work.

In response to a comment by a Member that work of this nature had been undertaken in the 1980's, the Investment and Policy Manager explained that the purpose of the work previously undertaken had been to identify the best route to bypass the city, whereas the function of the southern relief road was now focussed on open access to the city and connectivity between the east and west.

- *When would a substantive document on the Masterplan be available for Members?*

The Director of Economic Development responded that the development of the Masterplan was an iterative process, and therefore she anticipated 2 – 3 years would be needed before a substantive document was developed.

The Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder added that she felt that a cross party working group could give consideration to individual issues prior to the development of a substantive document, as had been done with the development of the Local Plan, she hoped this could start as soon as possible.

A Member felt that the indicative area identified was an excellent strategic position to create employment opportunities within the city and for providing opportunities to connect to the opportunities on the West coast. He felt that masterplanning was important to protect the city from ad hoc developments and allowed for the planning of proper infrastructure to support housing and employment developments. Large village settlement may be included in the policy and as the completion of the plans was thirty years away, people did not need to feel frightened by the Masterplan.

The Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder agreed, adding that she felt the Masterplan was an exciting opportunity to be involved in the growth and development of

the city, and that as political leaders in the city Members needed to be engaged in the process. The Council needed to deliver what it could to help the city's prosperity, by creating quality homes, leisure, work, and education provision.

Another Member applauded the ambition of the project and felt that the Masterplan would create many exciting opportunities for the next generation.

RESOLVED – That the Investment and Policy Manager be thanked for the presentation.

EEOSP.18/16 3RD QUARTER PERFORMANCE REPORT 2015/16

The Policy and Performance Officer presented report PC.06/16 which updated the Panel on the Council's service standards and gave a summary of the Carlisle Plan actions 2013-16.

The Policy and Performance Officer reported that the end of year report would include the new priorities/activities outlined in the new Carlisle Plan 2015-18. Details of each service standard had been included in table 1 of the report. The table illustrated the cumulative year to date figure, a month by month breakdown of performance and, where possible, an actual service standard baseline that had been established either locally or nationally.

In considering the report Members raised the following comments and questions:

- *How were the statistics covered in the report selected for inclusion?*

The Deputy Chief Executive explained that the indicators reported to the Panel had been agreed by the Executive at the beginning of the previous Carlisle Plan, the indicators had had been selected on the grounds that they would be of interest to Members and the public, and that they were a manageable number to consider. He reminded Members that in the previous report format one hundred and twenty four national indicators were considered.

The statistics covered by the quarterly performance reports were linked to other performance indicators; they were also used by the Senior Management Team as a mechanism for ensuring that service standards were met.

In response the Member explained that he felt it would be useful for the Panel to be provided with qualitative data along with the statistics as that would assist in Member's understanding of the issues being covered by the report, for example, in addition to reporting the number of Corporate Complaints dealt with in the stipulated fifteen day timescale, it would be useful for Members to know the reasons for the complaints and how they were addressed. The Panel agreed that this would be taken forward.

A Member expressed concerns that he had previously raised issues relating to his Ward, which he felt had not been addressed. The issues raised included housing, highways, health and flood related issues.

Another Member took issue with this statement and felt that questions and comments made by Members needed to be relevant to the report which was currently being considered.

RESOLVED – (1) That report PC.06/16 be noted.

(2) That the Panel be consulted on the information provided in therevised performance information/service standards relating to the new Carlisle Plan which will be included in future quarterly performance reports to Panel.

(The meeting ended at 12.37pm)

Environment & Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Agenda
Item:

A.2

Meeting Date: 14 April 2016
Portfolio: Cross Cutting
Key Decision: No
Within Policy and
Budget Framework
Public / Private Public

Title: OVERVIEW REPORT AND WORK PROGRAMME
Report of: Overview and Scrutiny Officer
Report Number: OS 09/16

Summary:

This report provides an overview of matters related to the Environment and Economy O&S Panel's work. It also includes the latest version of the work programme.

Recommendations:

Members are asked to:

- Decide whether the items on the Notice of Key Executive Decisions should be included in the Panel's Work Programme for consideration.
- Comment on the draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2015/16
- Note and/or amend the Panel's work programme.

Contact Officer: Sarah Mason

Ext: 7053

Appendices attached
to report:

1. Draft Scrutiny Annual Report 2015/16
2. Environment and Economy O&S Panel Work Programme 2015/16

1. Notice of Key Executive Decisions

The most recent Notice of Key Executive Decisions was published on 4 March 2016. This was circulated to all Members. No items fall into the remit of this Panel.

2. References from the Executive

There are no references from the Executive's meeting on 7 March 2016.

3. Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report 2015/16

The Scrutiny Annual Report has been drafted and is attached at Appendix 1. Panel Members are asked to comment on the draft which is being considered by all three O&S Panels. The report will then be formally approved by the Scrutiny Chairs Group prior to being presented at Council on 26 April 2015.

4. Work Programme

The Panel's current work programme is attached at Appendix 2 for comment/amendment.

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: None

Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2015/16

Annual report to full Council on the workings of the O&S
Panels with recommendations for future work programmes
and amended working methods if appropriate.

April 2016



Cllr Reg Watson OBE

Lead Member, Scrutiny Chairs Group



I am pleased to present the 2015/16 Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report to Carlisle City Council.

Even in times of austerity the Scrutiny panels continue to monitor and challenge the chief officers and Executive Members, trying to squeeze out the last drops of efficiency from a reducing budget. This year all of the scrutiny panels have done well and I thank them for their efforts.

I would also like to thank the scrutiny support officer, chief officers and Members of the Executive for their help and openness throughout the year. I hope we can continue to add value during the following year.

Cllr Colin Glover, Leader of the Council



Throughout 2015, Carlisle has grown in confidence and there has been a positive attitude to the future from both inside the Council and the wider community. The December floods had a devastating effect on residents and businesses in the city, but it is a credit to the people of this great city, how everyone came together, supporting each other to recover, rebuild and become more resilient into 2016 and beyond.

There is no doubt that the pressures on Local Government are greater than ever before. Reducing budgets mean that difficult decisions have to be made and expectations of the Council for positive leadership of the city continue to grow. Our Overview and Scrutiny Panels play a key role in developing the direction and priorities for the future. Over the past year members have questioned and challenged the Executive and officers to ensure good decision making and planning of the services we provide. There is no doubt that Scrutiny is at its best when it is positively contributing to the development of policies and services, through panel meetings and focussed task and finish groups. This provides valuable input to inform the way decisions are made by the Executive and Council and I would like to thank members who have made that positive difference to the work of the Council.

Continued...

Cllr Colin Glover, Leader of the Council - continued...

I also want to thank the Scrutiny officer staff who provide support and guidance to our Panels.

Scrutiny Panels have considered a wide range of subjects and the past year has seen the development of two significant areas of work which will guide the direction of the Council in the coming years. The Local Plan has been developed to give a clear vision of how the city will grow and prosper and the Carlisle Plan, which sets out our priorities for the next few years. Detailed examination and contributions by Scrutiny Panels and wider public consultation have been valuable in guiding the development of these plans.

We are fortunate at Carlisle City Council to have committed and confident staff who have regularly provided updates on their work and plans for the future. We owe them all our thanks for their dedication, often going over and above what would be expected of them.



Introduction

Scrutiny is considered to be the main check and balance to the power of the Executive and involves many of the Councillors who are not on the Executive. Individual Councillors are selected by their political parties to sit on the scrutiny panels.

The key roles of scrutiny are:

- ♦ ensuring the Executive is accountable. This means questioning members of the Executive and senior officers about decisions that have been made or are about to be made. It also involves looking at how well the Council is doing against its policy objectives and targets for achievement.
- ♦ reviewing and developing policies. In this role, scrutiny can help the Council to develop its policy and budgetary framework. This might involve research and consultation with the community and other agencies on policy issues, good practice and looking at alternative ways of doing things.
- ♦ ensuring the continuous improvement of Council services. Scrutiny can make suggestions to the Executive for service reviews. Members of scrutiny panels are often involved in individual reviews where a particular service or function of the Council is thoroughly examined.

In Carlisle, scrutiny operates through three panels - Community Overview and Scrutiny, Resources Overview and Scrutiny and Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny. The Scrutiny Chairs Group (Chairs and Vice Chairs of the three Scrutiny Panels) meets on an ad hoc basis to deal with any overarching scrutiny issues.

There are eight non-Executive members on each panel and each panel is politically balanced (i.e. the proportions of each political party on the panel are the same as on the Council as a whole).

This annual report provides an overview of the work of the scrutiny function during the 2015/16 civic year. The report provides brief details of the work of the individual panels and gives details of Task and Finish Group work.



Setting of Scrutiny work programmes

Scrutiny agenda planning

Consideration was given early in the civic year to decide the content of each Panel's work programme for the year ahead.

Consideration to forthcoming decisions and issues was given and where focus of scrutiny should lie in order to gain the maximum value. Panel Members, SMT officers and Portfolio Holders have been involved in developing each Panel's work programme for the year 2015/16. The following questions were asked when deciding what should be included in a work programme:

Will scrutiny activity add value to the Council's, and / or partners' overall performance?

Is the issue strategic and significant?

Is consideration of the item likely to lead to effective outcomes?

Will Scrutiny involvement be duplicating the work of another Committee?

Is the Scrutiny activity timely?

Regular meetings have continued throughout the year with SMT officers and Chairs of EEOSP and COSP to discuss forthcoming agendas in more details. This helps to ensure that access to appropriate information is available. Scrutiny Members need to be confident that the information provided is an accurate picture of the Council's (and it's partners) performance.



Community Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Personal View from Cllr Rob Burns, Chair of Community O&S Panel



To quote Will Rogers, not to be confused with Roy, 'Last year we said 'Things can't go on like this' and true enough, they didn't, they got worse'.

It is tempting to reflect that, at the end of another municipal year, things have got worse and in some ways they have, with more budget cuts, fewer staff delivering services, less room for optimism and growing disillusion in the community.

On the face of it, in the words of another old gunslinger, Cpl Fraser in Dad's Army 'We're doomed, we're doomed'.

But actually, perhaps surprisingly given those circumstances, that's not strictly the case.

There is I believe a general sense of achievement in the Council at the end of this year and at COSP meetings, there have been many items which have been uplifting in some way, including;

- ♦ The presentation from the Carlisle Youth Council when some young people presented us with an encouraging view not only of some of their activities, but their enthusiasm and skill in presenting them. Clearly some of them had their minds set on filling some of the seats on the other side of the committee table in the not too distant future!
- ♦ Initial discussions about devolution and the Cumbria Deal (or no deal). If you thought the issues around membership of the EU were complicated....
- ♦ The exciting prospects emerging from the renewal of the Leisure Contract which hopefully will not only produce financial benefits, but will bring much needed upgrading to some tired old facilities.
- ♦ The development of the new Community Plan which offers an intriguing vision of a vibrant, socially and economically viable city.

But of course there were also times when it seemed that things couldn't actually get any worse and the December floods were a reminder of how fickle life can be.

As usual in such circumstances, we saw extraordinary feats of human kindness, courage and resilience and COSP received reports detailing the Council's own exemplary response, which of course remains on going. It sounds trite to say that we learn from our experiences, when there are so many personal tales of hardship and trauma which cannot be so easily dismissed, but it is a fact that we had learnt much from our previous response ten years ago, which made the initial and continuing recovery processes more timely, relevant and appropriate.

Cllr Jessica Riddle, Portfolio Holder for Communities, Health and Wellbeing



Overview and Scrutiny has an essential role in ensuring that Executive decisions are fair and properly informed. I continue to value their input and robust questioning.

I have rarely found it greatly comforting when in the depths of despair, to know that someone is worse off than me, but there was a great sense of the whole Cumbrian community sharing the experience in December which was indeed comforting and positive.

It has been a great privilege to be Chair of this Panel again this year and I would like to thank fellow Panel Members for their forbearance and support.

We have not found too much to disagree about which is due in many ways, to the input from Officers who have presented the issues to us in a straightforward and open style which has encouraged positive exchanges.

The input from Portfolio Holders and representatives of other agencies has also been key in encouraging constructive debate.

But most of all, the efficiency and effectiveness of Scrutiny would almost certainly be diminished if it were not for the diligence and skills of the Scrutiny Support Officer and the Committee Clerks who perform possibly one of the most under-appreciated jobs on the Council, that of being able to read, write, listen and understand all at the same time (I hereby declare myself ineligible for any future vacancies), in order to produce minutes which are invariably accurate, informative and well written and are of inestimable value to the smooth running of the Council's democratic processes.

At the end of my second year, I have defied those naysayers who said I'd soon get fed up with being a Councillor, indeed my enthusiasm has grown.

Part of that has been due to my involvement with COSP and I hope I will be given the opportunity to continue to be a Member of the Panel in the new municipal year, which is sure to be 'full of things that have never been'!

Bring it on!

Cllr Anne Quilter, Portfolio Holder for Culture, Health, Leisure and Young People



I fully appreciate the contribution of the Community O&S Panel to the decision making process of the Executive and Full Council.

By attending the meetings as Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Young People I am able to appreciate the wider view of members thinking and thank all concerned for their valuable input.

Environment and Economy Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Personal View from Cllr Paul Nedved, Chair of Environment and Economy O&S Panel



It has been a privilege to Chair the Economy and Environment Panel for a second year in what has been an extremely busy and challenging agenda.

I have both valued and enjoyed the robust scrutiny undertaken by Members and Substitutes of the Panel and thank all for their considerable contributions to what has been at times vigorous discussion and at others in depth monitoring of the items before the Panel. I welcome the valued input from new Members to both the Panel and the Council as well as the well healed who can always be relied upon to provide in depth scrutiny.

My thanks extend to Directors and Officers who have presented a wide ranging series of well received Reports and updates which at times included vigorous questioning from Members. Portfolio Holders have been supportive of the Panel's work and I thank them for consistent attendance and input.

The invaluable advice, support and guidance of the Scrutiny Manager has to be singled out. Preparation for each meeting has been of a high standard and briefing notes a very useful tool to scrutiny consideration. A thank-you also to the unenviable task of the Committee Clerks and Member Support Officers for providing substantial Minutes, Notes and research.

Both the discussions at the outset with the Panel, Directors and Officers to develop the work programme coupled with regular agenda setting meetings with the Deputy Chief Executive and Scrutiny Manager have allowed us to adapt to changing priorities. A series of Scrutiny Training sessions were undertaken which added value. The recommendations of the Peer Review in the previous year for re-examining scrutiny structure have as yet not yielded any significant changes although Call-In procedures have been modified.

The value of Task and Finish Groups for providing in-depth examination of specific areas has proved especially useful and enjoy cross party support.

Work Programme undertaken by the Panel 2015/16:

- ◆ Budget
- ◆ Rethinking Waste Business Case and Vehicle Procurement Update on Clean Carlisle

- ♦ Clean Neighbourhood Enforcement Policy
- ♦ Clean Up Streets Petition
- ♦ Contaminated Land Strategy
- ♦ Car Parking Development Plan
- ♦ Carlisle Plan
- ♦ Major infrastructure projects in Cumbria
- ♦ Implications for Carlisle Enterprise Zone and Tourist Information Centre
- ♦ Performance Monitoring
- ♦ Carlisle South Masterplan
- ♦ City Centre Development Framework
- ♦ Update on Public Realm
- ♦ Local Enterprise Partnership (presentation Graham Haywood, LEP Director)
- ♦ New Infrastructure Projects for Cumbria (Guy Kenyon, Lead Officer Cumbria CC)
- ♦ Carlisle Economic Potential
- ♦ Performance Monitoring Reports, Reports and updates which included vigorous and at times critical questioning
- ♦ Flood 2015 Report
- ♦ Skills Audit (deferred)
- ♦ Business Support Task and Finish Group

Central themes dominating Local Environment scrutiny have been the ongoing review of Waste Services (Rethinking Waste project) with a series of Reports on the redesign of waste and recycling services and vehicle procurement by 2017. The Cross Party Working Group has proved to be especially valuable and is to be continued. Two Reports on Clean Up Carlisle always provokes considerable discussion and questioning on subjects as diverse as gull sack implementation, dog fouling, education, campaigns and future planning coupled with equating the perception from the public of these campaigns in both rural and urban wards. The Panel was also the vehicle for a Clean Streets Petition which led to vigorous debate and recommendations.



A wide range of presentations have come before the Panel under the Economy brief.

Highlights have been the LEP presentation and discussion with Graham Haywood, Carlisle Economic Potential from the Deputy Chief Executive and Major Infrastructure Projects in Cumbria presented by Guy Kenyon. Equally the embryonic report on the Carlisle South Masterplan brought about interesting discussion and analysis. Public Realm including ongoing discussions of street signage and the first Performance Monitoring Report of the Tourist Information Centre (April Panel) after the major refurbishment are also key priorities for this Panel.

A Task and Finish Group on Skills was deferred awaiting the Skills Audit undertaken by the Local Enterprise Partnership which has been recently published. However the Scrutiny Manager and myself by way of preparation attended the Skills Summit at the Carlisle College of the Arts and the Skills Fair. A gender pay gap element will also be looked into as part of this T and F.

A special thanks goes to the Business Support Task and Finish Group for the exhaustive overview of business support in the District, included Panel meeting last year at the Business Interaction Centre, visits to the Growth Hub and contacts with the Federation of Small Business, University of Cumbria, Chamber of Commerce, City Officers and Members. The scoping and evidence gathering were considerable which led to a series of recommendations contained in their report and have subsequently been received by the Executive with a generally favourable response. This was a significant piece of work by all Task and Finish Members and required their considerable input and time.

The Draft Local Plan 2015-30 will be in part scrutinised by the Local Plan Working Group in this civic year and will be revisited by the E and E Panel for further scrutiny at a later stage.

The Panel overall had a heavy agenda this year with 8 meetings, all of which had key themes and agenda items being scrutinised by the Panel.

Special thanks must also extend to the Director of Resources for steering us through detailed budget considerations and the Director of Local Environment for the substantial reports and preparedness at all times to update and be subject to detailed questioning by the Panel.



The flood of 2015 reporting will be a key element moving forward with presentations to the April and subsequent E and E and Panels and the "grassroots " impacts to residents and business to be the subject of Task and Finish working moving forward.

Overall this has been a most enjoyable and challenging year and I am extremely grateful for the support I have received from the Panel. Invariably good humoured and at times understanding when there has been full agendas!

Looking forward to next year's work programme!

Cllr Elsie Martlew, Portfolio Holder for Environment & Transport



Overview and Scrutiny is a vital piece in the democratic process. As the council is run on a "cabinet" style basis it is essential that the Executive can be held to account. As Portfolio Holder I welcome this safeguard and I value the input from O & S members prior to major policy decisions being taken by the Executive.

Business Support Task Group

The Economy & Environment Scrutiny Panel commissioned a Task Group to look at Business Support as they had concerns about the provision of business support in the District. Members required more of an understanding of what role Carlisle City Council has, as this has changed over time. The Task Group were asked to look at the roles of the difference agencies and how they work in partnership.

The group evidenced that there is a great deal of advice and support on offer, however this is not presented in a simple way in a single location. It is clear that there is no expectation from local businesses that the Council provides business support, but we could facilitate access to support with smarter signposting. There are examples, from across the North West, where authorities have created webpages or supported the creation of websites dedicated to business support and growth.

The Council role is not to have all the answers; it can help business people find the right answers as easily as possible. To play this role effectively will require further work on mapping out the existing sources and networks offering business support and an ongoing commitment to keeping this mapping current and accurate.

A number of recommendations were made to Executive in November 2015.

Executive gave assurance that the close relationship with providers of business support would continue, that the Council's new web-site would include signposting to help businesses, and the review of the Enterprise Centre would look at all aspects of the Centre's operation including renaming and rebranding.



Cllr Heather Bradley, Portfolio Holder for Economy & Enterprise



As a former member of scrutiny panels, I view their role in scrutinising decisions and helping to develop policy as essential. As a Portfolio Holder, I have found the comments and questions of the Environment & Economy and of the Community Scrutiny Panels helpful and sometimes challenging.

I appreciate the work of Task & Finish Groups and the way in which their efforts can assist in developing policy and in informing future Council decisions. I should like to thank the Chairs and members of the panels for the contribution they make to the Council.



Resources Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Personal View from Cllr Reg Watson, Chair of Resources O&S Panel



Scrutiny has an important role to play in times of austerity to ensure efficiency and thrift.

The Panel probed a number of areas including:

Asset Management Plan – we must keep a close eye on this as it is the main part of our future funding

Performance monitoring – ensuring value for money

Sickness management – doing well despite the cuts and the floods

I would like to thank our Scrutiny Support Officer and Chief Officers for their advice and support and a big thank you to fellow Panel Members for their support over the last 12 months. I hope we can continue to add value to Council deliberations.

Cllr Dr Les Tickner, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance & Resources



This has been a challenging year for ROSP due to the number and ambition of the Executive proposals. I am pleased by the level of detailed challenge into the proposals particularly where the investment required for the business case has to be justified. I would also like to place on record my thanks and appreciation to the scrutiny staff for their tireless work behind the scenes researching for the task and finish projects, preparing the panel and facilitating the meetings.

Pre-decision scrutiny

Pre-decision scrutiny

Throughout the year a number of items have been scrutinised by panels prior to an Executive decision. 'Pre-decision scrutiny' is where Overview and Scrutiny Panels look at a planned decision shortly before it is made by the Executive. This is often seen as a contrast with post-decision scrutiny through the Council's call-in arrangements, whereby the implementation of decisions can be delayed.

According to the Centre for Public Scrutiny¹, looking at decisions before they are made provides an important means to influence those decisions, and to improve them. It gives scrutineers an opportunity to challenge assumptions that may have been made as the decision was developed; it also gives them the chance to consider how decision-makers have considered what risks might arise from the implementation of the decision, and how those risks might be mitigated. Scrutiny councillors bring a different perspective to the decision-making process than that provided by Cabinet members or officers, which can help decisions to be more robust. Looking at a decision before it is made can often be seen as a more effective means of scrutiny than looking at a decision after it is made

¹*Pre-decision scrutiny, Practice Guide 2—Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) June 2014*

Pre-decision scrutiny items in the past year include:

- ◆ Low cost home ownership
- ◆ Carlisle Plan 2015-16
- ◆ Sports and Leisure new contract
- ◆ Rethinking Waste Business Case and Vehicle procurement
- ◆ Tullie House Business Plan
- ◆ Revised Equality Policy
- ◆ Tullie House Business Plan

- ◆ Contaminated Land Strategy
- ◆ Clean Neighbourhood Enforcement Policy
- ◆ Draft Budget 2016/17 (to all three panels)
- ◆ Asset Review Business Plan
- ◆ Asset Management Plan 2015-2020
- ◆ Digital Vision and Technology 5 year Strategy

Call-in

Call-in provides a mechanism for Councillors to intervene when they feel that a decision being made by the Executive needs to be revisited (or possibly changed). It provides a key check and balance in the leader/cabinet system of governance.

In the 2015/16 Civic year one request for Call-in was received.

Decision Ref	Issue	Overview & Scrutiny Panel	Outcome of Call-in Meeting
OD 184/15	Appointment of Leisure Contract Retender Advisor	Community	That the decision not be referred back to the decision making body.

Scrutiny of the 2015 Flood

Scrutiny of the 2015 Flood

Following the Floods in December 2015, Members of Environment and Economy O&S Panel have suggested that a Task and Finish Group be set up to consider any future response to the flood, investigate any possible ways that the Council could influence flood prevention measures and also look at the Council's first response to the flood and take away any lessons learned.

The Scrutiny Chairs group on 4 April agreed that a workshop be set up in the current civic year. This would provide an overview of the issues and plans for recovery and future resilience. Further consideration would then be given to the scope of Flood scrutiny including the best timing of review work.

It has also been agreed that regular flood update reports would be provided to each Panel, to receive updates on issues within the remit of that Panel.



Conclusion

Conclusion to follow



Appendix 2 ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY O&S PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

Date last revised: 04 April 2016

Issue	Type of Scrutiny					Comments/status	Meeting Dates							
	Performance Management	Key decision Item/Referred from Executive	Policy Review/Development	Scrutiny of Partnership/External Agency	Monitoring		25 Jun 15	30 Jul 15	17 Sep 15	29 Oct 15	26 Nov 15	21 Jan 16	3 Mar 16	14 Apr 16
Contact Officer														
CURRENT MEETING - 14 April 2016														
Scrutiny Annual Report Sarah Mason			✓		✓	Draft report for comment before Chairs Group								✓
Flood Update Report Darren Crossley					✓	Update report on flood recovery programme								✓
Update on Clean Carlisle Scott Burns					✓	6 monthly update report			✓					✓
Tourist Information Centre Jane Meek	✓				✓	Performance monitoring report for Tourist Information Centre (Old Town Hall)								✓
City Centre Development Framework Garry Legg					✓	Report and presentation on City Centre Development Framework								✓
TASK AND FINISH GROUPS														

Appendix 2 ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY O&S PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

Date last revised: 04 April 2016

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Flood 2015						Discussed at Scrutiny Chairs Group: Flood update items to each Panel. Informal Council Briefing on the Floods 7 April.								
Skills Audit						T&F group deferred until after Flood T&F group. To include gender pay gap.								
FUTURE ITEMS														
COMPLETED ITEMS														
Work Planning Session							✓							

Appendix 2 ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY O&S PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

Date last revised: 04 April 2016

Issue Contact Officer	Type of Scrutiny					Comments/status	Meeting Dates							
	Performance Management	Key decision Item/Referred from Executive	Policy Review/Development	Scrutiny of Partnership/External Agency	Monitoring		25 Jun 15	30 Jul 15	17 Sep 15	29 Oct 15	26 Nov 15	21 Jan 16	3 Mar 16	14 Apr 16
Contaminated Land Strategy		✓				Scrutiny of Executive report	✓							
Enterprise Zone						Verbal update		✓						
Rethinking Waste		✓				Rethinking Waste Business Case and Vehicle Procurement (pre-decision Scrutiny)			✓					
Carlisle Plan		✓				Pre-decision consultation on the draft Carlisle Plan 2015-2018			✓					
Major infrastructure projects in Cumbria – implications for Carlisle Jane Meek						Presentation on the major infrastructure projects in Cumbria and the implications for Carlisle				✓				
Car Parking Development Plan Angela Culleton			✓		✓	Scrutiny of car parking development plan				✓				

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	Performance Management	Key decision Item/Referred from Executive	Policy Review/Development	Scrutiny of Partnership/External Agency	Monitoring		25 Jun 15	30 Jul 15	17 Sep 15	29 Oct 15	26 Nov 15	21 Jan 16	3 Mar 16	14 Apr 16
Clean Neighbourhood Enforcement Policy Scott Burns		✓	✓			Scrutiny of revised Enforcement Policy				✓				
Update on Public Realm Mark Walshe					✓	Update on the proposed city centre orientation improvements (including signage and car park renaming).					✓			
Local Enterprise Partnership Jane Meek				✓		Updated report Cumbria LEP ED 19 14 and presentation by Graham Haywood, LEP Director					✓			
Budget Peter Mason		✓	✓			To consider budget proposals for 2016/17					✓			
New infrastructure projects for Cumbria (inc. nuclear new builds) Sarah Mason						Presentation by Guy Kenyon, Lead Officer – Infrastructure Planning, Cumbria CC.						✓		
Carlisle Economic Potential Darren Crossley		✓	✓			Update of projects following March 2015 report		✓				✓		

Appendix 2 ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY O&S PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

Date last revised: 04 April 2016

Issue Contact Officer	Type of Scrutiny					Comments/status	Meeting Dates							
	Performance Management	Key decision Item/Referred from Executive	Policy Review/Development	Scrutiny of Partnership/External Agency	Monitoring		25 Jun 15	30 Jul 15	17 Sep 15	29 Oct 15	26 Nov 15	21 Jan 16	3 Mar 16	14 Apr 16
Clean Up Streets petition Rachel Rooney												✓		
Rethinking Waste Project Angela Culleton/Colin Bowley					✓	Report – Update / monitoring of project.							✓	
Carlisle South Masterplan Garry Legg			✓			Presentation – Introduction to Carlisle South Masterplan							✓	
Performance Monitoring Reports Gary Oliver	✓					Monitoring of performance relevant to the remit of Panel	✓		✓		✓		✓	

Report to Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Agenda
Item:

A.3

Meeting Date: 14 April 2016
Portfolio: All
Key Decision: No
Within Policy and
Budget Framework NO
Public / Private Public

Title: December 2015 Flood Update Report
Report of: The Deputy Chief Executive
Report Number: SD07/16

Purpose / Summary:

This report is part of a series of update reports prepared for Overview and Scrutiny Committees on flood recovery activities and future programmed work.

The reports contain a generic section designed to give all Committees an overview of flood recovery work and a more specific section tailored to the work areas of each Committee.

This Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Report provides specific updates relating to:

- Local Environment - initial clean-up operations
- Customer Contact and access to services (including web, phone and face to face)
- Flood grants and household payments (figures as of 4th March – updated figures will be supplied to the meeting)
- City Council property and asset recovery
- Financial considerations and activities
- Car Park recovery
- Liaison with Environment Agency
- Resident support via the Carlisle Flood Partnership (led by Cumbria County Council)

Recommendations:

1. That members of the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee review this report and give consideration to the progress made to date and the recovery plans going forward.

Tracking

Executive:	-
Overview and Scrutiny:	14.04.16
Council:	-

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In December 2015 Carlisle, other places in Cumbria and number of other areas in the North of England and Scotland suffered widespread and severe flood damage as a result of Storm Desmond and the subsequent storms during the Christmas and New Year period.
- 1.2 From Friday 4th December onwards a multi-agency emergency response was required to deal with the initial and on-going stages of the event. The City Council, amongst others, significantly contributed to Gold, Silver and Bronze command centres at Penrith Police HQ and in the Durranshill police station in Carlisle.
- 1.3 On Monday 7th December the City Council set up its own Crisis Management Team (CMT) at Bousteads Grassing Depot. The Civic Centre was severely damaged by the floods and at this point in time was still under water (to the first floor level), without power or other key services. Bousteads Grassing was used as a temporary centre for Council activity. The Crisis Management team consisted of Senior Officers and a full range of other key staff, all of whom played a vital role in coordinating the City Council response to the flood and our on-going recovery activity.
- 1.4 The initial work arising from this CMT focused on:
- enabling our Business Continuity Plans for service recovery (customer contact, access to services, delivery of key services, re-starting ICT infrastructure, communications, asset recovery)
 - ensuring clear communication with residents, staff, members, press and media of the key issues arising and our multi-agency responses
 - liaison with emerging County wide recovery groups for housing, infrastructure and community issues
 - handling offers of assistance and donations for flood victims
 - Developing plans for assets and wide spread service recovery
- 1.5 The CMT continued to meet on a daily basis in the run up to the Christmas break and frequently during the early part of January 2016. After this initial crisis period the recovery work was then taken on by a range of other focused groups relating to property, services, finance, insurance and legal issues.

- 1.6 Whilst the impact of the floods and the on-going implications continue to be a major concern for residents, businesses, visitors and public sector providers the purpose of this report is to focus on the recovery efforts of the City Council and its constituent services. The rest of this report will focus on these areas of work.

2. FLOOD RECOVERY ACTIVITY: DECEMBER – MARCH 2016

2.1 Local Environment:

The clean-up of Carlisle started as soon as the flood waters receded. Due to the heavy rain in previous months the rivers had been full of sediment which meant thick deposits of mud were left behind by the flood waters. Some of the mud had to be cleared by hand with shovels before the street cleaning machines could go in.

Skips were provided in flood affected areas for residents and emptying these was made more difficult by the temporary closure of Eden Bridge which meant getting to the drop-off sites took much longer than usual.

Overnight road closures were put in place for several nights on Warwick Road to enable local streets to be cleared while minimising disruption and avoiding danger to the public.

Up to 18th December, in excess of 1,064 tonnes of flood material was disposed of from flood affected streets in Carlisle. A further 75 tonnes was collected from Bousteads HWRC and 17 tonnes from Brampton HWRC. Around 350 skips were provided across the flood affected areas to deal with the initial volume of flood damaged contents.

These works were carried out in addition to the normal services still being provided across the rest of the District. Staff from Local Environment also provided tremendous assistance in emptying the ground floor of the Civic Centre and a range of other flood damaged properties.

2.2 Customer Contact and access to services:

Following the flood the Civic Centre was initially inaccessible to staff and members of the public. The Council was temporarily left without IT systems, phone and web services and has no facilities for meeting and assisting residents and customers.

The recovery of key customer services was one of the first priorities for the CMT. A temporary Customer Services Centre was operational in the Old Town Hall on Monday 7th December (complete with phone lines and functioning web service). The team continued to operate from this site until access to the Civic Centre was

secured and arrangements were made for the relocation of this service to Committee Rooms A, B and C on 21st December. Telephone services had also then been fully restored (14th December) in the first floor IT Training Room.

Since this point a more appropriate facility has been secured via the temporary contact centre and Civic reception in the members' car park to the side of the Civic Centre, this facility opened 29th February. This provides all of the services we normally provide and is accommodating some of our partners such as the DWP and passport office. The Customers Services team will continue to occupy these facilities whilst a full recovery of the ground floor and basement of the Civic Centre takes place.

2.3 Flood grants and household payments (Figures as of 4th March 2016)

Community Support Grant - £500 household scheme:

Further to the floods the Government announced an immediate assistance scheme targeted to support households affected by the event. This offered a one off Community Support Grant payment of £500 to each household.

Up to 4th March, 1,648 households have been confirmed as flooded by Storm Desmond, of these 1,625 are eligible for the £500 community support grant. Of these, 1,484 properties have so far received a payment of £500 each, equating to £742,000 of grant. This is being recovered from the County Council upon submission of fortnightly grant claims.

£5,000 flood resilience grant:

This Government scheme covers both residential and commercial properties (204 businesses were affected by the flood) and is being administered by the Housing Department.

99 applications have been received and payments made to 3 applicants (as of 4th March). 53 applications have been approved equating to approx. £239,213. This is recoverable from the County Council.

Council Tax & NNDR discount schemes:

County wide schemes have now been approved with the DCLG paying £400,000 to the County Council to fund the local discretions (second homes / empty properties / flood affected businesses) contained within the County wide schemes.

Districts are submitting monthly claims to recover the costs incurred. Funding for discounts offered in line with the Government Scheme will be paid through a S31

grant directly to us. To date Council tax discounts have been awarded to 1,661 householders which amounts to £648,987.17 up until 31st March 2016.

Business Rates discount has been awarded to 84 businesses, amounting to £230,417.81 to 31st March 2016.

2.4 City Council property assets recovery

The 2015 flood inflicted widespread and severe damaged to City Council property assets. Since the flood significant effort and expense has been incurred in making safe, assessing, stripping, drying and preparing facilities for full recovery. During this period the Council has been actively involved with our insurance brokers, loss adjusters and insurers to develop our claim for property and contents.

The Council (guided by our insurers) have also employed WYG as programme managers for the first phase of our property recovery.

WYG have assisted the Council to develop a property recovery plan and tackle immediate recovery issues such as making safe and stripping / drying our assets.

A central part of this work to date has been the surveying exercise to establish the post flood condition and reinstatement costs of over 60 assets ranging from the Civic Centre to minor items such as walls and open spaces. The completion of these surveys is now imminent and the next phase of works procurement has begun. This will be the focus of attention during the next month as contractors are secured for key recovery projects.

2.5 Financial considerations and activities

Bellwin Claim

Further to the flood event the Government informed authorities affected that they would be entitled to seek financial assistance under the Bellwin scheme.

The Bellwin scheme was introduced in 1983 by Lord Bellwin of Leeds, the then Environment minister. This was later incorporated into Local Government and Housing Act 1989, section 155.

A Bellwin scheme may be activated, at the discretion of the environment secretary,

- when an emergency or disaster involving destruction of or danger to life or property occurs
- and, as a result, one or more local authorities incur expenditure on, or in connection with the taking of immediate action

- or to safeguard life or property or to prevent suffering or severe inconvenience in a local authority's area or among its inhabitants

The current Government has now circulated Bellwin scheme terms for this flood emergency (covering 5th – 28th December 2015); these terms are attached as Appendix A.

The City Council is currently compiling its full claim for eligible expenditure incurred between 5th December 2015 and 4th March 2016. This claim must be submitted by 6th June. The City Council is liable under the scheme for the first £26,486 of the claim (0.2 per cent of its calculated annual budget).

Emergency Decision Provisions

From Monday 7th December the City Council called on our Emergency Decision Provisions to give officers the required spending powers to react swiftly to need. These decisions were recorded on a notice form and reported to Council during January and February. Once out of the initial emergency period the City Council reverted to standard arrangements for budget spend.

Additional Officer work related to the flood emergency and recovery

In addition to the arrangements for spending the City Council also managed the need for additional officer work related to the initial emergency and recovery activity.

These arrangements covered a wide range of extra duties and overtime requirements for the high volume of standard work in areas such as Local Environment.

These arrangements were also captured and recorded for assessment under the Bellwin claim.

2.6 Car Park recovery

As a result of the flood the following car parks have been damaged across the City Centre:

- Lower Viaduct
- Town Dyke Orchard
- Civic Centre
- Lowther Street
- The Sands
- Bitts Park
- Devonshire Walk

- Paddy's Market
- Swifts Bank

The damage to these sites has been significant with surfaces, lighting, fences and most ticket machines all being affected.

In the immediate aftermath of the event the Council sought to make clear to the public that although our capability to charge for parking had been damaged the city was still open for business and car parks could be used.

Our ability to recover the ticket machines has been hampered by a difficulty in obtaining maintenance support and repair parts from the suppliers. To alleviate this issue our officers have made short term repairs to ensure at least one machine per car park is operational.

A full survey of the car park machines has now been completed noting that 16 of the 27 car park ticket machines were flooded beyond repair. The City Council's Insurance Company have agreed to pay to replace the flood damaged machines. The current model we use the MP 104 has been superseded by the CWT-C. The ambition is to replace both the flood damaged machines and then phase in the replacement of the other 11 machines, to upgrade the 27 to card and cashless payment facilities

We are now procuring the 16 flood damaged machines, the remaining 11 that are out of action (having been scavenged for parts to make the other machines operational) and upgrade 13 of those machines to include card facilities to make a better service for our customers.

These new machines are now on order with our suppliers.

2.7 Liaison with Environment Agency, Cumbria County Council and others associated with full flood recovery and improved resilience

Scrutiny panel members will have already noted (and hopefully had the chance to attend) the Informal Council Briefing session planned for 7th April. The above agencies will be present at the briefing and will update all members on the developing picture of flood incident and how agencies are working together to assess future prevention and alleviation schemes.

It may have also been noted that the Chancellor announced specific funding for flood prevention in his Budget for 2016. The details of the £25m pledged support have yet to be received but the Council is well placed to play a strong role in the effective use of this investment.

2.8 Resident support via the Carlisle Flood Partnership (led by Cumbria County Council)

During the initial (emergency) stages of the flood Carlisle City Council and other partners such as the University of Cumbria, Greystone Community Centre, Round Table, Carlisle Food Bank and a long list of other charitable organisations worked together to try and assist those affected by the storm.

The City Council working with these groups organised a distribution centre for donated goods and services via Fusehill Street campus and Greystone Community Centre. This exercise was operational in the run up to Christmas and involved a huge effort to manage, store and deliver donated items. The NHS supported this effort by providing the City Council with a 20,000 sq ft warehouse facility at Kingmoor Park to store donations.

As the emergency period passed the County Council organised and continue to lead a community focused flood recovery group.

This group contains a range of partners (The City and County Councils, British Red Cross, Carlisle Parish Councils Association, Environment Agency, Greystone Community Centre, CVS, Rotary, Cumbria Community Foundation) who are all focused on delivering joined up support service to local residents.

Paul Hendy (a member of this group) is also leading on delivering support services from the Flood Advice Centre based in the Nisi Prius building adjacent to the Courts in the City centre.

Finally in addition to this County led work a member of the local community Stephen Higgs has also organised a Community Flood Action Group. This group is made up of residents and businesses that have been affected by the flood. Liaison between these two groups is now taking place to ensure a coordinated response to key issues and individual requirements.

3.0 RECOVERY PROGRAMME – FUTURE ACTIONS

- 3.1 Further to the above initial information, views are requested from Scrutiny members on the future format and content of recovery programme updates.

As the programme develops it is clear that key areas such as costs of recovery, community issues, facility reinstatement will all be of interest to members however to avoid unnecessary work a guide to future areas of interest would assist officers to prepare a useful set of updates.

Contact Officer: Darren Crossley

Ext: 7004

**Appendices
attached to report:**

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:

- **None**



Department for Communities and Local Government

Appendix A: BELLWIN SCHEME OF EMERGENCY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES – TERMS OF THE SCHEME

FLOODING IN LOCAL AUTHORITY AREAS IN ENGLAND:

5th December 2015 to 28th December 2015

These notes set out the terms under which the Secretary of State is prepared to make available emergency financial assistance to local authorities in England under Section 155 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, in relation to dealing with severe weather and flooding in their areas from 5th December 2015 to 28th December 2015.

Authorities who have registered for the Scheme

The following local authorities have registered an intention to make a claim under this scheme:

Allerdale Borough Council	Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service
Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council	Lancaster City Council
Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council	Leeds City Council
Bolton Council	Manchester City Council
Burnley Borough Council	North Yorkshire County Council
Bury Council	North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Calderdale Council	Northumberland County Council
Carlisle City Council	Oldham Council
Chorley Council	Pendle Borough Council
City of Bradford Met Borough Council	Preston City Council
City of York Council	Ribble Valley Borough Council
Copeland District Council	Rochdale Borough Council
Craven District Council	Rossendale Borough Council
Cumbria County Council	Salford City Council
Cumbria Police & Crime Commissioner	South Lakeland District Council
Durham County Council	South Ribble Borough Council
East Riding of Yorkshire Council	St Helens Council
Eden District Council	Trafford Council
Gateshead Council	West Lancashire Borough Council
Lake District National Park Authority	Wigan Council
Lancashire Constabulary	Wyre Council
Lancashire County Council	

Scope of scheme

1. The Secretary of State **will pay grant at the rate of 100%** on qualifying expenditure above threshold.

2. Before being eligible for grant, an individual local authority is required to have spent 0.2 per cent of its calculated annual budget (threshold) on works that have been reported to the Department as eligible for grant. The thresholds for 2015-16 will be available on the GOV.UK website at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bellwin-scheme-emergency-financial-assistance>.

3. **The period of eligible spending allowed for this scheme ends on 4th March 2016.**

4. The claim form includes an option to make an interim claim. Interim payments will only be made against expenditure actually incurred. The Department will not normally be prepared to advance more than 75% of this amount.

Eligible Expenditure

6. In order to meet the basic statutory requirement expenditure must have been incurred:

- by a local authority (those named above) on, or in connection with¹, the taking of immediate action to safeguard life or property or to prevent suffering or severe inconvenience, in their area or among its inhabitants;
- as a result of the incident(s) specified in the scheme, which involved the destruction of or danger to life or property.

Examples of expenditure likely to qualify are at Annex A.

Ineligible Expenditure

7. The overriding rule is that expenditure which is not clearly incurred on or in connection with immediate action to safeguard life or property or to prevent suffering or severe inconvenience as a result of a disaster or emergency will not be eligible for grant. Expenditure that is not additional to what the authority would normally expect to incur will not be eligible. Neither is expenditure in an area for which there is already a government expenditure programme, such as maintenance of law or housing. Specific examples are set out in Annex B.

Claims

8. Claim form Bellwin (15-16) is to be used when making the claim. The claim should be signed by the authority's Chief Financial Officer and sent to Ade Ogunro, SRC Division, The Department for Communities and Local Government, 2nd Floor, Marsham Street, LONDON SW1P 4DF, to arrive no later than **6 June 2016**. A note to help with the completion of the claim form is at Annex D.

¹ Where the connection between any expenditure and the immediate action taken in response to the specified incident is not obvious, the authority should provide sufficient information to enable the Department for Communities and Local Government to take a decision as to the eligibility or otherwise of the expenditure concerned.

9. A final claim received after this deadline may be disregarded and an extension to the deadline will only be granted in exceptional circumstances that the authority will need to be able to demonstrate were beyond its control.
10. The figure included in the claim must relate to actual expenditure and must be precise. Where there is any doubt whether expenditure is eligible under the scheme that expenditure should be included and clearly identified so that DCLG can take a view.
11. The claim form must be certified by the Chief Financial Officer to the effect that it complies in all respects with the terms of this scheme.
12. As this scheme will not be subject to a separate grant audit, **supporting documentation for all expenditure must be supplied.**
13. The Department for Communities and Local Government will check the claim form on receipt, and may ask the authority for clarification if necessary. When a claim has been accepted, DCLG will notify the local authority and confirm that payment of the agreed grant can be made. If DCLG considers that less (or more) than the amount claimed is eligible, it will write separately giving details.

Department for Communities and Local Government
Local Government Financial Management
March 2016

Annex A

Examples of costs that would be expected to qualify

Subject to meeting the minimum statutory requirement set out in paragraph [6], the following are examples of expenditure likely to qualify for grant:

Street Clearance

- a) where repair is insufficient, the removal and replacement of street lighting, street signs, bus shelters and other street furniture, fences, railings damaged by the incident, where in its damaged state it presents a danger to public safety or security;
- b) works to clear debris – fallen trees and other objects causing obstruction or damage to highways, pavements and footpaths. The Department for Transport recommends local highway authorities continue to retain a contingency from the funding it receives from central Government to help repair roads that may have been damaged through weather incidents.
- c) hire of additional vehicles, plant and machinery that are not those already in use by the authority, and incidental expenses to carry out such works;

Staff Costs

- d) additional temporary employees or contractors, to work on the emergency or replace permanent employees diverted from normal work;
- e) special overtime for employees, either during the emergency for overtime worked on the emergency itself, or afterwards to catch up on work from which they were diverted by the incident;

Drainage Works

- f) the costs of initial land drainage works to clear debris and unblock watercourses which are or may be the cause of danger to the public;

Community Support

- g) costs of evacuating people from dangerous structures, and temporary rehousing;
- h) costs of providing emergency supplies of food and other emergency provisions, and key services to affected communities during the period of the emergency;
- i) costs of maintaining key communications and providing emergency information to affected communities;
- j) costs of temporary mortuaries;

- k) In relation to non-administration purposes, the costs of setting up temporary premises including costs of removal, increased costs due to rent, rates, taxes, lighting, heating, cleaning and insurance

Military Assistance

- l) In certain circumstances, marginal costs associated with military assistance may be eligible for reimbursement through the scheme. Examples include additional travel, accommodation and other subsistence costs for military personnel that have been deployed as part of the emergency response.

Capital

- m) The immediate nature of emergency expenditure means that capital expenditure is unlikely to qualify for grant, but there may be limited circumstances where it could apply or a contribution could be made. The authority must demonstrate that this secures better value for money than current expenditure and is connected to immediate action to safeguard life or property or to prevent severe inconvenience. Specifically, it must demonstrate:
 - i) given the existence of wider capital budgets, why additional (as opposed to simply reprofiled) capital expenditure was necessary to safeguard life and property; and
 - ii) that this capital expenditure offered better value for money than the alternative of current expenditure. The Department should be consulted before including any capital expenditure in a claim; and
 - iii) it otherwise meets the criteria of the scheme – including that such works are carried out within the eligible spending period and are immediate.

Examples of eligible capital costs may include some permanent repairs to structures rather than “patching up” repairs where there is a good value for money reasons for doing so and the repairs are carried out straightaway.

Other

- n) emergency works required to safeguard dangerous structures, including making them secure (where not insurable);
- o) Initial repairs to flood defences damaged as a result of the incident.

Annex B

Examples of costs that would not usually qualify

Insurable Costs

- a) costs which are normally insurable, whether by the authority or any other party (e.g. under household insurance policies);

Loss of Income

- b) loss of income (e.g., from facilities closed as a result of the emergency, including CT discounts), as this falls outside the scope of section 155 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989;

Longer Term Works

- c) longer term works of repair and restoration (i.e not immediate actions)

Salary Costs

- d) the normal wages and salaries of the authority's regular employees, whether diverted from their normal work or otherwise, and the standing costs of the authority's plant and equipment;

Other Funding and Betterment

- e) expenditure eligible for any other specific grants, e.g. police grant;
- f) betterment, e.g. repairs to a significantly higher standard than their condition on the day before the incident;

Annex C

Bellwin Thresholds 2015-16

Thresholds based on each individual Local Authority's budget will be available on the GOV.UK website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bellwin-scheme-emergency-financial-assistance>

Annex D

Guidance for completion of claim forms

DCLG will provide a claim form on which application for grant must be made. The following conditions will apply:

- All claims must be made on paper on a claim form provided by the Department.
- All submitted claims must enclose full details of the expenditure incurred. It would be useful to set out the main elements of the claim in a summary spreadsheet with references to the supporting invoices and other relevant information. A clear presentation will help the Department to finalise the claim quickly.
- The Chief Financial Officer of the authority must certify by signing the claim that it complies in all respects with the terms of the scheme in question;
- The figures included in a final claim should be actual expenditure and should be precise;
- The Local Authority must keep records in support of any claim in such a fashion that they are readily accessible for audit;
- Authorities intending to use agents to undertake work should note that the claiming authority's procedures should be capable of demonstrating that any claim is based on qualifying expenditure, and that proper arrangements have been employed both for specifying the work and for ensuring it has been satisfactorily completed;

Local authorities must submit claims to the Department by the deadline set out in the Scheme terms. In the event that a final claim is not submitted to the Department by this date, the Department will deem the claim to have lapsed;

- The Department will consider extensions to the deadline only in exceptional circumstances which the authority will need to be able to demonstrate were beyond its control;
- In some circumstances the Department will - where requested - make an interim payment to an authority of 75 per cent of its incurred grant entitlement. It will pay the balance due on receipt of the final claim. Where such a payment on account exceeds an authority's final entitlement, then the difference will be repayable to the Department immediately.

Report to Environment & Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Agenda
Item:

A.5

Meeting Date: Thursday 14th April 2016
Portfolio: Culture, Leisure and Young People
Key Decision: Not Applicable:
Within Policy and Budget Framework NO
Public / Private Public

Title: TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE
Report of: The Director of Economic Development
Report Number: ED. 19/16

Purpose / Summary:

To update Members of the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel on progress with regards to the operation of the Tourist Information Centre and Assembly Room.

Recommendations:

That Members note the content of the report.

Tracking

Executive:	
Overview and Scrutiny:	
Council:	

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The upgrade of the existing Tourist Information Centre (TIC) to provide improved access from street level to the first floor and improvements to the internal fabric of the building has provided the facilities to enable the TIC to act as the gateway to Carlisle's Historic and Cultural attractions. The TIC plays an important role in orientating visitors, providing information on key historic assets and the wider offer, showcasing Carlisle.
- 1.2 As the strategic hub for visitors coming to explore Carlisle and the adjacent regions, the TIC provides the obvious starting point for the visitor journey, whether it is a short walk around the Historic Centre of Carlisle, or exploring further afield to Hadrian's Wall, Lake District or Scotland.
- 1.3 The overall aim of phase 2 was to increase interpretation and modernise the service to be more customer friendly and fit for purpose. Given the breadth of the customer base, consideration given to the range of media used to communicate the information and interpretation to the widest possible audience.
- 1.4 New lighting has made a significant Improvement and with the new lobby area, the entrance to the building is an inviting space, open and airy. The two information points which customers can use to browse at their leisure, provide up-to-date information on local attractions. The three screens incorporated within the discovery wall provide an opportunity for advertising and displaying information on events which are taking place in the city. The projector screens on the six windows provide a unique opportunity to promote what is "GREAT" about Carlisle after hours.
- 1.5 The Assembly Room has been sympathetically restored back to its former glory by exposing the original fireplace, extending the panels on the ceiling, improving the lightening and refurbishing the window bays. The room now is a beautiful light and airy space that adapts itself well to any event that is taking place.
- 1.6 In light of the opportunities presented, the aim is for the TIC and Assembly Rooms to be more commercial.

2. MARKETING STRATEGY

- 2.1 Promotion of all aspects of the Old Town Hall are currently being developed with the main aim being to raise the awareness of the TIC services, retail offer and Assembly Room. This is being done in a number of ways and activity is also being closely monitored. The Team are concentrating on an online presence by creating a

website for the Old Town Hall; this will be a dual purpose site to promote the TIC and the Assembly Room. Ongoing marketing promoting our offer is being carried out through social media channels, Press Releases and partnership working.

2.2 MARKETING ACTIVITY

Marketing Activity	Timing	Monitoring Methods	Person Responsible
Old Town Hall website – this is dual purpose, promoting the TIC and Assembly Room	May 2016	Google Analytics	Laura Thompson and Marketing & Training Consultant
Facebook for the Assembly Room to advertise events, share pictures and increase awareness	April 2016	Increase in general activity	Laura Thompson and Michelle Masters
Twitter for the Assembly Room	Feb 2016	Increase in enquiries, retweets	Laura Thompson and Michelle Masters
Newsletters	May 2016	Increase in enquiries/footfall	Laura Thompson and Michelle Masters
Paid advertising in parish magazine	June 2016	Increase in enquiries/footfall	Laura Thompson and Michelle Masters
Press Release	ongoing	Increase in enquiries/footfall	Laura Thompson
Discover Carlisle Guide	April 2016	Repeat visitors/use of voucher for TIC/increase in enquiries	Communication Team and TIC staff
Information point at the Carlisle Citadel Train Station for steam days	June 2015	Increased footfall/ use of voucher on the steam train leaflet	TIC staff

3. RETAIL

- 3.1 The Tourist Information Centre now stocks a diverse range of local and nationally produced souvenirs. The new retail area is reduced in size from the former layout but now concentrates on providing a high quality offer of locally produced products, targeted at the customer. We are mindful of the need to promote the offer and monitor stock turn over and adjust our purchasing plan to ensure that we provide a range of goods, appropriate to the time of the year and customer need. We also monitor sales and income via a stock system that records all incoming and outgoing stock and the valuation. Mini Stock takes are done throughout the year with an annual check being completed on the 31st March.

3.2 Our purchasing plan ensures that we now stock a good selection of locally produced, quality goods. Some examples include:-

- Herdy – Keswick
- Cartmel Chocolates – Cartmel
- Carwinley Preserves – Longtown
- The Carlisle Brewing Company – Carlisle
- Felltarn Friends – Keswick
- Temporary Measures – Keswick
- Jewelmere – Maryport
- Little Fingers Jewellery- Carlisle

4. MONITORING

4.1 Evaluation and monitoring is an important part of maintaining a good stock system. In order to consistently achieve high standards we must be aware of both the needs of our visitors and the quality of their experiences while in the TIC. We regularly monitor our stock using a variety of methods as outlined below

- Conduct regular visitor & stock surveys
- Periodically analysing our statistics
- Keep a record of requested stock to ascertain any stock omissions
- Regular evaluation of our stock sales to ascertain which items are popular
- Evaluate the results of our annual stock check
- Keep a record of and investigate any complaints

5. MARKETING

5.1

How	What
Website	Use the Old Town Hall website online shop to showcase our popular and locally produced items and ticket sales.
Social Media	Top sellers and new items are to be promoted on the TIC social media accounts each week. Photographs are to be used to enhance these posts.
Press Release	Any new developments or speciality products are to be promoted with a press release provided by the communications team at Carlisle City Council.
TV screens	The TV screens are to be used to advertise event tickets and TIC services. Include new or speciality stock items and special offers.
Email	When replying to email, highlight stock items when appropriate to enquiry.
Retail Display	Keep the retail areas looking fresh with rotation of stock products. Seasonal stock to be displayed on prominent retail units.

6. STOCK

- 6.1 The purchasing decisions for all new items of stock are at the discretion of the management who are responsible for ensuring value for money and saleability.

In considering new products, we apply the following criteria:

- Price
- Shelf life
- Minimum order quantities
- Customer demand
- Existing stock
- Product quality
- Specific to the area
- Display Space & Theme
- Season
- Locally produced within a 30 miles radius

- 6.2 Pricing is important to ensure that the retail offer is commercial. In considering our prices we are mindful of product quality, other local suppliers, their prices and display of the product. We follow a widely used retail formula in setting prices and when marking products down for sale.

7. **ASSEMBLY ROOM**

- 7.1 Assembly Room lettings have already begun to show an increase with income from September to March of £1,700. If the current trend is maintained the target of £2,500 should easily be exceeded in 2016/17.

- 7.2 A wedding Licence has been applied for which is currently in its 3 weeks consultation period. We envisage the Assembly Room being used for exclusive wedding ceremonies, renewal of vows, christenings etc.

- 7.3 There is now a premises licence in place, which means the sale of alcohol is permitted with the Assembly Room and TIC.

- 7.4 We are also seeing a return of regular bookings with a monthly craft fair organisation using the Assembly Room for the whole of 2016. Feedback from customers has also been very encouraging with excellent comments from past and future users. For example:
- “The new access is great both for stallholders and visitors to the event. The new entrance is light and modern and draws visitors in well. The easily visible lift access is also great for older visitors and families with pushchairs. The room itself is light and airy and the new furniture is great”*

8. **FINANCE**

- 8.1 Expenditure on the purchase of supplies and services is closely monitored and controlled so it is kept to a minimum.
- 8.2 Energy saving measures installed as part of the building refurbishment has resulted in a reduction in gas and electricity bills.
- 8.3 Staffing costs are constantly being monitored and being accessed with customer demand.

9. **STAFF**

- 9.1 Staffing levels are being monitored and adjusted to meet with customer demand. The office operates on a seasonal basis with increased staffing in the summer period; currently this is being managed by casual staffing to cover the weekends and busier periods. The skills of staff are maintained through continual training to meet the Tourist Information centre requirements internally and externally. Training is identified through regular one to one meetings and appraisals.

9.2. **Staff Training Plan**

Training Activity	Timing	Delivered by
Social Media	May 2016	Marketing and Training Consultants Kate Wilson and Michelle Masters
Over the counter sales	June 2016	Laura Thompson
Customer services	Ongoing	Laura Thompson/ Jo Mills
Familiarisation Visit	Two each year	Laura Thompson/ TIC staff

10. **VISITOR STATISTICS**

- 10.1 Visitor numbers had increased slightly from September to December 2015 following the opening of the newly refurbished building, however they have declined recently compared to 2014 figures. This is mainly due to the adverse weather conditions and as a consequence of the flooding in December 2015.

**TIC Visitor Stats 2012 -
2016**

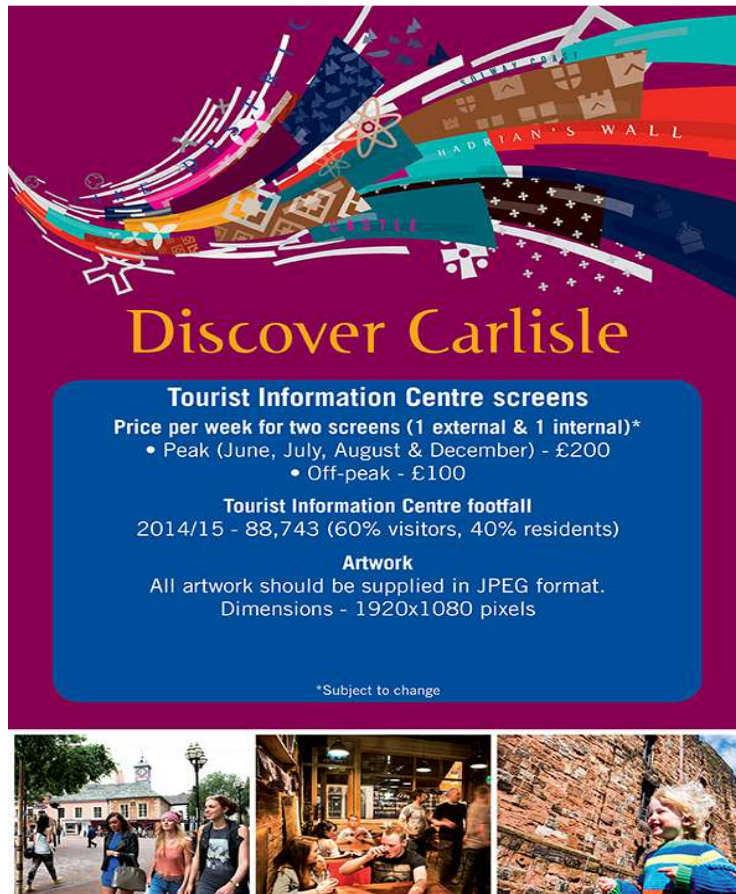
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Jan	4210	1869	4050	1943	3132
Feb	5256	2773	4989	2003	3879
Mar	8628	3193	7632	4420	4920
Apr	8129	3970	7725	7725	
May	9711	5043	9141	4948	
June	12334	5970	9993	6021	
July	12502	11099	11652	9826	
Aug	11751	13979	13650	12997	
Sept	9163	9316	8570	9383	
Oct	7614	7984	7309	7456	
Nov	7177	8030	8588	8154	
Dec	6015	5271	4639	5044	
	102490	78497	97938	79840	11464

NB

2012	TIC in Old Town Hall
2013 Jan - July	TIC in The Lodge Castle St
2014	TIC Old Town Hall
2015 Jan - July	TIC in Scotch St
2016	March Figures incomplete

11. INCOME

- 11.1 Additional income streams are being developed and the main area that's being looked at is for advertising on the internal and external screens. Businesses are being approached and take up has already begun. The rate card below sets out the cost of advertising.



12. NEXT STEPS

- 12.1 To progress with the implementation of the business plan, marketing strategy and training to strengthen the commercial operation of the TIC and Assembly Room with the aim of maximising income whilst providing the customer with a first class experience and building a loyal customer base.
- 12.2 To act as the information hub for Carlisle, working closely with partners and promoting the Carlisle offer in the widest sense. To progress the opportunities for joint working with local attractions which include: Carlisle Castle, Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery, Carlisle Cathedral, the Cumbria Museum of Military Life and the Guildhall.

13. CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 13.1 Members are asked to note the content of the report in order that they are aware of and understand the progress being made with respect to the operation of the Tourist Information Centre and Assembly Room following refurbishment of the building.

14. CONTRIBUTION TO THE CARLISLE PLAN PRIORITIES

14.1 Continued implementation of the business plan for the ongoing operation of the Tourist Information Centre and Assembly Room contributes directly and indirectly towards the promotion of Carlisle, regionally, nationally and abroad as a place with much to offer – full of opportunities and potential.

Contact Officer: Laura Thompson

Ext: 595294

Appendices None
attached to report:

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:

- None

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS/RISKS:

Chief Executive's -

Deputy Chief Executive –

Economic Development –

Governance –

Local Environment –

Resources -

Report to Economy & Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Agenda
Item:

A.6

Meeting Date: 14th April 2016
Portfolio: Economy, Enterprise and Housing
Key Decision: No
Within Policy and Budget Framework: Yes
Public / Private: Public

Title: **Carlisle City Centre Development Framework – Update**
Report of: Director of Economic Development
Report Number: ED 18/16

Purpose / Summary:

To update Members of the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel on progress with regards to implementation of the City Centre Development Framework.

Recommendations:

That Members note the content of the report.

Tracking

Executive:	N/A
Overview and Scrutiny:	14 th April 2016
Council:	N/A

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 GVA (consultants) were appointed in June 2013 to prepare a Development Framework to guide future development in Carlisle City Centre to 2030. A key objective of the study was to identify suitable locations within the city centre to accommodate future development to meet identified needs, and specifically those relating to additional retail and leisure floorspace. In this regard the City Centre Development Framework (CCDF) constituted a key element of the evidence base relied upon to inform the emerging Carlisle District Local Plan (2015 – 2030).
- 1.2 The requirement to prepare a Development Framework was prompted by the findings of the Carlisle Retail Study¹, prepared by GVA on the Councils behalf in August 2012. This study concluded that there was a significant quantitative and qualitative need for new Class A1 comparison (non-food) retail development within Carlisle over the period to 2030.
- 1.3 Work on the CCDF broadly followed a six stage process, as illustrated in Table One. The work concluded, following multiple public consultations, and was published in February 2015.

Stage 1	Information review and analysis of City Centre area
Stage 2	Identification of opportunities, constraints, key issues and initial ideas and options for change
Stage 3	Consultation and feedback on initial ideas and options
Stage 4	Refinement and identification of Preferred Option(s)
Stage 5	Consultation and feedback on Preferred Options
Stage 6	Final report and recommendations

Table 1 – Six Stage CCDF Process

2. CCDF KEY RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROPOSALS

- 2.1 Following detailed analysis and consultation the CCDF identified a number of key character areas as below. Each of the areas was classified according to their

¹ GVA (2012) Carlisle Retail Study. Available at URL: http://www.carlisle.gov.uk/downloads/FINAL_REPORT_web_2012.pdf

potential for future change and prospective scope for intervention. A proposed strategy, in the form of guiding principles, was also outlined for each area.

- Area North of Lowther Street including Rickergate
- Botchergate
- Caldew Riverside
- Citadel
- Historic Quarter
- Lowther Street/Portland Square
- Primary Shopping Area

2.2 The key recommendations from the CCDF were embedded in the Local Plan which is now at an advanced stage of preparation with adoption anticipated in the Summer. Specifically the CCDF was instrumental in informing the direction and content of Policy SP4 'Carlisle City Centre and Caldew Riverside' which will be amongst the most important policies at play in determining future development proposals within the City Centre across the next fifteen years.

2.3 A progress summary for each of the individual character areas, which includes the key proposals taken forward through the Local Plan, is provided in the subsequent sections of this report, with each area grouped around potential for future change.

3. UPDATE ON AREAS WITH LOW POTENTIAL FOR FUTURE CHANGE

3.1 **Historic Quarter** – The CCDF identified that there was limited (if any) prospects for physical intervention / redevelopment within this area. Two key recommendations in the Framework related however to increasing pedestrian permeability and accessibility and better promoting key attractions (Museum, Castle, Cathedral and Tullie House). In keeping with these objectives good progress has been made with respect to advancing Castle Crossing with an agreed outline design now in place, following a public consultation, and funding confirmed and consultants appointed to advance to the implementation phase. Phase one of the City Centre public realm works, which is focused on enhanced signage to better connect key attractions within the City Centre, is due to commence with on the ground installations from June 2016, in doing so directly helping to better promote the Historic Quarter and the key attractions within.

3.2 **Primary Shopping Area** – The CCDF identified that there was limited (if any) prospects for physical intervention / redevelopment within this area. Key recommendations related to increasing pedestrian permeability and accessibility,

promoting flexibility in secondary areas and managing car parking capacity. As with the Historic Quarter Phase One of the City Centre public realm works will help, post June 2016, improve pedestrian permeability and accessibility. In terms of promoting flexibility, the emerging Local Plan adopts a more flexible approach to land use planning within the retail core of the City Centre much to the support of a cross range of stakeholders.

- 3.3 The introduction of discretionary rate relief on long term (12 months+) vacant units has helped to reduce city centre vacancy levels with the almost full occupation of Earls Lane testament to the success of this initiative. Recently occupied premises supports that the primary shopping area is still attractive to a wide range of multi-nationals with Primark likely to significantly enhance footfall once opened later this year. Independent traders also seem to be trading successfully with a number of recent expansions and reoccupation, including within Treasury Court, testament to this.

4. UPDATE ON AREAS WITH MEDIUM POTENTIAL FOR FUTURE CHANGE

- 4.1 **Botchergate** – The CCDF recognised the anchor potential of the new County Council offices on Botchergate as a catalyst to help stimulate wider investment in this area on the back of increased footfall. These offices are now at an advanced stage of construction and are likely to be completed and operational by Autumn 2016. Amongst other recommendations for this area was promoting flexibility in terms of appropriate uses to help reduce vacancies and diversify the existing mix and reducing the risk posed to the conservation area. In these regards the introduction of discretionary rate relief on long term (12 months+) vacant units has had a positive impact on the area and officers remain in discussion with Historic England regarding the potential introduction of a Townscape Heritage Initiative as a means of enhancing the conservation area and stimulating investment.
- 4.2 **Lowther Street / Portland Square** – Amongst the key recommendations within this area were improving public realm and the viability of uses around the bus station and encouraging a viable new mix of uses in those premises within Portland Square being vacated by the County Council. The introduction of discretionary rate relief on long term (12 months+) vacant units has had a significant positive effect on Earls Lane with all of the units on this key gateway to the bus station now occupied having been empty for in excess of several years.
- 4.3 With respect to Portland Square officers have now prepared and will shortly be consulting on a draft conservation area appraisal and management plan for

Chatsworth/Portland Square. Once adopted this will help to positively manage change and guide more detailed interventions. With regards to the premises recently vacated by the County Council, the County have submitted a bid for funding (essentially a loan) from the Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership in order to frontload works associated with converting the premises back to residential use. This approach should significantly de-risk their redevelopment and ultimately ensure they represent a more attractive investment opportunity which stands a good degree of success.

- 4.4 **Caldew Riverside** – The CCDF recognises the challenges faced with respect to redeveloping the Caldew Riverside site but nevertheless highlights that it constitutes a significant brownfield regeneration opportunity with potential to accommodate a mix of uses to complement (but not compete with) the City Centre. The City Council's recent acquisition of Tesco's land holdings on the site affords a greater opportunity to progress proposals given that the site is now in single ownership.
- 4.5 Efforts are currently being focused on raising awareness of the site and its potential particularly amongst the Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership and the Government. This is being achieved through a number of ways including the inclusion of the site within a Southern Gateway Prospectus which is being prepared by the LEP, with City Council input, to showcase to the Government and investors the collective potential of sites to the south of the City Centre including the Citadels, Carlisle Station, Caldew Riverside and potentially the Enterprise Centre. The context provided by the Prospectus will raise awareness and importantly support bids for Local Growth Funding being progressed for the Citadels and Carlisle Station.
- 4.6 The prospectus will help support a development brief for Caldew Riverside. In the interim efforts are also being derived to reduce the holding costs of the site and address negative perceptions through for example considering demolition of the former and now derelict car showroom on the site.

5. UPDATE ON AREAS WITH HIGH POTENTIAL FOR FUTURE CHANGE

- 5.1 **Citadels** – The CCDF identified a significant opportunity in the immediate locality of the Citadels for a mixed use redevelopment, which could act as a catalyst to regenerate the southern extent of the City Centre, following the vacation of the site by Cumbria County Council. Given this and recognition of the potential of this area to enhance the sense of arrival (from rail) into Carlisle and Cumbria, the Cumbria

Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) are keen to support, as one of their priorities, the reuse and redevelopment of the Citadels.

- 5.2 On the back of the recommendations within the CCDF and above context, officers have been supporting the County Council in putting together a submission to the Government's Local Growth Fund (LGF). Specifically funding is being sought to deliver essential infrastructure to improve connections to and within the site and to assemble lease holdings to create a single consolidated development site which could be taken to the market. The bid submission is based on an indicative end use of a mixed use scheme comprising of restaurants; boutique hotel; modest supermarket; new comparison retailing and residential units.
- 5.3 A separate bid is being progressed by the County Council for the Nisi Prius with the intention of creating a high quality business incubation centre.
- 5.4 Finally of note within this area is that an LGF bid is being developed for Carlisle Station, with funding likely to be sought to improve the station entrance and forecourt through a programme of public realm improvements; moving vehicular access to the rear of the station including the provision of a new multistorey car park and enhanced connections underneath the station; and enhanced commercial facilities and services for station passengers. Identified as one of Cumbria's key pieces of strategic infrastructure improvements at the station have the potential to act alongside the planned redevelopment of the Citadel as a significant catalyst for wider investment in the City Centre.
- 5.5 In the interim the role of this area as a gateway to the wider City Centre is being enhanced through the roll out of new signage through the aforementioned first phase of the City Council's public realm works. Efforts are also ongoing to secure a new and viable end user for the former Central Plaza Hotel, a key and prominent listed building within the Citadel character area.
- 5.6 **North of Lowther Street including Rickergate** – The area to the North of Lowther Street including Rickergate was identified through the CCDF as the preferred option to accommodate the majority of the required additional retail floorspace (c. 18,700 sqm net) as part of a wider mixed use comprehensive redevelopment proposal including leisure uses, new residential units and car parking provision. This area was taken forward in the emerging Local Plan and formally identified, through Policy SP4 within the Plan, as a potential future expansion of the Primary Shopping Area.
- 5.7 Whilst the CCDF contained indicative proposals for the Rickergate locality focused on the Civic Centre site, it is important to note that the wider area was identified reflecting multiple options to accommodate future growth i.e. those plans previously

published by The Lanes showing an extension of the shopping centre westwards across Lowther Street. This wider and ultimately more flexible designation has ensured that notwithstanding the recent flood events the strategy for the City Centre remains sound i.e. the ability to accommodate growth remains. Testament to the market interest in this area is the recent granting of planning permission (November 2015) for a c. 3,500 sqm new retail unit, and multi storey car park (c. 400 spaces), on the site of Iceland and adjacent Lowther Street car park.

- 5.8 Owing to the recent December 2015 flood events the City Council have not progressed discussions with interested parties regarding their landholdings in the area, reflecting a need to concentrate efforts on flood recovery. Discussions will however reconvene in due course with any potential opportunities and consequential key decisions reported to the relevant committees.

6. NEXT STEPS

- 6.1 Efforts will continue to be prioritised on advancing a number of key projects and initiatives which directly support the implementation of the City Centre Development Framework and beyond this the vision for the City Centre set out in the emerging Carlisle District Local Plan (2015-2030). It must be recognised however that despite clear and positive initial progress the nature of many of the proposals is that sustained efforts across the longer term will be required to ensure success.

7. CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Members are asked to note the content of the report in order that they are aware of and understand the progress made with respect to implementation of the City Centre Development Framework.

8. CONTRIBUTION TO THE CARLISLE PLAN PRIORITIES

- 8.1 Continued implementation of the recommendations within the City Centre Development Framework will support, both directly and indirectly, a number of the corporate priorities including:
- Supporting business growth and skills development to improve opportunities and economic prospects for the people of Carlisle;
 - Continue to improve the quality of our local environment and green spaces so that everyone can enjoy living, working in and visiting Carlisle; and

- Promoting Carlisle, regionally, nationally and abroad as a place with much to offer – full of opportunities and potential.

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**Appendices
attached to report:**

- None

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:

- Carlisle City Centre Development Framework (Feb 2015)
http://www.carlisle.gov.uk/Portals/24/Documents/Examination_Library/Evidence%20Base%20Documents/EB%20014%20Carlisle%20City%20Centre%20Development%20Framework%202015.pdf?timestamp=1443626584820