

ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

THURSDAY 12 SEPTEMBER 2013 AT 10.00 AM

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Bowman (Chairman), Councillors P Atkinson (as substitute for Councillor Whalen), Bainbridge, Harid (as substitute for Councillor Watson), Nedved and Miss Sherriff (as substitute for Councillor Bowditch).

ALSO

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Bradley – Economy and Enterprise Portfolio Holder
Councillor Glover – Leader
Mr M Berry – University of Cumbria

OFFICERS: Deputy Chief Executive
Director of Economic Development
Overview and Scrutiny Officer
Policy and Performance Officer

EEOSP.52/13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Bowditch, Graham, McDevitt, Watson and Whalen.

Apologies were also submitted on behalf of the Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder and the Culture, Health, Leisure and Young People Portfolio Holder.

EEOSP.53/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest in respect of the business to be transacted.

EEOSP.54/13 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meetings held on 13 June 2013, 20 June 2013, 25 June 2013 and 25 July 2013 be agreed as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

The Chairman advised that there were two items outstanding from the previous meeting. The first issue related to the circulation of a list of members of the Carlisle Economic Partnership and a list of members of the Local Enterprise Partnership. The Director of Economic Development advised that she would circulate the lists to Members that afternoon.

The second issue related to unemployment figures which had been agreed would be circulated to all Members. The Economy and Enterprise Portfolio Holder advised that she had received the figures and had assumed they had been circulated to all Members. She apologised and agreed to forward the figures to Members that afternoon.

RESOLVED –1) That a list of members of the Carlisle Economic Partnership and the Local Enterprise Partnership be circulated to Members following this meeting.

2) That the Economy and Enterprise Portfolio Holder forward a copy of the unemployment figures to all Members following this meeting.

EEOSP.55/13 CALL IN OF DECISIONS

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

EEOSP.56/13 OVERVIEW REPORT AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer presented report OS.21/13 which provided an overview of matters related to the work of the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel. Details of the latest version of the work programme and Key Decision items relevant to the Panel were also included.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer reported that:

- The Notice of Key Executive Decisions had been published on 5 July 2013. There were no decisions which fell into the remit of the Panel.

Since circulation of the papers for the meeting a further Notice of Key Decisions had been published which included two Key Decisions which would be considered as Part B items by the Executive at their meeting on 30 September 2013. The decisions related to the release of funds to progress Phase 2 of the improvements and modernisation of the Old Town Hall, and the H&H development at Rosehill.

The Director of Economic Development explained that whatever decision was made by the Executive in respect of the H&H development, the development would be subject to a planning application and the planning process.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer explained that the matter also fell within the remit of the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

- The following Minute Excerpt had been received from the Executive's meeting held on 5 August 2013 and was included in an appendix to the report:
 - Minute Excerpt EX.80/13 – Purple Sacks Review – the funding for the replacement of purple sacks was considered and approved by Council at their meeting on 10 September 2013.
- Task and Finish Groups – The Recycling Task and Finish Group met on 27 August 2013 to scope their review and determine the Terms of Reference. Councillor Nedved was the Lead Member on the Group and advised that the Group felt that since the review of recycling which was undertaken some time ago there had been a reduction in the figures. The next reviews were due to be undertaken ahead of the end of contracts in 2014 and 2015. However, the Group believed that a more in depth study was required. Members of the Task and Finish Group would join a recycling round to see for themselves how the round operated and they would then report back to the Panel. The Director of Local Environment would arrange a date and advise Members of the Group. It was anticipated that the review would be completed by March/April 2014.
- Work Programme – The Overview and Scrutiny Officer presented the current work programme and advised that a by-election in the Dalston Ward was scheduled to be held on the same day as the next scheduled meeting of the Panel. It was agreed that the meeting would go ahead as arranged.

The Director of Economic Development agreed to submit a report to the next meeting providing an update on the Local Plan.

The Deputy Chief Executive suggested it may be useful to provide an update on the Local Enterprise Partnerships. The Leader advised that he now represented the City Council on the Partnership and agreed to provide updates on a regular basis. Once the minutes of the Partnership meetings had been approved they were published on the Partnership's website. It was agreed that an update would be submitted to the Panel at the meeting in October and that the Chairman of the Partnership would be invited to attend.

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

2) That a report on the Local Plan be submitted to the Panel for consideration at their meeting on 17 October 2013.

3) That a report on the Local Enterprise Partnership be submitted to the Panel for consideration at their meeting on 17 October 2013 and that the Chairman of the Partnership be invited to attend.

EEOSP.57/13 BUSINESS INTERACTION CENTRE

The Director of Economic Development presented report ED.24/13 which provided an update on the development of a Business Interaction Centre (BIC). As part of the Council's priority to support economic growth, in December 2012, the Council agreed to work in partnership with the University of Cumbria to develop a Business Interaction Centre at Paternoster Row. The Centre would form a high profile entry point for businesses and employees seeking to access University expertise, particularly Business School and Arts, Business and Science expertise. The Centre also included the Centre for Regional Economic Development, academics from the Business School based in Carlisle and business/student placement support and student enterprise. The Centre would also enable access to research and development services for local companies with some provision for rapid prototyping equipment and design services.

Following discussion between the University and the Council it was agreed that the Centre would be best located in the City Centre in Paternoster Row. The property was leased from the Council but had been mothballed since 2010 as part of the process of estate consolidation. Paternoster Row was considered to be the best location as it brought the Business Interaction Centre closer to its customers enabling the business and student worlds to merge, raise its visibility, provide an attractive venue for business start ups and contribute to the regeneration of the "cultural quarter".

In order to help support the Business Interaction Centre the Council agreed to contribute £100,000 towards the costs of refurbishing Paternoster Row subject to a number of conditions which the Director of Economic Development outlined. The Director of Economic Development advised that the University had worked with Officers from the Council on the dilapidations identified at Paternoster Row and Castle Street. A programme of works had been agreed, a number of which had been completed, and a project update was attached to the report as an appendix.

The Economy and Enterprise Portfolio Holder believed that the Centre would provide a great boost to the City's economy and to fledgling and established businesses. The Centre was a good use of the buildings and would provide a prestigious address and a prestigious building for tenants to meet customers. The Centre was well equipped and all of the IT provision had been updated. The Centre would be an asset to the City and reinforced the Council's commitment to assisting small businesses and the growth of the local economy.

The Director of Economic Development introduced Mr Berry from the University of Cumbria. He stated that the Business Interaction Centre was the result of a significant amount of work with the Council and had taken in its first tenants at the start of August 2013. There were currently four tenants and the Centre Manager was in discussion with a further five potential tenants. It was intended that there would be a small VIP launch of the Centre in November 2013 with the main launch in the Spring. There had not been a lot of publicity about the Centre to date and Mr Berry was pleased with the success of the Centre so far.

The Economy and Enterprise Portfolio Holder advised that arrangements for a visit to the Centre for Members would be arranged for October 2013 when the Centre was fully operational. The visit would be opened to substitute members of the Panel.

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

- *Did the tenants pay a fee to use the Centre or did they have a lease agreement?*

Mr Berry advised that the University had worked hard with their legal team to produce a mixture of leases that would ensure tenants would not over-commit themselves.

- *Burnetts Solicitor was the only major business mentioned in the list of joint events. How would links with major businesses be developed?*

Mr Berry stated that a significant amount of work would be required with the University. The Centre Manager had more material which would be available to potential tenants. There had already been significant interest in the Centre and that would grow over the coming months.

The Director of Economic Development explained that the Centre was part of the Growth Hub which was run by the Chamber of Commerce and they were able to publicise the Centre to a wider audience.

The Deputy Chief Executive stated that although it was early days there would be a base through the Chamber of Commerce and the Centre for new businesses as well as people undertaking MBAs etc. The Centre could also work with the Ambassadors for Carlisle.

- *What was the vision for the Centre in 2 to 3 years' time?*

The Business Interaction Centre was small at present but was the first foot on the ground to business growth. Mr Berry assured Members that the University were not abandoning business in Carlisle and that there was a long term commitment to the City. Business was critical in the University's corporate strategy. It was hoped that the Centre would expand beyond Paternoster Row and it would have to be managed very carefully to ensure confidence amongst customers in the long term.

- *It was important to keep academic study in the City. At present 90% of courses in business/finance/accountancy were outside of the City. It would be better to offer courses that had been available in the past.*

Mr Berry stated that 90% of recent courses for undergraduates in business were recruited to Lancaster. Carlisle needed to ensure there was sustainable progress in business courses. Investment in the Centre showed a commitment of the University in Carlisle. Mr Berry agreed to provide Members with an update on the uptake of courses in Carlisle.

- *The provision of short courses was important. Even under graduates and post graduates required refresher courses. The development of a wider range of short courses such as research techniques and IT were ongoing and would be a key and attractive part of the Business Interaction Centre.*
- *What would be the extent of the publicity regarding the Centre outside of the City?*

Mr Berry advised that initially the publicity would be regional and as far as people would be prepared to travel to the Centre. The University had a long history of aspirations and challenging delivery therefore the progress of the Centre would be undertaken in a managed way. It was difficult to set up courses that would be sustainable and therefore it would be useful for Michelle Lawty-Jones to attend a meeting of the Panel to explain the challenges in setting up small courses. The University were seeking to be flexible and wide ranging in the courses they provided.

- *There were a number of current customers in the incubation units that had used similar facilities in the past. How would the Centre approach such tenants to move on once they became established to ensure they were not taking up a place that could be utilised by another new business?*

Although the building was large Mr Berry believed it would soon be filled with tenants. He was aware of the challenges and tenants would be monitored. The Centre Manager would spend time with tenants who could be conduit to other tenants coming into the Centre.

- *What would be the City Council involvement following the launch of the Centre?*

Performance of the Centre would be reported to the Council and it was hoped that the Centre would be the core of an increase in partnership in the future.

The Economy and Enterprise Portfolio Holder advised that the University was a partner on the Carlisle Economic Partnership and therefore had close contact with and worked closely with the Council.

- *Which contractor was engaged to carry out the works to the building?*

Mr Berry advised that he would advise the Panel of the name of the contractor following the meeting as he did not have that information with him.

RESOLVED: 1) That Report ED.24/13 – Business Interaction District be noted.

2) That a visit to the Centre for Members of the Panel be arranged for a date in October.

3) That a report on the progress of the Centre be submitted to the Panel in 12 months time.

EEOSP.58/13 TOURISM REPORT

The Director of Economic Development presented Report ED.25/13 that updated the Panel on the delivery of the Tourism Strategy.

The Director of Economic Development explained that tourism had always played an important role in the economy of the area and outlined the background to the Tourism Partnership which aimed to improve the tourism product further and grow the industry locally. It was also considered that a Partnership would enable resources to be maximised and work more effectively. A number of factors had led to the withdrawal of resources from the Partnership and a need for the Council to take stock and re-assess how it could best support tourism in the area with the resources available. Over the last 18 months the strategy had been to work with partners on key areas which would deliver outputs and outcomes in line with the Carlisle Plan which had included entering into Service Level Agreements where appropriate.

The Director of Economic Development advised that the Brampton Tourist Information Centre was currently managed by a group of volunteers that had been trained and supported by Carlisle Tourist Information Centre and Brampton Parish Council. It was the Parish Council's decision to take on the running of the Centre and they were now looking to rebrand the centre as Brampton Heritage and Visitor Centre so they would be stepping away from being a Tourist Information Centre. The Council continued to offer support and provide advice to the volunteers and the Parish Council.

With regard to Carlisle Tourist Information Centre and Old Town Hall the Director of Economic Development explained that Phase 1 of the Old Town Hall had been completed and outlined the works that had been undertaken. Since the Tourist Information Centre had moved back into the building staff had received a number of positive comments from visitors and local residents.

Phase 2 of the Old Town Hall project focussed on how the Tourist Information Centre and the Assembly Rooms would look and function. The intention was to modernise the service to become more interactive and customer friendly. Options would be presented to Members for consideration.

A key issue for Carlisle in respect of economy and in particular tourism was to raise the profile for Carlisle and what it had to offer. The Council had been working on the Sense of Place project which was launched on 11 July 2013 at a breakfast event attended by a number of tourism businesses.

The Director of Economic Development explained that the Carlisle Tourism Partnership Conference was a one day conference that had taken place on 26 April 2013. It had been well attended and included key speakers from Visit England, Hadrian's Wall Heritage Trust, Cumbria Tourism and local media company, Hydrant. Three workshops had taken place from which a set of clear objectives and priorities were formulated.

Two Service Level Agreements with Hadrian's Wall Heritage Trust and Cumbria Tourism had been formulated. They reflected the services and commitments that the Council would expect to see for Carlisle from the relevant regional organisations to which the

Council paid an annual fee. Included in the Service Level Agreements were agreements to both liaise and hold meetings on a regular basis.

Carlisle was a member of Britain's Heritage Cities Group which included eight cities including Chester, York, Durham and Bath. The Group had drawn up Terms of Reference which were attached to the report as an appendix. The Group would have direct access to the Regional Growth Fund managed by Visit England and Membership of the Group enabled Carlisle to have access to overseas marketing channels including USA and Canada as well as emerging markets in Asia.

The Director of Economic Development explained that the Marketing and Tourism Team were fully engaged in the preparation, planning and delivery of events in the City. A copy of the programme of events which had taken place over the last twelve months was included in the report.

In conclusion the Director of Economic Development reported that there were a variety of initiatives across the Council which contributed towards delivering the Tourism Strategy and the Carlisle Plan which the Tourism and Marketing Team played an important role.

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

- *Would there be a review of the tourism service?*

The Director of Economic Development explained that a review would be undertaken in the context of other issues within the Directorate. The staff review would be dependent upon the on the Old Town Hall and how to take tourism forward would be in line with the Directorate's review. A framework needed to be in place before a staff review could be undertaken. The Director of Economic Development had discussed the matter with the Culture, Health, Leisure and Young People Portfolio Holder and had agreed that a broader staff review would be required. The Director advised that a Policy and Investment Officer had recently been appointed. She also confirmed that there were currently four full time equivalent posts in tourism and a number of part time posts mainly based at the Tourist Information Centre.

Officers were looking at events for the future and the Director was looking at how the post would fit into the Council's tourism and events strategy.

The Leader advised that the Council would do what they could on a limited budget and that there was a positive attitude to tourism. Members and Officers had spent some time talking to colleagues in Chester and York and had received help and looked at the footfall of the cities and their heritage. It was agreed that Carlisle had a lot to offer currently and in the future.

Tourism was being driven by the Carlisle Plan and since Phase 1 of the Old Town Hall had been completed the focus was now on branding and marketing of the City. Links with the Hadrian's Wall Trust and British Heritage had been useful. It was unfortunate that funding had been cut but the Leader could see the benefits of developing partnerships. It was important that tourism did not focus on just the Lake District and that Carlisle was looked at as part of tourism connected to the forthcoming Commonwealth Games. There were a lot of opportunities for people to use Carlisle as a base for the Games.

- *Had the Tourism Partnership met since the Tourism Conference?*

The Director of Economic Development advised that the Council were looking at the outcome of the conference to understand whether a plan could be formed. Officers had looked at the Terms of Reference for the Partnership and it had been determined that the Partnership wished to continue and deliver actions identified from the conference. The Culture, Health, Leisure and Young People Portfolio Holder was currently the Chair of the Partnership as an interim measure. It would be necessary at some point to review the Terms of Reference.

- *Did the Service Level Agreements represent value for money? There was no representation of Carlisle on the Cumbria Tourism website.*

The Director of Economic Development explained that the Service Level Agreements were new and would ensure value for money. The Culture, Health, Leisure and Young People Portfolio Holder was currently on the Cumbria Tourism Board and attended the meetings. The Director of Economic Development agreed that information from the meetings could be forwarded to the Overview and Scrutiny Officer for circulation along with the circular from the Hadrian's Wall Trust. With regard to the Hadrian's Wall Trust following a loss of funding there had been a number of changes that had resulted in the Service Level Agreement being agreed. That was led by Northumberland Council but the City Council was a party to the agreement.

The Deputy Chief Executive advised that the City Council spent £300,000 on tourism but only £5,000 on Cumbria Tourism. The Council needed to revitalise the totality of spending on tourism as it was a key part of the City's economy. The marketing and branding of the City was also in the Council's hands.

- *The City did not signal itself well. There was very little signage coming into the City and within the City.*

The Leader advised that work was being undertaken on signage and the public realm on the best ways to move people around the City. Officers were also working with train operators with a view to having signage in the station. The City needed a consistent brand that could be used by businesses that people would instantly recognise. That could be something that the Carlisle Ambassadors could look into. A similar scheme worked well in Burnley and could work in Carlisle.

The booklet produced by British Heritage could be used to form the prospectus for Carlisle and be part of the toolkit for businesses to use as part of their branding. A prospectus was currently being developed by the Partnership. A Steering Group had been set up to implement the Sense of Place programme to ensure projects were taken forward.

- *There was a concern that partners did not give a lot of weight to Carlisle. A report from Manchester following the Commonwealth Games there showed how the economy of the surrounding area had been positively affected. Something had to be done to ensure Carlisle was included in the preparations for the Games in Glasgow.*

The Director of Economic Development advised that the various partners working with the City Council were aware of the Games and were discussing the matter with Officers. Discussions had taken place with representatives from Virgin Trains as people could stay in Carlisle and travel to the Games.

- *The report indicated what the Council had achieved over the past year but nothing about the forthcoming year.*

The Leader explained that the Panel had requested a report on what had been done over the past year. In respect of the Commonwealth Games he believed that teams could stay in Carlisle and use the facilities here. There was a constant battle in respect of the Lake District about encouraging people to stay in Carlisle.

- *What support was being offered to Brampton Tourist Information Centre?*

The Director of Economic Development advised that the support was in the form of advice and training. Ms Thompson, the Carlisle Tourist Information Centre Manager, had been in touch with volunteers and the Parish Council. No financial support was given. That was a decision made by Brampton Parish Council.

- *What events were planned for the future?*

The Director of Economic Development explained that events were a cross authority initiative but added that there was a full events programme which had been successful this year and which the Council would continue to take forward.

The Leader stated that the Council continued to bring in big events such as the Tour of Britain which were constantly under pressure to include new venues. Big events organisers were aware of Carlisle now as a venue to hold events because they knew that Carlisle could do them well.

The Deputy Chief Executive advised that more enquiries were being received and the result of those would be brought to Panel when the time was appropriate. There was a capacity and willingness from the Council, businesses and hotels for Carlisle to stage big events. There had been an increased footfall during the Carlisle Pageant and the last week of the school holidays compared to last year.

- *Was Carlisle maximising the use of promotional material? There was no mention of Carlisle in magazines on trains. Would it be possible to submit an article to those magazines?*

The Director of Economic Development explained that advertising in those magazines was expensive and an article usually was dependent upon an advert being placed. The Council had a relatively small budget for marketing so money had to be spent in the most efficient way possible.

- *Promotional material in hotels, etc usually focussed on activities outside of the City. How did the Council advertise the City around the County?*

The Leader suggested that students could be offered promotional material for visitors. Smart marketing was required.

- *Following the Pageant the Culture, Health, Leisure and Young People Portfolio Holder advised that it had cost the Council £6,000 but the report stated that the budget allocation had been £20,000. Did the Council overestimate the cost of events and therefore restricted themselves to how many events they could hold each year.*

The Leader explained that Members and Officers estimated what the cost of an event would be without sponsorship. If a sponsor then came forward that sum would be put back into the pot for future events.

The Economy and Enterprise Portfolio Holder believed that many people who had been born in the area needed to be reminded of what the City had to offer as they could become used to their surroundings. It could be useful to see the area through other peoples' eyes and build confidence. Culture, history and the landscape were part of the Sense of Place project.

- *Would the Council consider holding another Love Carlisle event?*

The Deputy Chief Executive advised that there were the pageant, the fireshow and the Sense of Place all of which were recurrent and ongoing events based on themes of what the City and partners did to promote the City.

RESOLVED: 1) That Report ED.25/13 –Tourism Report be noted.

2) That reports from Cumbria Tourism and Hadrian's Wall Trust and information on the Service Level Agreements be circulated.

3) That the circular from Heritage Cities be circulated to all Members.

4) That an update report on the Commonwealth Games and future events be submitted to the Panel for consideration at their meeting in February 2014.

5) That an update report on Phase 2 of the Old Town Hall be submitted to the Panel following consideration by the Executive on 30 September 2013.

EEOSP.59/13 QUARTER ONE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2013/14

The Policy and Performance Officer submitted report PC.16/13 which updated the Panel on the Council's service standards that helped measure performance and customer satisfaction, and included updates on key actions contained within the Carlisle Plan.

From Autumn 2013 a new service standard would be introduced, Customer Satisfaction with Environmental Services, that would be measured from customer feedback from the website and through the Carlisle Focus magazine readers' survey.

With regard to the information on the Carlisle Plan the intention was to provide the Panel with a brief overview of the current position without duplicating the more detailed reporting that had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels at earlier meetings.

The Policy and Performance Officer explained that only Service Standards that were relevant to the Panel had been included in the quarterly report. The Service Standard in respect of missed waste collections was now measured as a number in line with the industry standard. The Standard on percentage of household waste sent for recycling showed targets for 2015 and 2020. Those targets were due to be reviewed locally by the Cumbria Strategic Waste Partnership Board in October 2013. The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder sat on that Partnership Board along with the Waste Services Manager.

The Policy and Performance Officer advised that there had been an increase in recycling in June due to the increase in garden waste recycling over the summer. The Policy and Performance Officer provided a recycling figure of 52.6% for June and 49.5% for July giving a year to date figure of 48.1%.

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

- *During the spell of hot weather the times of the recycling and refuse rounds were changed to start earlier. How had that impacted on missed collections?*

The Deputy Chief Executive advised that anecdotal evidence indicated that the changes went smoothly. There was a positive impact from the providers in that they were able to complete the rounds quicker due to the reduction in traffic. However there was no significant difference in performance overall.

In response to a query the Economy and Enterprise Portfolio Holder advised that the cost of providing gull sacks had been included in the report that had been considered by Council on 10 September 2013. The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder had agreed to provide a written response to Members on the matter.

- *The Council was involved in several Partnerships. Would it be possible to have a list of all partners that the Council worked with?*

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer advised that an annual review of partnerships was undertaken each year as part of the remit of the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel. and agreed to circulate the report to Panel Members. The Deputy Chief Executive also advised that the Partnership Manager had produced a summary sheet of all the key partnerships of which the City Council were a part.

RESOLVED: 1) That Report PC.16/13 – Quarter One Performance Report 2013-14 be noted.

2) That a copy of the report to Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel on the annual review of City Council Partners be circulated to Panel Members.

(The meeting ended at 11.35am)