

RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Panel Report

Public

Date of Meeting: 15th October 2009

Title: Overview Report and Work Programme

Report of: Acting Scrutiny Manager

Report reference: OS 21/09

Summary:

This report provides an overview of matters related to the Resources O&S Panel's work. It also includes the latest version of the work programme and details of Forward Plan items relevant to this Panel.

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Recommendations:

Members are asked to:

- To note the Panel's work programme (Appendix 1).
- To agree a further topic to review and nominate Membership of Task and Finish Group.
- To agree ICT Shared Services Scrutiny
- To note arrangements for meeting of Scrutiny Chairs
- To note arrangements for workshop on Carlisle Strategic Partnership

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1. Forward Plan of Key Decisions of the Executive

- 1.1. The Forward Plan of the Executive, covering the period 1 October 2009 – 31 January 2010¹ August was published on 17th September 2009.
- 1.2. The issues which fall within the remit of this Panel are as follows and full details are set out in Appendix 3:
 - (a) Development Proposals for Caldew Riverside.
 - (b) Budget Process 2010/11

Both items will be on future agendas of this Panel.

2. Detailed Scrutiny Work

At the last meeting of the Panel it was agreed that a Task and Finish Group would be set up to look at the Policy Framework alongside Officers from Policy and Performance. The Panel agreed that they would choose a further topic at this meeting. Attached at Appendix 2 is a list of potential topics which the Panel discussed at the Development Session in July and a short briefing is provided to assist Members in their deliberations.

3. Shared Service – ICT

Members from Scrutiny at Allerdale BC have made an approach to the City Council to request that consideration is given to jointly scrutinising the Shared ICT Service.

Panel Members are requested to agree whether they wish to jointly scrutinise this service and decide how this will be undertaken. This item is currently on the Work Programme for ROSP to receive an update in December 2009.

4. Scrutiny Chairs Group Meeting

A meeting of the Scrutiny Chairs Group has been scheduled for Wednesday 28th October. If you have particular issues that you think should be discussed, please talk to the Chair or Vice-Chair.

5. Workshop – Carlisle Strategic Partnership

The Environment and Economy Scrutiny Panel have arranged a workshop on the Carlisle Strategic Partnership, the Local Area Agreement (LAA) and the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) and all scrutiny members have been invited to attend. This half day workshop will be held at **10am on 29th October 2009 at Tullie House, Carlisle.**

RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2009/10

Issue	Type of Scrutiny						Comments/Current Status	Meeting Dates							
	Performance Management	Forward Plan Item/Referred from Executive	Policy Review/Development	Scrutiny of Partnership/ External Agency	Budget	Monitoring									
								9 Jun 09	16 Jul 09	25 Aug 09	15 Oct 09	10 Dec 09	7 Jan 10	18 Feb 10	1 Apr 10
Current Meeting – 15 th October 2009															
Revenues and Benefits Shared Services			✓			✓	To consider revised Business Case				✓				
Sickness Absence	✓						Update on sickness absence statistics and management action (Lead Members: Cllrs Cape/Hendry)		✓		✓		✓		✓
Corporate Projects Board	✓					✓	Bi-annual report detailing Corporate Projects				✓				✓
Lease Cars			✓				Task Group Report to be considered by Executive 28/9/09. TG Members – Allinson/Clarke/Glover			✓	✓				
FUTURE MEETINGS															
Policy Framework			✓				Task & Finish Group (Cllrs Hendry/Allison/Layden)								

Last Revised: 05/10/2009

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Property Portfolio Options		✓	✓				Workshop held 18/8/09 Date for report to Panel TBC								
Budget 2010/11					✓		To consider strategic financial issues arising from the budget setting process					✓	✓		
Performance Monitoring Reports	✓					✓	Quarterly Monitoring of PI's. (Lead Member: Cllr Boaden)		✓	✓		✓		✓	
Budget Monitoring 09/10					✓	✓	Monitoring of budget expenditure.			✓		✓		✓	
Corporate Risk Register	✓					✓	Annual Monitoring (Lead Member Cllr Layden)		✓						
Transformation Programme of Carlisle City Council			✓				To scrutinise the suggested priorities	✓	Special meeting 6/7/09						

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Shared ICT Services			✓			✓	Monitor the shared service between Allerdale BC and Carlisle CC	✓				✓				
Pay & Workforce Strategy			✓			✓	Currently subject to consultation period	✓								
Carlisle Renaissance				✓		✓	To scrutinise the Action Plan for Carlisle Renaissance on a 6 monthly basis		Special Meeting held 6/8/09			Special Meeting due Jan 2010				
Caldew Riverside Development							To consider draft Heads of Terms for land transactions									
Use of Resources					✓		Progress of UOR Assessment submitted to Audit Commission							✓		
Scrutiny Annual Report							Draft report for comment before Chairs Group								✓	

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Completed Items															
Treasury Management					✓		Annual Report	✓							
Capital Strategy 2009/10–2001/12					✓	✓	Monitoring of predictions, level of reserves and future trends			✓					
Asset Management Plan 2008–2013					✓	✓				✓					
Medium Term Financial Plan & Corporate Charging Policy					✓					✓					
Member Training Annual Report	✓					✓	Routine Annual Monitoring		✓						
Corporate Complaints Annual Report	✓					✓	Routine Annual Monitoring		✓						

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Scrutiny Arrangements: Chairs Group and agreeing the Scrutiny Annual Report							A report providing options for amending the Scrutiny Chairs Group and the process to agree the annual report		✓							
Provisional Outturn 08/09					✓	✓	Monitoring & examination of variation.	✓								

INFORMATION ONLY ITEMS	
Details	Date Circulated
Employee Opinion Survey & Improvement Plan	

Resources Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Briefing Note – Potential Topics for Review

Development of the Corporate Plan

Tullie House

Community O&S Panel are the responsible lead Panel for items relating to Tullie House, however Resources have an interest in the financial implications. As Community O&S are already actively involved scrutinising the Governance Options and Development Plan Proposals, two Members of Resources O&S Panel have been invited to the Community O&S meeting on 14th October when this issue is considered.

Shared Services

The Resources O&S Panel have looked at shared services on an ad hoc basis to look at the development of specific services, usually within the formal panel arena. It is intended that reviews under the Transformation Agenda will consider the viability of sharing services with other Local Authorities. Should the Panel wish to undertake further work in this area then it is suggested that they have an initial discussion with Senior Officers in order not to duplicate any ongoing work.

Policy Framework

A Task Group has been set up to work with Policy and Performance on developing a revised Policy Framework.

Use of Consultants

The Council's use of consultants was suggested as a topic for review by Members during the Review of Scrutiny in early 2009 and Resources O&S would be the most relevant scrutiny panel to undertake such a review should they wish to do so. The recent final report on the Future Focus exercise (which involved all employees over a 10 month period) stated that "there is disquiet over the perceived resource allocated to the use of consultants and whether this could not be better allocated to use and develop internal expertise". The Resources O&S Panel has previously raised some concern regarding the amount of money spent on consultants by the Authority and requested and received a budget breakdown on this spending in January 2009.

There are many examples nationally where Scrutiny has undertaken successful reviews on this subject and should a Task Group be set up further research could be carried out on how this has been addressed elsewhere. The Authorities Audit function has previously undertaken some work in this area and any scrutiny review should take this into account.

Corporate Projects Board

The Panel will receive the six-monthly update of Corporate Projects at this meeting. Panel Members may wish to nominate a Lead Member for keeping an oversight between updates who could then report any issues of concern back to the formal Panel. Although this was a suggested topic for review it is not clear how any further work could add value to this Officer Group. However on scrutinising the report at this meeting Members may have suggestions as to where they could undertake any further work.

Consultation with Public and/or Staff

This was a suggestion which arose during the Review of Scrutiny earlier in 2009. Should Members wish to undertake a scrutiny review on consultation it should be defined whether this is to be consultation with the public or with staff as the subject is probably too large to cover both areas. As a result of Future Focus work is currently ongoing on communication with staff and therefore Members may decide they will be duplicating work if they opt for a scrutiny review on consultation with staff.

Consultation and Engagement with the Public could be an interesting topic for Members to look at. Again there are many examples nationally of how scrutiny has been involved and made worthwhile and relevant recommendations to their Executive Bodies. The Centre for Public Scrutiny published a Library Monitor in 2008 which documents 13 scrutiny reviews in to community engagement, assessing common features and provides a starting point for those interested in conducting an inquiry into this topic.

Media Communications

Again, this was a suggestion which arose during the Review of Scrutiny and also during the Future Focus events, failure to counter bad press was expressed as a concern by employees. A good example where scrutiny has been involved in this topic can be seen in a review by Crawley Borough Council in 2008.

This Review was established to examine concerns raised over the seemingly negative image of the town, and of the Council, being portrayed by both the local and national media and to investigate, concerns expressed regarding the relationship that the Council and Councillors have with the local media. The Panel consulted a number of witnesses including the Editors from the local newspapers, representatives from the Fire and Rescue Services, the Police Service and the business communities.

Review of the Council's Constitution

There are many examples nationally of where scrutiny has undertaken work on their Council's Constitution. This has usually been within Task and Finish Groups. An example of a successful review of the constitution is a review undertaken by Nottingham City council in 2005 which focused on the actual document itself – whether it was

functional, accessible and easy to read – and the role and organisation of the meetings of the Full Council. The objective of the review was to ensure that the constitution as a document is fit for purpose, that it explains the necessary legal and financial requirements and procedures in plain English and provide sufficient clarity to be used as a working document by all Members and Officers. The Constitution document was tested with the Plain English Society.

Carlisle City Council's Constitution document is 488 pages long and is updated on an annual basis. Should a Task Group be formed for such a review then Members will have a wide range of examples and good practice nationally which they could use.

Carlisle Renaissance

Following the bi-annual scrutiny by the Panel in August 2009, Members referred the scrutiny back to the Scrutiny Chairs Group to give consideration to more frequent scrutiny. The Chairs Group are due to meet on 28th October and will discuss this referral. Members may wish to feed suggestions via the Chair of the Panel to take to the meeting of the Chairs. The panel also had concerns about the perceived lack of information and communication regarding Carlisle Renaissance to both Members of the Council and the public at large. This is currently being addressed by the Director of Carlisle Renaissance, however the Panel could if they wished set up a Task and Finish Group to work with the Director to develop this. Alternatively the Panel could request that this is also addressed by the Scrutiny Chairs Group.

Asset Management

The Resources O&S Panel are currently involved in the development of the Property Portfolio Options and a workshop was held for Members in August 2009.

Sickness Absence

It has been suggested by the Chair that the Panel may want to undertake a scrutiny review on sickness absence. The Panel will be receiving an update report on this issue at the meeting today and Panel Members can decide whether they want to undertake any further work.

Nicola Edwards

Acting Scrutiny Manager

October 2009

**Index of Active Executive Key Decisions relevant to:
Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel**

Key Decision Ref Nos:	Subject:	Date of Executive Meeting
KD.038/09	Development Proposals for Caldey Riverside	26 October 2009 and 14 December 2009
KD.030/09	Budget Process 2010/11	(a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f) and (g) on 23 November 2009 (h) on 14 December 2009 (i), (j), (k), and (l) on 17 December 2009 (m), (n), (o) (p) and (q) on 18 January 2010

FORWARD PLAN
Active Executive Key Decisions relevant to:
Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Ref: KD.038/09 **Portfolio Area** Promoting Carlisle, Finance, Economy and Environment & Infrastructure

Subject Development Proposals for Caldew Riverside

Key Decisions:

To agree the basis of land transactions at Caldew Riverside

Decision to be taken at Executive on: 26 October 2009 and 14 December 2009

Responsible or Lead Overview and Scrutiny Panel:

Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date when the matter will be available for consideration by Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Policy and Budget Framework matter which will be available for consideration by the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 10 December 2009

Consultees: Carlisle Renaissance, University of Cumbria

Date for Consultees' comments:

Relevant reports/background papers which are available:

Report LDS.72/08 - development Proposals in respect of Caldew Riverside Carlisle (at Executive 18 December 2008)

The Head of Economic and Tourism Services/Director of Legal and Democratic Services report will be available five working days before the meeting.

Further Information From:

Head of Economic and Tourism Services, Carlisle City Council, Civic Centre, Carlisle, CA

Subject Budget Process 2010/11

Key Decisions:

To consider strategic financial issues arising from the budget setting process:

- (a) Budget Update - Revenue Estimates
- (b) Individual Charges Reviews (Community Services, Legal & Democratic Services, Development Services)
- (c) New Revenue Spending Proposals
- (d) New Savings Proposals
- (e) New Capital Spending Proposals and Provisional Capital Programme
- (f) Repair and Maintenance
- (g) Treasury Management and Prudential Borrowing Implications
- (h) Consideration of Overview and Scrutiny Consultation feedback
- (i) Draft Revenue Support Grant Settlement (if available)
- (j) Summary Overall Revenue and Capital Position
- (k) Draft Treasury Management and Investment Strategy including MRP Strategy
- (l) Executive Draft Budget Proposals for consultation
- (m) Final Revenue Support Grant and Final Revenue Budget Summary
- (n) Provisional Capital Programme
- (o) Treasury Management and Investment Strategy including MRP Strategy
- (p) Consideration of Final Budget Consultation
- (q) Executive's Final Budget Proposals

Decision to be taken at Executive on: (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f) and (g) on 23 November 2009
(h) on 14 December 2009
(i), (j), (k), and (l) on 17 December 2009
(m), (n), (o) (p) and (q) on 18 January 2010

Responsible or Lead Overview and Scrutiny Panel:

Resources Overview & Scrutiny Panel for all budget issues except the detailed service estimates.

Community and Environment & Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panels for New Spending Proposals, Savings and Charges pertaining to their individual areas of responsibility

Date when the matter will be available for consideration by Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Policy and Budget Framework matter which may be considered as follows:

- (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f) and (g) - Community Overview & Scrutiny Panel on 1 December 2009, Environment and Economy Overview & Scrutiny Panel on 3 December 2009 and Resources Overview & Scrutiny Panel on 10 December 2009
- (i), (j) and (k) - Resources Overview & Scrutiny Panel on 7 January 2010

Consultees: Overview and Scrutiny Panels, Business Community, Trade Unions, Citizens and Staff

Date for Consultees' comments: Consultation period 17 December 2009 to 14 January 2010

Relevant reports/background papers which are available:

The Director of Corporate Service's report will be available five working days before the meeting.

Further Information From:

Head of Financial Services, Carlisle City Council, Civic Centre, Carlisle CA3 8QG