

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

THURSDAY 10 JANUARY 2012 AT 10.00 AM

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Luckley (Chairman) Councillors Mrs Bradley, Earp, McDevitt (as substitute for Councillor Miss Sherriff) Mrs Prest, Scarborough, Mrs Stevenson and Mrs Vasey.

ALSO

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Riddle – Communities and Housing Portfolio Holder
Councillor Mrs Martlew – Environment and Transport Portfolio
Joanne King - Carlisle Locality Officer, Cumbria Youth Support
Councillor J Mallinson – Observer
Councillor Mitchelson - Observer

OFFICERS: Director of Community Engagement
Director of Local Environment
Environmental Health Manager
Wellbeing Manager
Scrutiny Officer

COSP.01/13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Miss Sherriff.

COSP.02/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

COSP.03/13 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meetings held on 22 November 2012 be agreed as a correct record of the meetings and signed by the Chairman.

COSP.04/13 CALL-IN OF DECISIONS

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

COSP.05/13 OVERVIEW REPORT AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Officer presented report OS.02/13 which provided an overview of matters relating to the work of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel and included the latest version of the work programme and Key Decisions of the Executive which related to the Panel.

The Scrutiny Officer reported that:

- The Notice of Executive Key Decisions had been published on 14 December 2012. The following issues fell within the remit of this Panel:

KD.033/12 – Budget Process 2012/13 – Had been considered by the Panel on 22 November 2012.

KD.036/12 – Review of CCTV Provision in Carlisle – to be considered as part of this meeting's agenda

KD.037/12 – Carlisle Plan to be considered by the Panel on 14 February 2013.

KD.041/12 – Regulatory Reform Order Empty Property Policy Amendments a date for consideration by the Panel had not yet been agreed.

KD.045/12 – Parish Charter – Would be considered by the Panel on 28 March 2013.

Members did not raise any questions or comments on the items contained within the Notice of Key Decisions.

- The following Minute Excerpts had been received from the Executive's meeting held on 17 December 2012:
 - EX.161/12 – Charges Review
 - EX.163/12 – Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery Trust Business Plan 2013/14 – 2015/16
 - EX.165/12 – Amendments to the Cumbria Choice Allocations Policy
 - EX.166/12 – Proposals for Implementation for Council Tax Technical Reforms to Discounts and Exemption
- An update of the implementation of the recommendations from the Disabled Facilities Grants and Homelessness Task and Finish Groups had been included in the report as appendix 3 for the Panels information.

Members considered the update and asked for clarity with regard to the ring fencing of the of the additional Department of Health funding and the Director of Community Engagement agreed to provide a written answer alongside confirmation with regard to the information received on the number of DFGs carried out by Riverside Carlisle.

A Member asked for further information with regard to the Homeless Prevention Project. Ms King, the Carlisle Locality Officer, Cumbria Youth Support explained that the Project was a multi agency partnership for the prevention of homelessness in 16 and 17 year olds. The pilot of the project had been completed; she agreed to provide the Panel with further information in writing.

A Member highlighted the Council's Transformation programme and asked if the Young Persons Champion post would exist in the future. The Director of Community Engagement responded that the restructure of the Wellbeing Team had been out for consultation and on the basis of the responses the restructure would be reconsidered and this included the Young Persons Champion.

In response to a question the Director of Community Engagement agreed to circulate to Members the local and national figures for the number of homeless young people.

- The Work Programme for 2012/13 had been attached to the report. The Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel met on 3 January 2013 and considered an item regarding Carlisle Leisure Limited and Tullie House Trust. The Chairman and Vice Chairman of

this Panel had been invited to attend the meeting for that item. The Panel had requested further information with regard to the Carlisle Leisure contract and would hold a meeting, to which all Members of the Community Panel would be invited, to consider the information.

- The Riverside Carlisle six monthly monitoring report was scheduled for the February meeting and Members asked that it included information on Riverside's assessment on the impact of the changes of the Welfare Reform in particular the impact of the 'bedroom tax'.

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 Forward Plan items:

KD.033/12 – Budget Process 2012/13 – Had been considered by the Panel on 22 November 2012.

KD.036/12 – Review of CCTV Provision in Carlisle – Would be considered as part of this meeting's agenda

KD.037/12 – Carlisle Plan 2012 – 13 would be considered by the Panel on 14 February 2013

KD.041/12 – Regulatory Reform Order Empty Property Policy Amendments a date for consideration by the Panel had not yet been agreed.

KD.045/12 – Parish Charter – Would be considered by the Panel on 28 March 2013.

3) The following Minute Excerpts from the Executive's meeting held on 17 December 2012 were noted:

EX.161/12 – Charges Review

EX.163/12 – Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery Trust Business Plan 2013/14 – 2015/16

EX.165/12 – Amendments to the Cumbria Choice Allocations Policy

EX.166/12 – Proposals for Implementation for Council Tax Technical Reforms to Discounts and Exemption

4) That the Director of Community Engagement provide the Panel with the following information:

- If the Department of Health funding would be ring fenced for Disabled Facilities Grants
- Details of the information Riverside Carlisle provided on the Disabled Facilities Grants they carried out.
- The local and national figures for the number of homeless young people.

5) That details of the Homeless Prevention Project be circulated to all Members of the Panel.

COSP.06/13 WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

The Director of Community Engagement submitted report CD.01/13 describing activities, joint working arrangements and proposed new ways of working to improve wellbeing in young people not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs).

The Director reported that the first part of the report focused on the current programmes and highlighted how the Community Engagement Directorate supported NEETs including partnership working, programme management and direct delivery. He reminded the Panel that the Community Engagement Directorate facilitated and delivered a wide range of programmes to children and young people but the programmes were not specifically targeting NEETs and outcomes for NEETs were not formally recorded.

The Director gave an overview of the current programme which included ABSTRACT magazine, working with young homeless people within the hostels, providing Wellbeing projects, accredited learning and peer mentoring and Police and Inspira partnership working.

The second part of the report summarised ways of working in the future with an emphasis on delivering in partnership, seeking a more coherent joined up approach, making better use of resources, new structures and ways of working. He explained that the statutory responsibility for the planning and delivery of services to meet the needs of Children and Young People rested with Cumbria County Council. Budget and staff reductions within Communities Housing and Health meant that a more joined up and targeted approach to partnership working was required to ensure that the Council could continue to deliver its priorities for employment and the prevention and alleviation of homelessness.

The Director of Community Engagement highlighted a number of partners which supported NEETs programmes in to 2013 included the Carlisle Youth Zone, Community Resource Centre, Carlisle Leisure Limited, Secondary Schools, Inspira, the Job Centre Plus, Cumbria Police and Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service.

The final part of the report provided information on the work of the Carlisle and Eden Young Persons' District Delivery Group which took a project and delivery based approach to addressing the priorities that the Children's Trust had identified, along with other priorities that the Group had identify locally.

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

- Was there a City Council representative on the District Delivery Group?

Ms King replied that there was a City Council officer on the Group but not a City Councillor. She confirmed that an invitation for representation had been sent to the City Council.

- Members were concerned about the accountability of the Group to the City Council if there was no Member representation.

Ms King informed the Panel that the Group was accountable through the Children's Trust Board and the Carlisle Partnership Executive.

- A Member asked for further information on the ABSTRACT Magazine.

The Wellbeing Manager responded that the magazine had been in circulation for some time. It cost £1,729 to publish and was put together by young people for young people. The editorial staff was made up of 15 young people who produced the magazine with the support of the City Council's Young Persons Champion. The magazine was distributed to as many locations as possible and was very well received.

- The report did not contain any figures or statistics on NEETs.

The Wellbeing Manager informed the Panel that the City Council did not report formally on NEETs. Ms King added that the NEET figures were reported to the District Delivery Group and the figures for the previous quarter were:

Carlisle 16 – 18 NEETs 5.9% equivalent of 176 Young People
Cumbria 16 – 18 NEETs 5% equivalent of 614 Young People
National Average 6%

A Member asked what specific action was taken to support the unidentified or difficult to reach NEETs and young people who required additional support. Members felt that the report did not set out the steps taken with regard to NEETs.

The Wellbeing Manager reiterated that although NEETs accessed activities the information was not captured.

A Member asked if the NEETs information could be broken down to urban and rural figures.

Ms King replied that the figures came from Inspira and they could be asked for a further breakdown.

- The report highlighted the Social Inclusion Programmes but did not include the work being undertaken in the Shaddongate Resource Centre. The work being undertaken there was very important and a Member suggested that either a written report should come to the Panel or the Manager of the Centre be invited to a future meeting to discuss the programmes being offered.
- Community Centres had not been included in the report. Was there work being undertaken as their contribution to supporting young people? The Panel understood that there had been a poor relationship between the Council and Community Centres but their contribution was vital when resources were so scarce.

The Wellbeing Manager confirmed that work was happening in the Community Centres and they were becoming much more involved in supporting Young People.

The Communities and Housing Portfolio Holder agreed that the relationship had not been good in the past due to a break down in communication and informed the Panel that the relationship had improved and the Council was working on new service level agreements to support the improvement.

RESOLVED – 1) That the Working with Young People report be welcomed;

2) That the Shaddongate Resource Centre Manager asked to submit a written report or be invited to a future meeting of the Panel;

3) That the NEETs statistic be broken down into urban and rural information.

COSP.07/13 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TRANSFORMATION

The Director of Community Engagement presented report CD.02/13 introducing the proposed transformational changes within the Community Engagement Directorate.

The Director explained that the report outlining the proposals for change had been sent to all staff within the Directorate for consultation and asked that views and comments be sent to the Director by 4 January 2013. A range of responses to the consultation had been received from staff and as a result it had been decided that decisions regarding the Wellbeing Team and the Partnerships would not be progressed until further detailed consideration had been given to the responses.

The changes to the Customer Contact Centre would progress and had been driven by the increase in footfall to the Centre as a result of the Welfare Reform.

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

- In the new Foyer would there be places where members of the public could discuss matters confidentially?

The Director of Community Engagement reported that the plans for the foyer were being amended. The Triage Receptionists would not go into a lot of details and would try and ensure information was kept private but there would not be a separate room to be used each time.

- The new structure for the Customer Contact Centre had a reduction in telephonists, Members had already received complaints regarding the length of time it took for the Council to answer the phones and were concerned that the delay in answering the telephones would increase.

The Director of Community Engagement assured Members that there would not be an increase in the time it took to answer the telephone. The restructure allowed for better use of the telephonists time and it was hoped that the restructure would improve the Contact Centre.

- What training would be provided for the new Triage Receptionists?

The Director of Community Engagement replied that the staff in the Centre had excellent skills but they were on a low grade, the new Triage Receptionists would require new job descriptions, a training package and support to offer the service to those that needed it.

- It was suggested that the Customer Contact staff give members of the public a reference number when they call so their case could be followed properly.
- The Panel was disappointed that the Antisocial Behaviour Officers would be deleted and asked where the duties of those posts would go?

The Director of Community Engagement responded that some of the duties would go to the new Community and Families Development Officer. The Council would continue to support the Problem Solving Groups through this role as the work was valuable and an effective way for the Council to contribute to the prevention of anti social behaviour.

- Given that the proposals were being reconsidered would they meet the savings timescale?

The Director of Community Engagement replied that he was confident that the necessary targets would be met as he did not want the process to take a long time for the benefit of the staff.

- A Member felt that the Directorate should be concentrating on front line provision. She acknowledged that staff within the Wellbeing Team were under a lot of pressure and was concerned that a reduction in the Team would result in further pressure on officers.
- The Panel felt that the Arts Development Officer was a luxury in the current economic situation but wanted to be clear that, if the post went ahead, the post holder would be liaising with Tullie Housing and not working for them.
- The Panel asked for clarification with regard to the Welfare Advice Team.

The Director of Community Engagement confirmed that there was no intention of moving the Welfare Advice Team but there would be more work with the Citizens Advice Bureau, and the Law Centre to strengthen the effectiveness of the Welfare Advice Team.

The Communities and Housing Portfolio added that the priority had been to make partners ready for the Welfare Reform and increase accessibility for those who needed it.

- A Member asked about the morale of staff within the Directorate.

The Director of Community Engagement was concerned that staff within the Directorate felt valued and was properly supported regardless of the outcome. He acknowledged that there was room for improvement but the Council had mechanisms in place both internally and externally to support and advise staff. The opinions and ideas from staff were being properly considered. He was aware that there was a lot of pressure on the staff and that they needed as much support as possible.

- The Panel asked to see the plans for the new Foyer when they were available and asked for a further update on the proposals at their next meeting.

RESOLVED – 1) That the comments and concerns of the Panel be taken into account during the reconsideration of the proposals for the Community Engagement Directorate restructure;

2) That a copy of the plan for the new Foyer be submitted to the Panel when available;

3) That an update on the restructure within the Community Engagement Directorate be submitted to the Panel on 14 February 2013.

COSP.08/13 CCTV

The Director of Local Environment submitted report LE.01/13 providing a summary of the transformation proposals for 2013/14 in relation to the provision of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)

The Environmental Health Manager reported that the CCTV savings proposals sought to find transformational savings of £180,000. The report discussed the options for achieving the savings and recommended that the Council ceased the active monitoring of CCTV but retained cameras in both the City Centre Car Parks and those that were most used for crime and disorder. The cameras would be maintained by the City Council and automatically record images.

He outlined the background to the CCTV and gave details of the number and type of cameras that had been operational within the City since 1995. He explained that the technical equipment had been upgraded to a digital recording system in 2006 and there were communication links with partners. The control room had two separate CCTV video links to Cumbria Police which enabled the Police to view incidents directly. He informed the Panel that the City Council control room was single manned Monday to Friday 0945 to 0200 and Friday to Sunday 1045 to 0300 hours. The cameras record 24 hours, seven days per week and there were three permanent CCTV operators.

To achieve the required savings a significant scale down of the CCTV system would be required and four options for a continued CCTV system were outlined within the report. The Environmental Health Manager added that option 4 was the most effective and efficient option as it provided both a deterrent and a means to collect evidence.

The Executive had on 19 November 2012 (EX.156/12) considered the report and decided:

“That the Executive approved the proposal to:

1. Discontinue active monitoring of the CCTV system.
2. Reduce the number of cameras and restructure the CCTV service, retaining 9 car park cameras, 20 internal Civic Centre Cameras in line with Option 2.
3. Subject to available budget, retain 6 City Centre Cameras for the next financial year only to enable further negotiations with partners to agree financial support for the continuance of those cameras.
4. Delegated authority to the Director of Local Environment in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to conclude those negotiations.”

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

- Was there a backlog of cameras which were not working?

The Environmental Health Manager explained that there was a rolling schedule of repairs which was undertaken by an external company under a maintenance contract. There had been some issues regarding electricity supply to some cameras and would be corrected.

- How often did the Police access the cameras?

The Environmental Health Manager responded that the Police accessed the cameras on a regular basis and the Control Room maintained a log of all access.

- Had there been any public consultation?

The Environmental Health Manager outlined the detailed consultation which had taken place with stakeholders to determine if stakeholders could contribute to the running of the CCTV.

The Director of Local Environment reminded the Panel that the CCTV proposals were part of the budget process which was open to public consultation.

- The report concentrated on the businesses in Carlisle but there was no mention of the safety of the residents in Carlisle. A Member understood that there was an additional £500,000 in the Council budget and asked if that could be redirected to the CCTV. She also had concerns that new businesses would not come to the City if there was no CCTV provision.

The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder explained that businesses had not been prepared to contribute to the running of the CCTV in the future. The CCTV service was a discretionary service funded entirely by the City Council and the main operational beneficiaries were retail and the Police. She informed the Panel that she had met with the Police and Crime Commissioner to discuss the situation and there would be further meetings. Both Eden District Council and Allerdale Borough Council had ended their CCTV provision and did not do the same consultation that the City Council had. The City Council was keen to continue with the service but needed financial support to do so.

- Had any of the stakeholders come forward with options to continue the service?

The Environmental Health Manager responded that the consultation period ended on 4 January and the responses were being collated. There had not been any significant budget options submitted but there were other potential cost saving ideas that could be investigated further. One of those was the change from fibre optic cables to Wi Fi. The fibre optic contract ended in 2014 which meant there was a year to explore ideas further.

The Director of Local Environment highlighted the consultation and the responses and reported that the Council was looking for the best way to maintain as much of the service as possible whilst meeting the savings. The consultation invited options and it was hoped that there could be a more shared approach to the service.

- Had antisocial behaviour increased in authorities where the cameras had been switched off?

The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder responded that she had not been informed of any increases.

RESOLVED: That the Panel's response to the consultation is as follows:

Members of the Panel expressed concerns about the reduction in CCTV coverage, recognised that budgetary constraints have to be considered and supported the consultation the Council is conducting with the beneficiaries of the scheme as to moves they can make to assist the Council in continuing this important service.

(The meeting ended at 12.10pm)