



**PORTFOLIO AREA: Finance & Resources**

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Date of Meeting: 15 October 2001

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Public

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Key Decision: Yes

Recorded in Forward Plan: Yes

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Inside Policy Framework

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**Title:** NEW SPENDING BIDS 2002/03

**Report of:** The City Treasurer

**Report reference:** Financial Memo 2001/02 No 91

**Summary:**

In accordance with the agreed budget timetable for 2002/03, any bids for new spending during 2002/03 are to be presented to this meeting of the Executive for initial consideration.

**Recommendations:**

The Executive is requested to consider the new spending bids for 2002/03 for feedback to a future meeting.

**Contact Officer:** Angela Brown

**Ext:** 7280

**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

CITY OF CARLISLE

To: The Chairman and Members of  
The Executive  
15 October 2001

Financial Memo  
2001/02 No 91

NEW SPENDING BIDS 2002/03

**1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND OPTIONS**

- 1.1 In accordance with the agreed budget timetable for 2002/03, any bids for new spending during 2002/03 are to be presented to this meeting of the Executive for initial consideration.
- 1.2 These bids have been prepared having regard to the Executive's Budget Principles agreed at its meeting of 18 September as reproduced below:

Spending Bids

The theme of the budget for 2002/03 is one of consolidation. The Executive expects this theme to inform the approach of officers to new spending bids. At its meeting of 15 October the Executive expects to receive **limited spending bids** from officers. The Executive expects officers to formulate such bids in consultation with the Corporate Management Team and individual Executive Portfolio Holders.

Savings

The theme of the budget for 2002/03 is one of consolidation. This theme will inform the approach of the Executive to the pursuit of savings. The Executive expects officers to identify **a potential saving equivalent to each new spending bid they propose**. The Executive expects such potential savings to be realistic and deliverable.

**2. SUMMARY OF NEW SPENDING BIDS RECEIVED**

- 2.1 A summary of the bids received is shown in Appendix 'A'. The detail of each bid is shown in Appendices A to D attached.

**3. CONSULTATION**

Overview and Scrutiny as part of the budget process.

**4. HEAD OF PERSONNEL'S COMMENTS**

Not applicable.

**5. CITY TREASURER'S COMMENTS**

Included within report.

**6. CITY SOLICITOR'S COMMENTS**

Not applicable.

**7. CMT COMMENTS**

7.1 CMT considered these bids at their meeting of 08 October and have indicated their support for the bids included within this report. The bids have been prioritised as Mandatory, Highly Advised and Discretionary.

**8. MILLENNIUM GATEWAY CITY PROJECT**

8.1 The City Treasurer would remind members that the 'evaluation stage' of the archaeological finds will shortly commence, following which the costs of any necessary conservation and reporting will be identified. At present there is estimated to be a balance of £140,000 within the project budget for these further costs. Independent advice suggests that these further costs may be up to £200,000 in excess of the remaining budget provision, but that the work could be spread over several years. At the time of writing, other capital expenditure to a value of £300,000 has been 'frozen' pending identifying the final costs of the archaeological research.

**9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are Environmental Implications from the Recycling Bid (Appendix A, Item iii).

**9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 The Executive is requested to consider the new spending bids for 2002/03 for feedback to a future meeting.

**10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 To enable new spending bids to be considered and fed into the budget cycle in accordance with the approved budget guidelines.

D THOMAS  
City Treasurer

Contact Officer: Angela Brown  
City Treasury  
Carlisle

Ext: 7280

05 October 2001  
AB/CH/f910102

SUMMARY OF NEW SPENDING BIDS 2002/2003

|      | <u>Detail</u>  | <u>Recurring</u><br>£                              | <u>Non-<br/>Recurring</u><br>£   | <u>Savings/<br/>Funding<br/>Identified</u> | <u>Portfolio</u>                                | <u>Appendix/<br/>Details</u> | <u>Bid Priority<br/>(see key<br/>below)</u> |
|------|--|--|--|--|---|------------------------------|---|
| i)   | Bandstand  | 5,000  | 20,000   | No   | Infrastructure,<br>Environment<br>and Transport | B                            | B   |
| ii)  | Public Inquiry –<br>Morton Development   | -  | 25,000   | No   | Infrastructure,<br>Environment<br>and Transport | B                            | #   |
| iii) | Recycling Initiatives  | -  | 20,000   | No   | Infrastructure,<br>Environment<br>and Transport | B                            |   |
| iv)  | Disability<br>Discrimination Act   | -  | Subject to<br>a further<br>report  | No   | Corporate<br>Resources                          | B                            | #   |
| v)   | Asset Management<br>Plan   | -  | Subject to<br>a further<br>report  | No   | Finance and<br>Resources                        | B                            | A   |
| vi)  | Web Site<br>Development<br>- Web Design Post<br>- Web Redesign<br>- Financial Trans.<br>- Info. & Forms<br>- Content Mgmt<br>- Consultation<br>- Engaging citizens<br>- Intranet<br>- On Line shopping | 18,430<br>-<br>-<br>1,400<br>-<br>-<br>-<br>-<br>- | -<br>30,000*<br>20,000<br>8,750<br>18,000<br>-<br>15,000<br>15,000*<br>5,000 | Possible<br>use of<br>IEG<br>monies?       | Strategy &<br>Performance                       | C                            | A   |
|      |  |  | * Nil cost if<br>Web post<br>is funded                                       |  |   |                              |   |
| vii) | Committee Servicing<br>Software  | 3,500  | 25,000   | No   | Corporate<br>Resources                          | D                            | B   |

|       | <u>Detail</u>                   | <u>Recurring</u><br>£ | <u>Non-<br/>Recurring</u><br>£ | <u>Savings/<br/>Funding<br/>Identified</u>     | <u>Portfolio</u>                  | <u>Appendix<br/>/ Details</u>                    | <u>Bid Priority<br/>(see key<br/>below)</u> |
|-------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| viii) | Best Value                      | 100,000               | -                              | No   | Strategy and Performance          | To continue Best Value                           | A   |
| ix)   | Community Safety                | 50,000                | -                              | No   | Community Activities              | To continue Comm. Safety                         | A   |
| x)    | Assembly Rooms                  | -                     | 40,000                         | No<br>(Some sponsor monies?)                   | Economic Prosperity               | Was a bid in 2000/01 Exhibition and Audio Visual | B   |
| xi)   | Queens Golden Jubilee           | -                     | 10,000                         | Existing Grants Budget?                        | Community Activities              | Referred to Comm. O&S                            | B   |
| xii)  | Additional DSO Vehicles         | 6,973                 | 43,100                         | Renewal Fund/<br>funded from DSO base budgets. | Infrastructure. Env and Transport | See FM 87 also on Agenda                         | B   |
| xiii) | Cash Receipting Software        |                       | 40,000                         | Renewal Fund                                   | Finance & Resources               | Ditto above.                                     | B   |
| ivx)  | Concessionary Fares Swipe Cards |                       | 50,000                         | Renewal Fund / Concess. Fares savings          | Finance & Resources               | Ditto above                                      | A   |
| vx)   | Richardson Street – Back Lane   |                       | 62,325<br>(over 4 years)       | No   | Infr, Env and Transport           | Was a 2000/01 bid                                | B   |

Key: # - Mandatory

A – Highly Advised

B – Discretionary

**INTERNAL MEMORANDUM**

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|--|--|
| <b>From:</b> Director of Environment and Development | <b>Please ask for:</b> Michael Battersby |
| <b>To:</b> City Treasurer                            | <b>Extension:</b> 7400                   |
| <b>FAO:</b>  | <b>E-mail:</b> Michael Battersby         |
|  | <b>Your ref:</b>                         |
|  | <b>Our ref:</b> MB/MMJ                   |

03 October 2001

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**ADDITIONAL FUNDING ISSUES FOR 2002/2003**

I am writing to advise you of a number of areas where additional funding may be required:

1. **Bandstand - £25,000 non-recurring**

As part of the budget in the current financial year £5,000 was allocated to fund a trial initiative of a temporary bandstand in the City Centre. This was done to coincide with Cumberland Week and the feedback from this trial was extremely positive.

Should the Executive wish to pursue this then the current funding bid covers the purchase of bandstand of a similar type to that used in the trial. The precise details and supplier would need to be resolved but the cost of such a bandstand is £20,000. The proposal would be to erect it at an agreed location in the City Centre at Easter and remove it at the end of the summer. £5,000 has been included for erection/dismantling and a modest level of ongoing vandalism repair in the first year. Subsequently these costs would be met from the administration costs of users of the area.

2. **Morton Housing Development – Public Inquiry £25,000 non-recurring**

The regional Government Office have called a public inquiry to deal with several large housing applications and the Council will have to take part in that Inquiry. The estimated cost of professional advice (legal representation, expert witnesses, additional in-house staff costs) is £25,000. It is anticipated that this will take place in Spring/early summer 2002, and is an unavoidable cost which can not be met from existing budgets.

3. **Recycling Initiatives £20,000 non-recurring**

The National Waste Management Strategy has imposed very demanding statutory recycling targets for Carlisle. These have been incorporated into the improvement plan from the BV Review of the service.

Initially one of the key actions has been to progress a pilot kerbside collection project in conjunction with Eden DC which is expected to commence in early 2002. The initial costs can be contained in existing budgets.

Whilst the kerbside collection of paper, cans, bottles and hopefully other materials should result in an increased recycling rate in the pilot areas experience from other Authorities confirms that an even higher rate can be achieved by simultaneously increasing the number of local bring sites. The recycling targets are extremely onerous (doubling tonnages currently recycled over the next two years) and every opportunity must be grasped to encourage public participation.

At current prices a bring site for the full range of containers can be established for £1,000 and the bid is to establish 20 sites at suitable locations. The revenue costs can be met from the generated recycling credits.

It should also be noted that in respect of long term budget planning the outcome of the pilot will be built into the overall waste collection service which is likely to result in significantly increased revenue costs.

4. **Disability Discrimination Act compliance – value to be confirmed**

The Council has a statutory requirement to ensure its buildings comply with the relevant parts of the DDA by 2004 and this has been reported earlier to Members.

Detailed estimates and reviews of service delivery are under way and will be presented in the next cycle.

At the present time the funding for the element of planned maintenance within the Municipal Building Maintenance budget (£191,000) has not been allocated and could be used to fund some DDA work. However, should that be used then there would be a subsequent impact on the planned maintenance programme.

5. **Asset Management Plan – to be defined**

A schedule of funding priorities is in the process of being developed as set out in the AMP. These will be discussed through the DAG and corporately before being presented to the Executive.

**M Battersby**



## Web site development

This report outlines a number of proposals which have been identified to develop the City Council's web site to ensure that it is being used as a cost effective tool which contributes to the corporate aims and objectives.

There are increasing expectations and demands of local authority web sites and Carlisle City Council launched its web site in February 2001 yet there is currently no identified funds for further development.

The proposed developments identified so far include:

Web designer role

Web redesign

Financial transactions

Information and forms

Content Management

Information and Forms

Consultation

Citizens Engagement

Intranet

On line shopping

While it is recognised that it is not realistic to expect all of these developments to receive funding for 2002/3, there are key ones which are essential to the future role of the web site.

For example the funding of a full time web designer post will lead to a number of other developments such as the redesign of the web site and development of an Intranet to be implemented at no further cost to the authority. Members may want to consider what are the priorities for the web site development and what they would like to be delivered in the next financial year.

## **New Money Requirements**

### **Carlisle City Council Web Site Background**

There are many external and internal relations challenges for the development of the city's web site and electronic communications as a whole. National targets to have all services on line by 2005, the need for more customer focused services as well as more efficient and effective delivery of services, increased need for consultation and more transparent government with increased public information and participation all place increasing demands on developing electronic communications.

A successful web-site serves the Council and links to the Council's key objectives in a number of areas. It promotes Carlisle to a potential massive audience, it is a method of improving performance, and is a vehicle for supporting the delivery of Council policies in the area of crime and disorder, sustainable transport and environment policies.

In addition to this it is one of the most cost effective methods of communication and compares very favourably with traditional methods of publication – it spends the community's money wisely.

Carlisle City Council currently has a web site set up and maintained by the Communications Unit. An e-government group led by the Director of Community and Leisure is coordinating an e government strategy to fulfil national performance targets. The Head of IT has submitted the council's IEG statement.

Carlisle's web site was launched in February 2001, after trials with the Citizens Panel and internal staff, and is largely an information based site with little interactivity. The site was commended by Carlisle Access Group for its accessibility for people with visual impairments.

Departments and units supply information for the web site and it is maintained and updated by the Communications Unit staff through nine hours allocated time of one full time design post.

## Proposed future developments

### Web Designer Role

All of the following initiatives are contingent upon a full time web development officer being appointed. A web development officer is responsible not only for the day to day running of a site but for the implementation, commissioning and tailoring of any new development. Without this key role being fulfilled the current site cannot move forward and will soon appear dated to the outside world.

Currently nine hours of one FTE post within the Unit is dedicated to web site work, with the other part of the post being taken up with graphic design. The limited time available means that only basic updating and maintenance can be achieved with little scope for major development or implementation of new initiatives.

New money is required to create one full time post which would be able to fulfil the requirements of implementing new developments as well as maintaining and updating the site. Without the creation of a full time web development post, it is unlikely that any of the recommendations in this report will be fulfilled.

It is recommended that one full time needs to be funded at Scale Five .

**Total Cost    £ 18,430    Recurring**

### Web Redesign

It is recognised that the current site needs to be redesigned both in terms of its user friendliness and to enable the development of interactive services to be achieved. This report aims to map how the site should be developed, noting any resource implications, and attempts to prioritise the developments.

The web site design currently follows a departmental design which is suited to the council's structure rather than ease of use for visitors. This can make it difficult for a visitor to find what they are looking for if they do not know which department has responsibility for that service.

It is recognised that the web site needs to become more user focused and should be organised to enable the user to find the information they want more quickly and effectively. The web site could be redesigned to have entry points for residents, visitors, businesses, etc or be organised in a 'life event' theme.

Several sections have requested their own sites which to date have been set up linked to the corporate site – these include Sports & Recreation, Town Twinning, Historic Carlisle (Tourism), Carlisle Conference Group. Tullie House and the Sands Centre are undertaking setting up their own separate web sites using external companies. This fragmentation of corporate electronic identity needs to be addressed through a new corporate web site, which satisfies department needs and retains a corporate identity..

A policy regarding corporate style of information on the web also needs to be developed and implemented, and systems of updating and altering information also needs to be developed and implemented.

The web site does not need to be limited to council information but should also be able to sign post people to information or services provided by other organisations in Carlisle, eg education.

The current allocation of time to the web site design does not realistically allow for a web site redesign.

The options to address this are:-

- a) buying in external support or additional in house support for the web site can be explored. Minimum cost for a fully transactional web site to achieve the objective laid out in this development plan would be £30,000 in addition to the other outlined costs. However, the site would last a maximum of two years before it would need another major design overhaul, leading to further costs. **Cost £30,000**
- b) If the site is developed in-house along the lines outlined above with the creation of a full time web designer there will be no additional cost to the Authority.

**Cost £0**

To date the site averages 900 visits per week. It is the intention that any re-designed web site would double these hits in each of the first two years.

## Financial transactions

The Government's target is for all authorities to have 100% electronic delivery of eligible services. Customer's demands for a wide range of payment methods and accessibility to these also needs to be catered for.

Electronic payment methods could be effective for:

Council tax

Rent

Parking fines

Ticket purchase (eg Sands)

Planning applications

Council Debtors

The web site would need to be enabled to deal with financial transactions as well as systems implemented internally to process payments in an effective and efficient new way.

Implications of developing the web site to be used in this way include the need to purchase an appropriate system, staff training and security issues, and an overall financial implication of a one-off payment which should lead in the long term to savings as well as improved customer satisfaction.

The incentive to implement this initiative will be an improved collection rate and reduced collection costs.

**Total Cost    £ 20,000**

## Information and forms

A brief survey of customer forms across the authority has highlighted that there are at least 30 but possibly many more in use. Putting forms on the web site to be filled in and returned electronically or for customers to print out and return via the postal system.

The myriad of forms which could be serviced on line could include:

Electoral registration

Job applications

Planning

Benefits

Licenses

Housing

Council tax

Grants

To provide forms on line a system can be purchased and implemented to allow an easier more accessible way for customers to receive and complete forms, and provide an efficient method of on line data collection for the council.

**Cost £8,750  
plus £1,400 recurring**

## **Content Management**

E-mail has proved to be an invaluable asset for improving communication both internally and externally. The immediacy of this medium has led to significant improvements in levels of service. These improvements can be built upon by ensuring that information is not only communicated electronically but is stored and retrieved electronically also. By adopting content management standards and software this process becomes achievable.

To provide wide access to public information, all printed material should be available on the web site, but it should be recognised that the format of information provided on the web may have to be different to the printed material and rewriting or redesigning material may be necessary to ensure the information is easy to read and accessible when transferred to the web.

Adopting such a system will result in savings in time for the web developer who will not be required to physically manage web content. The ability to "publish to the web" will eliminate this bottleneck and result in more timely and accurate electronic publication.

**Total Cost    £ 18,000**

## **Consultation**

Modernising local government involves more engagement and consultation with the local community. Carlisle already has an effective Citizens Panel of 1000 representatives of local residents, but consultation by electronic means offers the potential for much wider consultation and in the long term would provide benefits by reducing the amount of data input from officers. Electronic consultation has already been successfully trialed internally.

To enable as many people as possible to be able to access this means of consultation, access for the community needs to be explored. This wider type of consultation could offer fast effective feedback on many local issues and would be an example of Carlisle City Council engaging with and listening to its residents.

It is feasible that consultation could be developed to become more targeted towards particular sections of the community. It anticipated that if a full time web designer post is funded, there will be no cost to the authority for this process to be developed.

Total cost £0

## **Engaging citizens**

The web site currently has the forward plan published on it, and will also have the executive's key decisions taken. However this could be developed to not just provide the information but offer an interactive system for residents to comment on any issue, give feedback on decisions or request further information. The web site should promote citizens involvement by this means.

To truly open up public meetings to as wide an audience as possible, these could be viewed on the web via a web cam. A web cam could be used to also transmit large events such as the fireshow onto the web.

Election results could be broadcast on the web site as they are known given another up to the minute means of accessing this type of news.

A detailed technical proposal has yet to be drawn up for this proposal but for budgetary purposes a cost of £15,000 should be allowed for both internal and external events to be broadcast. There will be minor setting up costs for each unique event but these would be included in the event costs.

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| <b>Equipment for broadcasting events inside the Civic Centre</b> | <b>£ 5,000</b> |
| <b>Broadcasting outdoor events</b>                               | <b>£10,000</b> |

## **Intranet**

Internal communications is currently being assessed and developed, initially through a staff survey which will show how internal communications are currently used and any preferred means.

Electronically, internal communications are served through public folders on the outlook system, and a new initiative , The Essential Guide, which provides largely management information and corporate support details.

It is envisaged that the web site could provide an entry point for staff only which would take them into the intranet site and be a useful and informative user friendly site for staff.

The current allocation of time to the web site design does not realistically allow for an intranet development. The options to address this are:-

- a) buying in external support or additional in house support for the web site can be explored. Minimum cost for a fully functional website to achieve the objective laid out in this development plan would be £15,000 in addition to the other outlined costs.

**Cost £15,000**

- b) If the intranet is developed in-house along the lines outlined above with the funding of a web designer there will be no additional cost to the Authority.

**Cost £0**

### **On line shopping**

The web site can also be an opportunity to promote saleable items, for example from the TIC shop or shop at Tullie House as well as any civic gifts, charitable Christmas cards etc, As well as offering the opportunity to promote items to customers, financial transactions could be possible as well. There is the possibility that this initiative would be cost generative – but only to the benefit of existing commercial operations. There are packages which would allow an on-line Carlisle City Council "shop" to be set-up for the sale of Civic branded goods.

**Cost £5,000**

### **Summary**

There is little in the way of savings that could be yielded up to fund these new money bids. The web site is a recent development, only launched in February 2001 and has not been funded beyond the initial setting up of the site. The web site however is expected to fulfil an increasingly important role in the ways outlined above and the move towards electronic communication means and delivery of services on line. There is therefore a strong case to be made for injecting new money into the service.

Having considered the full cost implication for delivering future web developments and the possibility of alternate funding opportunities for some of these developments we consider that the following two items are the most pressing:-

- 1) **The employment of a web designer**
- 2) **Redesign of the web site**



However, the development proposals outlined here should also be given some consideration and Members might want to include some of the options outlined above as a priority for 2002/3.

Sharon McKee  
Head of Communications

f910102

**INTERNAL MEMORANDUM**

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**From:** City Solicitor and Secretary

**Please ask for:**

Ian Dixon

**Extension:**

7033

**To:** City Treasurer

ianD@carlisle-city.gov.uk

**Your ref:**

**Fao:** Angela Brown

**Our ref:**

IJD/MH

4 October 2001

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**RE: POTENTIAL BUDGET BIDS**

I refer to your memo of 26 September requesting initial indication of any bids for new expenditure for 2002/03.

As you will be aware the Council introduced its new Constitution as from 11 September 2001 which has brought about fundamental changes to the Council's decision making processes. Running at the same time is the Council's approach to E Government and the requirements for Councils to conduct as much of their business by electronic delivery as possible.

The Committee Section has adopted a number of IT solutions to Committee processing over recent years but these have been ad hoc solutions utilising wherever possible the different facets of Microsoft Office such as Outlook for Committee Calendars, Word for Committee Minutes, Access for the numerous databases with a separate Minute Index and Report Retrieval System. Whilst Officers, particularly in the Committee Section, who are used to working with the different systems are able to use the various systems and are aware of the links between them, this is not the case for all Officers and Members. There is a need particularly, for Members who are not part of the Executive, to be aware of forthcoming items, agendas, supporting reports and decisions and this has raised the possibility of introducing a dedicated Committee Management Information System.



The operation of the new Constitution is likely to be reviewed early in 2002 and it is possible that matters relating to Corporate Working and Members information, ie the links between reports and minutes, forward plans and decision notices could well arise. Should those items be identified and the solution is found to be a Committee Management Information System then there would be a need for a budget to be provided.

A Committee Management System would enable the Cabinet/Committee Structure and Committee Cycle to be managed effectively;

would enable elected Members, Officers and citizens to search for and find Minutes, Reports, Agendas together with information from previous meetings;

could enable users to access the system from any browser enabled device within security parameters;

could maintain current and previous years Council Structures with the Council Calendar and meeting venues;

be able to hold standard information about Members' names, addresses, contact numbers, Party Wards, their roles within the Authority with attendance recording and reporting;

could store details of meetings which could be searched and displayed including Agendas, Minutes, Reports and Resolutions. Documents would be able to be attached to meetings either as Reports, Minutes or Agendas;

the text can be indexed and a comprehensive search facility provided.

Whilst detailed estimates for such a system have not yet been obtained it is likely that the installation of a system with training and the first year support would be in the region of £20,000 - £25,000 with an ongoing annual supplement to update/maintain the product of £3,500.

As this is being flagged up as a possible requirement which could arise as a result of a Review of the Constitution no work has been carried out on identifying equivalent budget savings at the present time.

City Solicitor and Secretary

