



# CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

## *Committee Report*

**Public**

**Date of Meeting:** 6th December 2001

**Title:** WEB SITE DEVELOPMENT

**Report of:** Town Clerk & Chief Executive

**Report reference:** 249/01

**Summary:** Report as requested by the Chairman for details of proposals to develop the web site.

**Recommendations:** to note the report and the request for a detailed report on potential options from the Executive.

**Contact Officer:** Sharon McKee x 7110

**Ext:** 7110

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

## **1. Background**

The City Council web site was launched in February 2001.

It is currently an information based site with little interactivity. No additional resources have been identified or committed for the development of the web site and as such only a limited part of one full time design post can be dedicated to maintenance and updating of the web site.

Departments and services provide the information necessary for the updating of their part of the web site.

carlisle.gov.uk currently receives an average of over 5,000 hits per day.

## **2. The challenges which have to be considered in looking at the future of the website include:**

2.1 The URL carlisle.gov.uk is the corporate site, but there are several others which are council service sites, eg historic-carlisle.org.uk (tourism), info4leisure.org.uk (Leisuretime) and Tullie House has commissioned its own web site which is currently under development. While it is understandable that services may want to develop their own sites, the need for these to be identifiable as city council services and be part of the corporate site should be paramount.

2.2 The current design of the site is based on the structure of the council which means that unless a visitor is familiar with the council structure and departments it can be very difficult to find information easily and quickly. A redesign of the whole site is needed to improve its accessibility for users, to make it more user friendly and also to satisfy departmental needs and prevent the fragmentation of the web site as described above.

2.3 Any redesign of the web site needs to take into consideration the potential for interactivity and delivery of services on line. If the council is to develop interactive services, the web site is the obvious front end for this development, whether this is completing forms, undertaking consultation, financial transactions, etc.

2.4 It is anticipated that an internal version of the internet, an intranet, could be developed to help improve internal communications with staff and members. This should also be taken into consideration when anticipating any resources for the future development of electronic communications.

2.5 The current level of resourcing for the web site does not allow for the development detailed above.

### **3. Options for the future development**

A report by the Town Clerk & Chief Executive and City Treasurer on e government was considered by the Executive on 26 November. This report included in paragraph 11 the following recommendations for the web site development:

- *That a further report be prepared outlining a website policy and that detailed procurement options further be pursued within the action plan for the Communications Best Value Review;*

And

- *Following the above report the Executive determines the funding bid for website development.*

These recommendations were approved and a detailed report will be submitted to the Executive on 17<sup>th</sup> December.