

Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Agenda Item:

A.2

Meeting Date: 6th January 2014
 Portfolio: Cross Cutting
 Key Decision: No
 Within Policy and Budget Framework
 Public / Private Public

Title: OVERVIEW REPORT AND WORK PROGRAMME
 Report of: Overview and Scrutiny Officer
 Report Number: OS 01/14

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.

Recommendations:

Members are asked to:

- Decide whether the items on the Notice of Key Executive Decisions should be included in the Panel’s Work Programme for consideration.
- Note and/or amend the Panel’s work programme

Tracking

Executive:	-
Overview and Scrutiny:	6th January 2014
Council:	-

1. Notice of Key Executive Decisions

The most recent Notice of Key Executive Decisions was published on 16th December 2013. The following issues fall into the remit of this Panel and full details are attached at **Appendix 1**:

KD.030/13 Budget Process 2014/15 – on the agenda for this meeting of the Panel.

2. References from the Executive

The following reference from the Executive meeting on 9th December is attached at **Appendix 2**.

EX.150/13 – Budget 2014/15 – Feedback from the Overview and Scrutiny Panels on the draft Budget reports

3. Scrutiny Chairs Group

A meeting of the Scrutiny Chairs Group was held on 12th December 2013. Notes of the meeting are attached at **Appendix 3**.

4. Work Programme

The Panel's current work programme is attached at **Appendix 4** for comment/amendment.

Contact Officer: Nicola Edwards

Ext: 7122

**Appendices
attached to report:**

- 1. Notice of Key Decisions**
- 2. Reference from the Executive**
- 3. Notes of Scrutiny Chairs Group meeting 12/12/13**
- 4. Resources O&S Work Programme 2013/14**

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**

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS/RISKS: None

Items relevant to the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel:

Notice of Key Decisions to be taken by the Executive

The following key decision is to be made on behalf of Carlisle City Council:

Key Decision Reference:	KD.030/13
Decision Title:	Budget Process 2014/15
Decision to be taken:	<p>To consider strategic financial issues arising from the budget setting process:</p> <p>(a) Budget Update – Revenue Estimates (18th November 2013)</p> <p>(b) Individual Charges Reviews (Local Environment, Governance , Economic Development, Community Engagement) (18th November 2013)</p> <p>(c) New Revenue Spending Proposals (18th November 2013)</p> <p>(d) New Savings Proposals (18th November 2013)</p> <p>(e) New Capital Spending Proposals and Provisional Capital Programme (18th November 2013)</p> <p>(f) Repair and Maintenance (18th November 2013)</p> <p>(g) Treasury Management and Prudential Borrowing Implications (18th November 2013)</p> <p>(h) Consideration of Overview and Scrutiny Consultation feedback (9th December 2013)</p> <p>(i) Draft Revenue Support Grant Settlement (if available) (16th December 2013)</p> <p>(j) Summary Overall Revenue and Capital Position (16th December 2013)</p> <p>(k) Draft Treasury Management and Investment Strategy including MRP Strategy (16th December 2013)</p> <p>(l) Executive Draft Budget Proposals for consultation (16th December 2013)</p> <p>(m) Final Revenue Support Grant and Final Revenue Budget Summary (15th January 2014)</p> <p>(n) Provisional Capital Programme (15th January 2014)</p> <p>(o) Treasury Management and Investment Strategy including MRP Strategy (15th January 2014)</p> <p>(p) Consideration of Final Budget Consultation (15th January 2014)</p> <p>(q) Pension Fund Revaluation (15th January 2014)</p> <p>(r) Executive's Final Budget Proposals (15th January 2014)</p>
Date Decision to be considered:	18 November 2013 (EX.128/13, EX.129/13, EX.130/13, EX.133/13, EX.134/13, EX.135/13, EX.136/13, EX.137/13, EX.138/13) 9 December 2013 (EX.150/13), 16 December 2013 and 15 January 2014 consultation period to include Overview and Scrutiny as appropriate
Date Decision to be taken:	18 November 2013, 9 December 2013, 16 December and 15 January 2014

Items relevant to the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel:

Is the Decision Public or Private?:	The decision will be taken in Public
Documents submitted for consideration in relation to the Decision:	<p>Minutes from the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel 19 November 2013, Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel 21 November 2013 and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel 28 November 2013 on 9 December 2013</p> <p>Report RD.51/13 - 2013/14 Revised Revenue Base Estimates and Updated Medium Term Financial Plan Projections: 2014/15 to 2018/19 on 18 November 2013</p> <p>Report LE.30/13 - Review of Charges 2014/15 - Local Environment on 18 November 2013</p> <p>Report CD.53/13 - Review of Charges 2014/15 - Community Engagement on 18 November 2013</p> <p>Report ED.35/13 - Review of Charges 2014/15 - Economic Development on 18 November 2013</p> <p>Report GD.50/13 - Review of Charges 2014/15 - Governance Directorate - Licensing on 18 November 2013</p> <p>Report RD.53/13 - Summary of New Revenue Spending Pressures on 18 November 2013</p> <p>Report RD.54/13 - Summary of New Saving Proposals and Additional Income on 18 November 2013</p> <p>Report RD.56/13 - Revised Capital Programme 2013/14 and Provisional Capital Programme 2014/15 to 2018/19 on 18 November 2013</p> <p>Report RD.58/13 - Corporate Assets - 3 Year Repair and Maintenance Programme on 18 November 2013</p> <p>Report RD.55/13 - Treasury Management July - September 2013 and Forecasts for 2014/15 to 2018/19 on 18 November 2013</p>
Contact Officer for this Decision:	Director of Resources, Carlisle City Council, Civic Centre, Carlisle, CA3 8QG
Relevant Portfolio Area:	Finance, Governance and Resources (Councillor Dr Tickner)
Relevant or Lead Overview and Scrutiny Panel:	Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel, Environment & Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel and Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

All public reports can be viewed in the Customer Contact centre of the Civic Centre, Carlisle, the Public Library and on the Council's website www.carlisle.gov.uk.

Other documents relevant to the matter may be submitted to the decision maker. These, if available, may be obtained by contacting the named contact officer.

**EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE
EXECUTIVE
HELD ON 9 DECEMBER 2013**

**EX.150/13 BUDGET 2014/15 – FEEDBACK FROM THE OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY PANELS ON THE DRAFT BUDGET REPORTS**
(Key Decision – KD.030/13)

Portfolio Finance, Governance and Resources

Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel Community; Environment and
Economy; and Resources

Subject Matter

The Minutes of the meetings of the following Overview and Scrutiny Panels relating to the draft Budget reports considered by the Executive on 18 November 2013 were submitted:

- (a) Community – 19 November 2013 (COSP.76/13)
- (b) Environment and Economy – 21 November 2013 (EEOSP.79/13)
- (c) Resources – 28 November 2013 (ROSP.83/13)

Copies of the above Minute Excerpts had been circulated prior to the special meeting.

The Leader reported that invitations had been extended to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel Chairmen to attend the special meeting.

It was noted that the Chairman of the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel had submitted apologies, and that the Chairman of the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel was not in attendance.

The Chairman of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel was present. She indicated that the observations of the Panel were as detailed within Minute Excerpt COSP.76/13, to which there was little she could add.

The Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder wished to place on record thanks to all Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels for their work in scrutinising the draft Budget Reports. He had attended the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting, when it was clear that Members had gone through the various options under consideration with a fine tooth comb.

The Portfolio Holder confirmed that Executive Members had received the Minutes of the Panel meetings. The Minutes and any additional comments would be taken into account as part of the Executive's deliberations on the budget.

The Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder then responded to Overview and Scrutiny's observations on the Budget Process as follows:

Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 19 November 2013

Whilst the Panel had queried several areas of the budget, they were satisfied with the responses provided. Minor queries had been raised on the Charges Reports, responses being:

Local Environment Charges Report

- Sports Pitches Charges – the Portfolio Holder had recommended option 2 in the charging proposals for 2014/15 set out in the original report
- City Centre Events – the Portfolio Holder had recommended option 2 in the charging proposals for 2014/15 set out in the original report, which only increased the charges above inflation in respect of large commercial promotions

Community Engagement Charges Report

Although the individual rent charges for the Hostels were increased by the CCP target of 3.8%, the overall budgeted income did not increase due to the 2013/14 income being below target (£30,000) as a result of reduced occupancy rates. Therefore the increased rent would mitigate any income shortfall in 2014/15.

Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 21 November 2013

Whilst the Panel had queried several areas of the budget, they were satisfied with the responses provided. Minor queries were raised on the Charges Reports, responses being:

Local Environment Charges Report

- City Centre Events – the Portfolio Holder had recommended option 2 in the charging proposals for 2014/15 set out in the original report, which only increased the charges above inflation in respect of large commercial promotions.

Economic Development Charges Report

- Assembly Room hire charge (per session) rounded to £66 from £66.43

Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 28 November 2013

Whilst the Panel had queried in detail several areas of the budget, they were satisfied with the responses provided.

The Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder then expressed grateful thanks to the Director of Resources' Team for the information and advice provided to Overview and Scrutiny and himself, which had enabled good questioning of the various issues to take place. The Portfolio Holder further thanked the Director for his responses to those questions.

The Chairman of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel made reference to the amended Review of Charges 2014/15 Reports, copies of which had been circulated to all Members on 6 December 2013. Panel Members were very glad to see that some of the charges had been retained at this year's rates. She particularly made reference to City Centre Events / children's rides. As everyone was aware, businesses were struggling and those opportunities would add to their income.

The Chairman further referred to the hire of football pitches by junior clubs, commenting that the Panel was particularly concerned at the impact increased charges would have on families with more than one member. She further highlighted the healthy city implications thereof. Although option 2 was not the worst case scenario, Members were concerned to ensure that charges were affordable for the junior clubs.

In conclusion, the Leader seconded the comments expressed by the Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder. He further echoed thanks to Overview and Scrutiny Members and to the Director of Resources and his Team.

Summary of options rejected None

DECISION

That the Overview and Scrutiny Panels be thanked for their consideration of the draft Budget reports; and their comments, as detailed within the Minutes submitted, would be taken into account as part of the Executive's deliberations on the 2014/15 Budget.

Reasons for Decision

The views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels would be taken into account as part of the 2014/15 Budget process

SCRUTINY CHAIRS GROUP MEETING**12 December 2013 at 2.30pm**

Attended: Councillor Whalen, Lead Member and Vice Chairman of the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Councillor Mrs Luckley, Chairman of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Councillor Mrs Prest, Vice Chairman of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Councillor Mrs Bowman, Chairman of the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Councillor Watson, Chairman of the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Darren Crossley, Deputy Chief Executive
Sarah Irving, Press Officer
Nicola Edwards, Scrutiny Officer
Rachel Rooney, Lead Committee Clerk

10/13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Dr Gooding, Town Clerk and Chief Executive.

11/13 RAISING AWARENESS OF SCRUTINY

The Lead Member welcomed the Press Officer to the meeting and asked her to outline ways in which the Council currently interacted with the public and how they could be used to engage members of the public in scrutiny.

The Press Officer outlined her role in the authority and explained that there was a variety of options available for Members to increase awareness of the scrutiny function.

Press

It was suggested that an informal briefing meeting be held for members of the press to inform them of specific agenda items which Scrutiny would be considering at future meetings. This would encourage the press to attend the meetings and, hopefully, report on the items of interest. This would be of most use when subject reviews were being undertaken by the Panels.

Social Media

The Council had developed a Digital Champions Group, made up of a representative of each Directorate, which was developing social media and the Council's website. Both

the Facebook site and the Twitter feed had relatively short text boxes but could be used as links to the Scrutiny web pages or specific documents. The City Council Facebook page had 5,157 likes and the Twitter account had 2,567 followers.

The Scrutiny Officer felt that this would be easiest way to capture information from people which could then be fed into meetings, she added that it would also be appropriate for the Chairman and Vice Chairman to be proactive and put information on social media. She informed the Group that a number of authorities had a dedicated scrutiny Twitter account and asked what the protocol would be for this authority. The Press Officer explained that the Policy and Communications Manager was the relevant contact officer for social media but she understood that all information was to be fed through the existing pages.

Carlisle Focus

The Carlisle Focus residents' magazine was published twice a year in November and June. The magazine was sent to all residential properties and businesses in Carlisle and was an excellent way of signposting information for members of the public. She suggested a short article on Scrutiny be included in the June issue which gave members of the public information on scrutiny and signposted them to further information on the City Council website. It was agreed that the Annual Scrutiny Report was a timely document to be promoted in the June Carlisle Focus magazine.

Citizens' Panel

A new Citizens' Panel was being established and it was suggested that this would be an appropriate group to question regarding their knowledge of scrutiny. The feedback could then be used as a benchmark for future monitoring.

Website

The Scrutiny pages on the Council's website would be maximised by asking IT to create a URL address for them so they can be accessed much quicker with a shorter easy to use web address.

Customer Contact Centre

The Customer Contact Centre had large screens which could be used for the advertisement of meetings or specific agenda items and they also linked in to the self serve kiosks.

AGREED – That the Scrutiny Officer and the Chairs Group follow up on the various suggestions outlined above and be more pro-active in promoting the work of scrutiny.

12/13 CIVIC CALENDAR

The Lead Committee Clerk had previously circulated the 2014/15 draft Civic Calendar. She highlighted the change in date to the 2014 elections and the Annual Council meeting and the effect on the meetings in the current year.

The Group had asked if it was possible to give consideration to the County Council schedule of meetings when preparing the City Council calendar to avoid any clashes. The Lead Committee Clerk was awaiting a copy of the County Council 2014/15 calendar and information on the process used to produce the calendar. She explained that consideration had to be given primarily to the City Council's constitution when setting the calendar but efforts would be made to avoid clashing with the County Council meeting and the Local Area Committee where possible.

A Member asked if it would be possible to change the way the substitutes were appointed to Committees and move to unnamed substitutes in a similar manner to the County Council. The Lead Committee Clerk agreed to investigate this further.

AGREED – That the schedule of dates and times of meetings for the municipal year 2014/15, including additional meetings required as a result of the proposed change in date for the local elections from 1 May 2014 to 22 May 2014 be recommended to Council for approval.

That further information regarding substitute membership of Committees be sought by the Lead Committee Clerk and circulated to the Group.

13/13 CHAIRS TRAINING

Councillor Mrs Bowman provided feedback from the Chairs training course she had attended which had been facilitated by North West Employers. She urged the Group to attend the training as it would be an excellent refresher and networking opportunity.

The Scrutiny Officer felt that the Chairman and Vice Chairman could make more use of the pre meetings to work out what the Panel wanted to achieve in the meetings and to encourage the Panel to work as a team. Although Task and Finish Groups had proved to be successful, the three Panels played an important role and more robust scrutiny could be achieved if Members of the Panels talked more and encouraged everyone to be involved. This would lead to a more effective and focused meeting.

A Member questioned the added value of scrutiny and the impact made to the Council's policy and direction. The Group agreed that Scrutiny had produced some excellent work which led to improvements in the services provided and felt that it was up to the Chairman to ensure the Panels were adding value.

AGREED – That Councillor Mrs Bowman's update be welcomed.

14/13 STRUCTURE OF SCRUTINY

The Lead Member asked the Group to give consideration to the structure of Scrutiny including the number of Panels, any savings which could be made and support for

Scrutiny. He asked that Members go back to their Groups to discuss the issues and report back to the next meeting of the Chairs Group.

AGREED – That the Scrutiny Chairs Group ask their relevant Groups for feedback on the future structure of Scrutiny.

That the Scrutiny Officer gather further information on available models for Scrutiny and report back to the next meeting of the Scrutiny Chairs Group.

15/13 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman and Vice Chairman were asked to provide resolutions for agenda items to assist the Committee Section in the production of minutes and to assist the Panel in making clear recommendations.

16/13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

AGREED – That the next meeting of the Scrutiny Chairs Group will take place on 6 February 2014 at 10.00am.

(The meeting ended at 3.35pm)

RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2013/14

Date last revised: 16 December 2013

Issue	Type of Scrutiny						Comments/Current Status	Meeting Dates							
	Performance Management	Notice of Key Decision / Referred from Executive	Policy Review or Development	Scrutiny of Partnership/ External Agency	Budget	Monitoring		6 Jun 13	18 Jul 13	29 Aug 13	10 Oct 13	28 Nov 13	6 Jan 14	20 Feb 14	3 Apr 14
Current Meeting – 6th January 2013															
Budget					✓		Budget setting 2014/15–2018/19					✓	✓		
Task & Finish Groups															
Saving Paper Task Group			✓				Completed			✓					
Future Meetings															
Performance Monitoring						✓	Quarterly monitoring of performance within remit of Panel	✓		✓		✓		✓	
Organisational Development Plan	✓					✓	To consider review of Plan July – monitor performance in Nov & Feb		✓			✓		✓	
Budget Monitoring 13–14					✓	✓	Monitoring of budget			✓		✓		✓	
Corporate Programme						✓	Quarterly monitoring of	✓		✓		✓		✓	

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Board							significant projects									
Corporate Risk Register						✓	Bi-annual Monitoring				✓				✓	
Sickness Absence	✓						To consider reports relating to the authority's sickness absence levels to invite OH		✓		✓			✓		
Transformation Board						✓	To receive six monthly updates (first on agenda)				✓				✓	
Employee Opinion Survey							To inform Members of feedback and action plan								?	
Significant Partnerships				✓			Bi-Annual scrutiny			✓					✓ June 14 Jan 15	
Scrutiny Annual Report							Draft report for comment before Chairs Group								✓	
COMPLETED ITEMS																

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Asset Management		✓				✓	Monitor disposal and investment programme Review of Plan					✓				
Member Training Report 2012-13						✓	Annual training report				✓					
Localisation of Business Rates							To consider a report detailing the impact of the policy				✓					
Medium Term Financial Plan		✓			✓					✓						
Asset Management Plan		✓			✓		2013-18 Plan			✓						
Carlisle Leisure Ltd				✓			Continued scrutiny of contract monitoring - Audit Report and update	✓								

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Treasury Management Counterparties		✓					Scrutinise report recommending amendments to Treasury Management	✓								
2012/13 Provisional Outturn Reports					✓		Outturn reports and requests to Council	✓								

For Information	