

RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

THURSDAY 15 OCTOBER 2009 AT 10.00 AM

PRESENT: Councillor Allison (Chairman), Councillors Mrs Clarke (for Councillor Layden), Mrs Geddes, Glover (for Councillor Cape), Hendry, and Mrs Styth

ALSO

PRESENT: Councillor J Mallinson – Finance Portfolio Holder
Councillor B Earp – Performance and Development Portfolio Holder
Councillor M Bowman – Economy Portfolio Holder

ROSP.35/09 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Boaden, Cape, Layden and Knapton

ROSP.36/09 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Allison declared a personal interest in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct in respect of agenda item A.5 – Land at Morton. He stated that his interest was in respect of the fact that he had made a presentation to the Local Planning Enquiry regarding a superstore at Morton.

ROSP.37/09 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meetings held on 6 July 2009, 16 July 2009 and 6 August 2009 be approved and signed and that the minutes of the meeting held on 25 August 2009 be noted.

ROSP.38/09 CALL-IN OF DECISIONS

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

ROSP.39/09 OVERVIEW REPORT AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Acting Scrutiny Manager (Mrs Edwards) presented report OS.21/09 providing an overview of matters related to the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel's work. Also included was the latest version of the work programme and details of Forward Plan items relevant to this Panel.

Mrs Edwards reported that:

- The Forward Plan of Executive key decisions, covering the period 1 October 2009 to 31 January 2010 had been published on 17 September 2009. Issues which fell within the remit of this Panel were Development Proposals for Caldew Riverside and the Budget Process 2010/11. Both of the items would be on future agendas for the Panel.

The Policy and Performance Manager (Mr O'Keeffe) thanked the Panel for the opportunity to do a presentation at a previous meeting and to Councillors for volunteering to sit on the Task and Finish Group. However, SMT had decided that they would be working with the Executive on the Policy Framework and a review would be brought to Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel. The Deputy Chief Executive (Dr Gooding) explained that it was the role of the Executive to propose the Policy Framework then pass it to Panels for scrutiny. There was a concern that the Policy Framework would go to Scrutiny before Executive and subsequently Council. In response to a request for clarification from a Member Dr Gooding advised that policies were proposed by Executive and it was not the intention of SMT to remove scrutiny from the process. A Member explained that the role of Overview and Scrutiny was to provide input into the development of the policy but the policy was set by the Executive initially.

A Member believed that if Overview and Scrutiny Panels were not involved early enough decisions would have been made by Executive before panels had been given the chance to scrutinise.

It was agreed that the Panel accepted Dr Gooding's explanation of the Policy Framework and that there would be the opportunity for Scrutiny Panels' input.

- Members were asked to choose a topic for Task and Finish Group work

Mrs Edwards reminded members that at the last meeting there was agreement that the Panel would choose a further topic for a Task and Finish Group and had provided a list of suggestions in Appendix 2 of the report.

In view of the above, the Panel identified two topics:

1. the use of consultants
2. sickness absence

as the subject of Task and Finish groups. The Panel was of the opinion that it would be inappropriate to look at sickness absence at the present time and therefore it was agreed that the first Task and Finish Group should investigate the use of consultants. That group would start immediately with the work on sickness absence beginning early in the New Year.

Councillors Hendry, Layden and Allison agreed to sit on the Task and Finish Group in respect of use of consultants.

- Members from Scrutiny at Allerdale Borough Council had made an approach to the City Council to request that consideration be given to jointly scrutinising the Shared ICT Service.

While there was agreement that there should be joint scrutiny of shared ICT services, the Panel was of the view that this should be deferred. Mrs Edwards advised that shared ICT services was to be an agenda item at the next meeting in December and for the Scrutiny Chairs Group meeting on 28 October. A Member requested that officers look at how joint scrutiny could be most effective.

A Member asked whether the transformation programme would be the subject of scrutiny in respect of the effect on staff, how it was settling in and the use of consultants. Dr Gooding suggested that the Chief Executive be invited to a future meeting to clarify those issues.

A Member remarked that the Pay and Workforce Strategy had been discussed at the meeting on 9 June but there had been no update since.

Mrs Edwards advised that the Panel had looked at the strategy before it went to Employment Panel as part of the consultation process. The Head of Personnel had been asked to do a full review of the Strategy and Mrs Edwards asked whether Members would wish to see the review when complete as it would have to be added to the work programme. It was agreed that the report would be included for information only.

Dr Gooding advised that Executive and the Employment Panel had to decide whether the PWS would proceed with the imposition of the pay model. The report being undertaken by Head of Personnel would be a review of lessons learned and what had resulted from the project. The most significant impact would be on staff and Dr Gooding believed it was important that the Panel scrutinise the report. Dr Gooding further advised that there were time pressures on the piece of work as personnel involved in the review would be leaving the organisation as a result of the Transformation Programme. It was essential that the review was completed in the next 6-8 weeks.

A Member stated that there had been no plans available for the Caldew Riverside project and asked when the matter would be brought to Panel for Scrutiny. The Head of Economy, Property and Tourism (Mr Beaty) advised that the project was dependent upon outside parties and that there was a delay in getting the draft Heads of Terms. They were expected towards the end of the year.

It was agreed that, as the agenda for the December meeting was quite large, it might be appropriate to have a separate meeting specifically to discuss budget issues.

- A meeting of the Scrutiny Chairs group had been scheduled to take place on 28 October 2009 and Members were asked to let the Chairman or the Vice Chairman have any issues for discussion

- The Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee had organised a workshop on the Local Strategic Partnership, the Local Area Agreements and the Comprehensive Area Assessment to take place on 29 October 2009. The Workshop was open to all Scrutiny Members.

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 the Panel wished to scrutinise the following Forward Plan items

Development Proposals for Caldew Riverside
Budget Process 2010/11

3) That a Task and Finish Group made up of Councillors Hendry, Layden and Allison be set up to review the use of consultants

4) That the Panel agreed to defer jointly scrutinising the Shared ICT Service with Allerdale Borough Council until later in the process.

5) That Members notify the Chair or Vice Chair of any issues to be discussed at the Scrutiny Chairs meeting on 28 October

ROSP.40/09 BUDGET SCRUTINY

The Panel discussed the draft report of the Budget Scrutiny Task and Finish Group (OS.22/09).

A key finding of their report was the dissatisfaction of the Scrutiny 2009 Budget. The Task and Finish Group had been set up to consider how budget scrutiny could be improved. It had been agreed that Resources Overview and Scrutiny would lead on the review. The Task and Finish Group included two members from each of the three scrutiny panels.

Meetings had been held with the Finance Portfolio Holder and Corporate Director and sessions had taken place with representatives from other Authorities.

It was agreed that the draft report of the Budget Scrutiny Task and Finish Group be referred to the Scrutiny Chairs Group.

Members felt that either a rolling training programme or an awareness/training session would be useful and that it should be available to all Members and officers.

The Head of Personnel (Mr Williams) advised that there was financial training as part of the Members Training Programme. Training started some time ago

and was run by the Head of Finance. Mr Williams agreed to circulate copies of the training plan to Members.

Councillor J Mallinson advised that although some of the budget was statutory and some non-statutory it was not possible to make savings and economies solely from the non statutory budgets.

RESOLVED – 1) That report OS.22/09 be agreed and forwarded to the Executive and to the Scrutiny Chairs Group for a formal response to this Panel on the recommendations made

2) That a separate meeting be arranged to discuss budget matters in December

3) That Mr Williams circulate copies of the training plan to Members

ROSP.41/09 RESPONSE FROM THE EXECUTIVE

(a) EX.169/09 Draft Medium Term Financial Plan (Incorporating the Corporate Charging Policy) 2010/11 to 2014/15

Minute Excerpt, EX.169/09 was submitted setting out the decision of the Executive on 1 September 2009 in response to comments/concerns raised by this Committee:

The Executive had decided:

- “(1) That the comments of the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel and their continued input be welcomed.
- (2) That the draft Medium Term Financial Plan (incorporating the Corporate Charging Policy) 2010/11 to 2014/15 be referred to Council for approval at its meeting on 15 September 2009.”

A Member stated that an article in the press had painted a dire picture of the financial situation of the Council. Mr Mason explained that although the financial plan was set in general terms it was impossible to know what would happen in the future and there were reports from Government Ministers and Civil Servants regarding future finances.

RESOLVED – That the comments of the Executive be noted.

(b) EX.170/09 Draft Capital Strategy 2010/11 to 2014/15

Minute Excerpt, EX.170/09 was submitted setting out the decision of the Executive on 1 September 2009 in response to comments/concerns raised by this Committee:

The Executive had decided:

- “1. That the comments submitted by the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel of 25 August be received.
2. That the report CORP.36/09 (amended) regarding the draft Capital Strategy 2010/11 to 2014/15 be referred to the meeting of the City Council on 15 September 2009 with a recommendation that the strategy be approved.”

A Member believed that it was confusing when reports showed an underspend in budgets that was due to a major project overlapping two or more financial years. Mr Mason advised that SMT were currently looking at profiling of budgets and how they budgets should be set out. The Head of Financial Services (Ms Taylor) was meeting with all projects managers to discuss the issue.

RESOLVED – That the comments of the Executive be noted.

(c) EX.171/09 Draft Asset Management Plan

Minute Excerpt, EX.171/09 was submitted setting out the decision of the Executive on 1 September 2009 in response to comments/concerns raised by this Committee:

- “1. That the comments of the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel be received.
2. That the Asset Management Plan as attached to report DS.72/09 be referred to the meeting of the City Council on 15 September 2009 for adoption.”

RESOLVED – That the comments of the Executive be noted.

(d) EX.184/09 Scrutiny of Carlisle Renaissance Action Plan

Minute Excerpt, EX.184/09 was submitted setting out the decision of the Executive on 1 September 2009 in response to comments/concerns raised by this Committee:

“That the scrutiny and comments submitted by the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel with regard to Carlisle Renaissance be welcomed; and the Panel advised that the Programme Director of Carlisle Renaissance was giving consideration to the manner by which more information could be provided to Members.”

A Member queried whether it would be possible to have a monthly update from the Carlisle Renaissance Board as on occasion information was read in the press before it was passed to Members. An information leaflet had been circulated but it was felt that it did not contain the level of information required by Members. It was suggested that Carlisle Renaissance could produce a monthly update newsletter as a means of getting information.

A Member stated that she had been to the Carlisle Renaissance office and found the staff very helpful, but agreed that regular input from the Carlisle Renaissance Board was needed. However a Member believed that, as a number of Councillors were in full time employment they did not have time to visit the Carlisle Renaissance offices.

A Member was concerned that there was no mention of Carlisle City Council or the Leader in the leaflet, and that information was passed to the press, radio and television before informing Members.

Councillor Mallinson advised that there was concern around who was driving Carlisle forward but the general perception now was that the Carlisle Renaissance Board was an independent body and that they were not engaging with people who could be their strongest advocates.

It was agreed that although some information was available on the web-site regular updates were still needed.

A Member advised that officers and consultants make a great deal of effort to provide briefings for Members and that there was not always a great turnout. The information was then made available in the press the following day and that was when some members would get the information. It was agreed that when the Communications department prepare press releases on Carlisle Renaissance they should circulate them to Members prior to them being in the press and that Carlisle Renaissance should be approached to pass their press releases to the Communications department for circulation.

RESOLVED – 1) That the comments of the Executive be noted.

2) That when the Communications department prepare press releases on Carlisle Renaissance they should circulate them to Members prior to them being published and that Carlisle Renaissance should be approached to pass their press releases to the Communications department for circulation prior to publication.

ROSP.42/09 – LEASE CAR TASK AND FINISH GROUP

A copy of the minute excerpt in relation to the Executive's response to the final report of the Lease Cars Task and Finish Group had been circulated.

A Member was concerned that if the scheme continued to be used as a recruit and retention tool there was the potential for a younger employee taking up a lease car contract and staying with the authority for a number of years.

It was felt that the Executive's response that they would undertake further investigation and report back to a future had no specific timescale.

In response Councillor Mallinson advised that the Executive was committed to taking action and that new contracts would be considered on individual merits. Councillor Mallinson confirmed that he would report back to the Panel at their meeting on 18 February 2010.

RESOLVED: 1) That the response from the Executive be noted

2) That Councillor Mallinson to report back to the Panel at their meeting on 18 February 2010.

ROSP.43/09 LAND AT MORTON

Councillor Allison declared a personal interest in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct in respect of agenda item A.5 – Land at Morton.

The Joint Acting Director of Development Services and Head of Economy, Property and Tourism (Mr Beaty) submitted report DS.84/09 seeking authority and funding to prepare and submit an outline planning application for the development of a District Retail Centre on land in the ownership of the City Council at Morton.

Mr Beaty set out for Members the reasons for the submission of an outline application, commenting that the Morton District Centre was the only Local Plan allocation that would provide for a major food store in Carlisle. The Council therefore controlled a very valuable piece of land where there were commercial reasons to ensure that the value was protected and maximised.

He added that the capacity for convenience spend in Carlisle was limited and it was important that the Council secured an outline planning approval that clearly established the scale and composition of any retail district centre prior to any decisions being made on the future development of the site. Although the cost of securing a planning approval was considerable, advice received from the Council's property advisors suggested that planning certainty was essential if the optimum value of the site was to be secured.

Mr Beaty informed Members that the impact on value, either negatively from failure to achieve a consent or positively by value increase from achieving consent, was significantly greater than the actual costs of the application. He added that the Council was also working with the Church Commissioners to progress the separate application for housing development at Morton, and it was felt that progress on a high quality district centre, including a food store, would benefit that development and support the overall implementation of the Morton Masterplan. The Council's outline planning application would comprise a food store, mixed commercial use, reservation of land for a 'park and ride' facility and associated infrastructure.

He explained the limitations of the Council securing planning consent, pointing out that owing to the application and effect of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 (S1 1992/1492) any grant of planning permission

obtained by the Council in respect of its own land at Morton could only be implemented by the Council. Further, any such consented development could only be used or operated by the Council rather than a third party food store operator.

Mr Beaty advised that the Council did not have the capacity or specialist knowledge necessary to prepare such an application and it was therefore recommended that Montagu Evans was retained to manage the process and prepare the submission as an extension of the current asset management work already being undertaken for the Council. It was further recommended that the Executive authorise the use of Council Procedure Rule 4 (2) (b) to permit the seeking and award of a tender from a single supplier in respect of the proposed planning application.

In conclusion he reported that the cost of the planning application was budgeted at £260,000, broken down into work around project management; planning specialists including public consultation; commercial input on uses and components; architects; transportation and environmental evaluations; legal and statutory fees (£30,000). £70,000 could be found from existing budgets, leaving a net balance of £160,000 to be found (excluding the statutory fees of £30,000 payable to the planning authority). The Executive was therefore recommended to seek the release of that budget from the Council in order to expedite the process.

The Executive had on 2 October 2009 considered the Plan (EX.189/09 refers) and decided:

- “1. That the City Council submits an outline application for the development of a district retail centre on land in its ownership at Morton.
2. That the Executive requests the City Council to release a net budget of £190,000 to fund the preparation and submission of the planning application.
3. That the Executive authorises the use of Council Procedure Rule 4(2)(b) to permit the seeking and award of a tender from a single supplier in respect of the proposed planning application.”

RESOLVED – That there was nothing to add as the decision had been made by the Executive at their meeting on 2 October 2009.

**ROSP.44/09 ALLERDALE/COPELAND/CARLISLE REVENUES AND
BENEFITS SHARED SERVICES REVISED BUSINESS
CASE**

The Head of Revenues and Benefits Services (Mr Mason) submitted report CORP.41a/09 concerning a shared Revenues and Benefits Service for Carlisle, Allerdale and Copeland Councils. He reminded Members that the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel (on 25 August 2009) and the Executive (on 1 September 2009) had considered the

Allerdale/Copeland/Carlisle Revenues and Benefits Shared Services Business Case, in addition to which Meritec had provided third party analysis/verification of the Business Case.

The report referred to the following main issues highlighted by Meritec on the Business Case and advised how those would be addressed:

- the ambitious 6-9 months timeframe;
- a contingency may be required to fund additional change management resources in the short-term;
- proof of concept of slim line management located locally but managing across three sites (not tested nationally);
- potential downturn in performance;
- the 'scoring' of the outsourced option;
- how the 'transformed back office' can reconnect with current front office practices of the three Councils;
- that 'joint venture' governance arrangements should be considered;
- to seek demonstrable commitment from key stakeholders to key principles of the Business Case;
- ICT external/internal costs; and
- programme plan to include critical decisions, mission milestones and timescales to mitigate risk.

Mr Mason added that the Panel had raised concerns at its previous meetings and the business case advised how the Panel's concerns were being addresses.

Mr Mason set out for Members details of the consultation undertaken with staff members throughout the project, highlighting in particular the main concerns raised. The majority of answers to the staffing concerns needed to be dealt with in the next phase of the project, which was to determine the employing authority; work out terms and conditions; and draw up protocols for how staffing arrangements could be dealt with. There were a number of actions, details of which were set out in the design action plan appended to the report. Some changes had already been made to the Business Case to address concerns e.g. Fraud Officer resources had been addressed by increasing the number from 5 to 6.5 in response to staff concerns in that regard.

Unison had staff membership within Revenues and Benefits at the three Councils, and details of the formal consultation with the Union and issues raised in response were provided.

Mr Mason added that the financial summary detailed at 9.6 of the Business Case had been updated to reflect all the changes noted in report CORP.41/09. The financial appraisal had been re-aligned over six years to reflect the extended implementation timetable which now ran to 30 September 2010. He set out for Members the summary position detailing costs and savings for Carlisle over the six year time period, indicating cumulative

savings of £510,000. It should be noted that the split of costs, savings and termination costs was subject to final agreement.

In delivering the shared services savings of £85k per annum (£510,000 over six year financial appraisal), the Council would incur additional capital costs of £40,000 and termination (redundancy) and protection costs of approximately £158,000 giving a payback period of approximately 2.3 years. A supplementary estimate would eventually require to be approved to fund up front costs (to be repaid from ongoing revenue savings).

Referring to the way forward, Mr Mason advised that the Action Plan set out in Appendix 6 was currently being progressed under which it was proposed to recruit the Partnership Manager during November/December 2009 initially to oversee the implementation of the shared service for the period December 2009 to September 2010.

It was further proposed to agree Capita's tender for providing the Revenues and Benefits ICT infrastructure to support the shared service in late October 2009. It should be noted, however, that if the shared service did not happen for any reason the ICT proposals stacked up on their own i.e. they would provide increased business continuity and networking infrastructure within current costs.

The Executive had on 2 October 2009 considered the Plan (EX.192/09 refers) and decided:

“1 That the actions progressed/to be progressed in addressing observations made by Meritec, Members, staff and Unions on the draft Business Case be noted. The actions being reflected in the updated Business Case and in the Action Plan set out at Appendix 6 to the Business Case.

2. That the extended timetable for implementing the Shared Service by 1 October 2010, including the appointment of the Partnership Manager during November/December 2009, be noted.

3. That the revised financial appraisal summarised at Section 5.3 of Report CORP.41/09, indicating savings of £510,000 over the six year timeframe of the appraisal, be noted.

4. That it be noted that eventually a supplementary estimate may be required of up to £158,000 to fund the Council's share of 'one off' termination costs (funded from ongoing revenue savings).

5. That the Executive was supportive of the revised Revenues and Benefits Shared Service proposals to enable the tender from Capita to provide the ICT software and operating systems supporting the Shared Service to be accepted in October 2009..”

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

A Member sought clarification of the staff savings stated in the Business Plan. Mr Mason explained that steps were already in place to reduce staff numbers as temporary staff had been employed to replace staff who had left. Some managers would be offered posts at a lower scale or be offered redundancy.

A Member stated that the report was an excellent piece of work and easy to understand. The report followed an excellent project and wished to express thanks to the team from all authorities involved.

Councillor Mallinson advised that he would be attending a meeting the following day and it was possible that a decision could be reached on who might be the lead authority and general approval. The proposals would then go to Executive and subsequently Council for full approval before implementation.

A Member expressed concern that if Carlisle were not the lead authority there would potentially be a downturn in performance. Mr Mason advised that any downturn would be due to ICT downtime but Carlisle would lead the technical support team and there would be mutual assistance across the authorities during the changeover of systems. Mr Mason further advised that to alleviate any backlog the three councils have 'ring fenced' DWP benefits administration grant earmarked by the DWP to resource benefits work including backlogs.

In response to a request for clarification from a Member Mr Mason advised that the Project Manager, while funded by Allerdale would oversee the implementation across all three authorities.

Mr Mason advised that performance updates of the shared service would be given in the normal quarterly monitoring reports. Any major issues would be reported to future meetings.

RESOLVED – That the changes to the revised Business Case be noted.

ROSP.45/09 EMPLOYEE SICKNESS ABSENCE UPDATE

The Head of Personnel and Development Services (Mr Williams) submitted report PPP.48/09, the purpose of which was to enable the Panel to continue their scrutiny of the authority's performance with regard to staff sickness absence.

Mr Williams stated that the figures for the first quarter of the year revealed a distinct improvement in performance and the Council was improving the target but officers continued to bear down on absence. Progress with the Improving Attendance Action Plan was presented along with some new actions that should ensure that the Council could maintain the improvement.

Mr Williams provided an updated analysis of performance and outlined progress against the Improving Attendance Action Plan.

In discussion Members raised the following questions and observations:

A Member stated that the format of the report was not as easy to understand as previous reports and asked whether figures relating to types of illness and days lost could be included.

The Head of Personnel and Development (Mr Williams) confirmed that they could be added to the next report. Mr Williams advised that the report showed a significant change in the ratio between long term and short term sickness levels. Stress had been a cause of long term absence but it was being addressed by the implementation of a number of actions.

Mr Williams further advised that the flu pandemic expected in the autumn and winter period would skew figures but that an action plan was in place to maintain services should it be required.

The Chair advised Mr Williams that the Panel would be setting up a Task and Finish Group to look at sickness absence early in the New Year.

A Member believed that as the figures supplied were for summer period there would be a potential downturn during the winter months. Mr Williams responded that the weather was not a good indicator as there were other factors throughout the year that affected sickness absences.

A Member asked whether there could be a separate column in the table for figures relating to swine flu. The Deputy Chief Executive and Director of People Policy and Performance (Dr Gooding) advised that it would not be appropriate as absence was absence for whatever reason and that an action plan had been prepared to be implemented if required. Mr Williams advised that should a situation arise SMT would be informed and as they met on a weekly basis the action plan could be implemented at very short notice.

A Member asked whether the reduction in the figures relating to long term sickness could be as a result of early retirement through ill health. Mr Williams advised that there had been an increase in the number of ill health retirements but confirmed that he would do some work on clarifying the figures and report back to the Panel.

A Member was concerned about the decline in the number of return to work interviews conducted in July and August. Mr Williams explained that the next report would include figures for absences in July and August where the return to work interview had been carried out after circulation of this report.

RESOLVED – 1) That report PPP.48/09 be noted;

2) That a Task and Finish Group be set up early in the New Year to look at sickness absence.

The Deputy Chief Executive and Director of People, Policy and Performance (Dr Gooding) submitted report CE.22/09 concerning the Corporate Projects Board established to ensure effective governance arrangements on significant capital projects and programmes of work undertaken by the Council.

Dr Gooding explained that a review of the capital programme would be undertaken as part of the budget process taking place over the coming months. She added that Covalent had been used to produce the summary of the position on capital projects.

During discussion, Members raised the following questions and observations:

A Member asked whether there was a problem with the funding of the Young Persons Foyer programme. The Head of Facilities (Mr Nicholson) advised that it was not our project and confirmed that more information would be available at a future meeting.

Members were concerned by a number of projects whereby the 'annual budget' column showed 'no budget' but there was a cost in the 'Cost to Date' column. Mr Nicholson explained that the cost was to the City Council and Mr Mason confirmed that the money was from the base budget. He agreed that there needed to be an improvement in the way the figures were presented.

A Member believed that there was not sufficient narrative in the report. Dr Gooding explained that the report was based on a request from the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the information requested at that time. He confirmed that the format would be improved for the next report.

A Member was concerned that fire precautions to the Civic Centre were on hold due to the transformation programme. Mr Nicholson explained that the work had been put on hold as it was expected that there would be some movement of staff between directorates as a result of the transformation process and that it work would re-start as soon as possible. Mr Nicholson confirmed that maintenance of the building was continuing as normal.

A Member was concerned about the amount of money available for disabled adaptations and facilities. He advised that Riverside contributed £60,000 per year but felt that the figure could be increased. Mr Mason explained that £335,000 had been paid out but that £1.9 million may not be spent until next year. The Head of Financial Services (Miss Taylor) was looking at the profiling of the information as part of use of resources to make it clearer and easier to understand.

In response to a question from a Member in respect of the current position regarding the historic quarter Dr Gooding reminded Members that it had been discussed at Council and agreed that the scheme was not progressing at the present time.

A Member asked which projects had been deferred or delayed to meet the costs of the Sands Centre review. Dr Gooding advised that there would be a report to Executive with proposals for changes to the capital programme.

A Member asked who sat on the Corporate Projects Board. Dr Gooding advised that the board was made up of staff at Service Head level and just below. The purpose of the board was not to make decisions but to give quality assurance and ensure that business cases were properly assess in respect of risks and costs. He pointed out that, as with many things, the composition of the board would be affected by the transformation programme but there would continue to be a need for quality assessment of business cases and advising SMT and the Executive.

In response to a Member's query about the make up of the board, Dr Gooding explained that originally there were two boards – the Capital Project Board and the Corporate Programme Board. Over time the Capital Programme Board had become more and more like SMT so it was dissolved leaving the Capital Projects Board advising members of SMT.

RESOLVED – 1) That the Panel welcomed the submission of report CE.22/09

2) That more narrative be included in future reports

3) That Dr Gooding circulate the list of members of the Capital Projects Board and its Terms of Reference

(Meeting ended at 12.20pm)