

ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

THURSDAY 9 SEPTEMBER 2010 AT 10.10 AM

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Rutherford (Chairman), Councillors Bainbridge, Bowditch, C Farmer, Hendry (until 12.25pm), Mrs Robson (until 12.30pm) and Watson (until 11.45am)

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Bloxham – Local Environment Portfolio Holder

EEOSP.56/10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Mrs Vasey

EEOSP.57/10 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest in respect of the business to be considered.

EEOSP.58/10 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED – 1) That the minutes of the meetings held on 24 June 2010 and 22 July 2010 be agreed as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

EEOSP.59/10 CALL IN OF DECISIONS

There were no matters that had been the subject of call in.

EEOSP.60/10 OVERVIEW REPORT INCORPORATING THE WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN ITEMS

The Scrutiny Officer (Mrs Edwards) submitted report OS.21/10 providing an overview of matters related to the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel's work. Details of the latest version of the work programme were also included.

Mrs Edwards reported that:

- Members attended a development session on 22 July 2010 to look at the Panel's work Programme for the Civic year. Minutes of the session had been circulated to the Panel
- The Forward Plan of the Executive covering the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 was published on 18 August 2010. The issues that fell within the remit of the Panel were:

KD.27/10 – Third Local Transport Plan (2011-2026) – the item was on the agenda for the meeting

KD.25/10 – Shoreline Management Plan 2 Adoption – Members agreed that they did not wish to consider the item at the next meeting of the Panel on 21 October 2010.

- Mrs Edwards advised that, while the 6 monthly update on Waste Services was to be considered at the meeting, she would update Members on the referral made to the Cumbria Joint Scrutiny Committee regarding Strategic Waste Partnership. The Joint Committee had considered the referral at their meeting on 29 April and decided that as there was an 'options project' due to end in June 2010, they would await the outcomes of that work before determining whether to pursue the referral as a scrutiny topic.

The Waste Services Manager had attended the following meeting in July 2010 to present an update on findings from the options project. The Committee were informed that there was currently no dedicated Waste Partnership Officer and determined that they would support the reinstatement of the post. They agreed that while they would not undertake a piece of Task and Finish work on the topic they would monitor the strategy.

- The initial meeting of the Area Working Task and Finish Group was held on 7 September. The Terms of Reference were being prepared and would be circulated to the Panel at a future meeting. The Task and Finish Group included Members of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel, the Group would be split into two to consider different areas and then would join together to present a final report in February.
- The Chair of the Panel and the Strategic Director had agreed that the workshop on the Core Strategy would be arranged for the end of September.
- There were a large number of items scheduled for the October meeting of the Panel. Mrs Edwards asked the Panel if they would consider moving the City Centre Partnership and the impact of Tullie House on the economy to the December meeting.

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) The minutes from the Development Session held on 22 July 2010 be agreed.

3) That the Shoreline Management Plan 2 Adoption would not be considered by the Panel.

4) That a workshop on the Core Strategy be arranged for the end of September 2010.

5) That the City Centre Partnership and the impact of Tullie House on the economy items be considered at the December meeting.

EEOSP.61/10 CAR PARKING TASK AND FINISH GROUP

Councillor Hendry, Chairman of the Car Parking Task and Finish Group presented the final report of the Car Parking Task and Finish Group.

He highlighted the recommendations made by the Group, in particular:

Recommendation 1 – Residential Parking Schemes should break even and consideration needs to be given on how this can be achieved;

Recommendation 3 – That the Executive instructs an officer to look at how car park assets can be maximised

Recommendation 5 – That contract parking is available at a pro-rata cost for parking on set days of the week

Recommendation 6 – That the Executive give consideration to linear parking charges

Recommendation 7 – That consideration is given to introducing Pay by Phone Parking.

A Member added that the Group had given some consideration to Park and Ride but had decided not to pursue this area within the review.

Officers informed the Panel that there was ongoing work looking at on street parking enforcement in Cumbria. It was agreed that if it was felt appropriate the Task and Finish Group could be reconvened to examine any new developments.

RESOLVED: 1) That the report of the Car Parking Task and Finish Group be approved with an added paragraph with regard to the Group's consideration of the Park and Ride scheme.

2) That the Executive be asked to consider the report and respond to the recommendations accordingly.

EEOSP.62/10 THIRD LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 2011-2026

The Principal Local Plans Officer (MS Goodridge) submitted report ED.26/10 informing Members that the Cumbria County Council was consulting on a draft Core Strategy and Transport policies of the Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP 3) which defined the longer term transport strategy and the associated policies and programme from 2011 to 2026. That document set out the direction for the next 15 years, taking account of national policy as well as local needs and demands.

As regards issues for the City Council, Ms Goodridge pointed out that Carlisle had a sub-regional role, was a gateway City and was the largest centre of employment in Cumbria. Its status as a Regional City and Housing Growth Point was recognised within the report. Consequently a number of major transport issues continued to be of concern, details of which were provided.

The Core Strategy acknowledged ongoing key interventions which included the Carlisle Northern Development Route and the Strategic Overview for Carlisle and Transport Programme, the latter being the subject of a separate report to this meeting. It further outlined potential schemes requiring significant investment which would be established within the strategy should resources become available; referred to access improvements namely for public transport and car parks as well as Carlisle Railway Station improvements; and potential strategic infrastructure improvements, including the Carlisle Southern Bypass and A69 improvements. The strategy did not, however, itemise and clearly spell out all the specific issues for sub areas of the County, for example, no reference was made to improving air quality within Carlisle.

Ms Goodridge considered that, given the fact that the LTP3 was no longer restricted to a 5 year period, the Core Strategy should set challenging targets to achieve over the longer term. She further commented upon issues around Carbon Emissions and Climate Change; Air Quality; and Walking and Cycling.

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

- *Members felt that the report should reflect the fact that the child and youth population of Carlisle was increasing, which did not reflect national figures.*
- *The establishment of the University was crucial to the City and this should be reflected in the document.*
- *Members were very concerned with regard to the speed limits in areas where schools were situated. They suggested that the speed limit be reduced to 20miles per hour on roads where schools were situated; they suggested that the speed limit could be in force at necessary times of the day.*

The Local Environment Portfolio Holder responded that there was a national review of speed limits underway. He was unsure about when the review would be completed and agreed that it would be useful to investigate where in the process the review was.

The Member welcomed the response and asked what protection the children were receiving in the meantime.

A Member further added that a review of the speed limits should also include larger rural towns such as Longtown or Brampton.

- *The transport outcomes needed more emphasis on tourism. Carlisle needed to sustain and facilitate tourism within the areas and this should be identified in the Transport Plan.*
- *The Plan needed to include some information on the condition and quality of roads within the County.*
- *A Member asked how funding for roads was allocated within Cumbria.*

The Assistant Director (Local Environment) (Ms Culleton) responded that there had been additional funding received in Cumbria to deal with the condition of the roads following the adverse weather conditions.

The Local Environment Portfolio Holder added that there was a formula for the allocation of funding under Claimed Rights. The financial aspects of the maintenance of the roads had not been included in the consultation document.

- *It was very important that consideration was given to the type of materials used and their environmental impact.*
- *How would the Plan be monitored and who would carry out the monitoring?*

The Assistant Director (Economic Development) (Mr Hardman) responded that the document was the County Council's responsibility and it would be the implementation of the Plan that would be monitored. He added that the Plan would be monitored using the National Indicators and Local Indicators as set out in the report and consideration would be needed to determine if those indicators were relevant.

The Panel then considered each of the consultation questions individually. Following a discussion on each of the questions the Panel formulated the following responses to the questions:

Question 1 – Is it possible to have a thriving economy in Cumbria while reducing transport's carbon footprint?

Yes – Reduce need to travel so any new sites were close to transport links and developers may put money into transport. The use of rail links for freight distribution be encouraged where appropriate. That creative solutions to rural transport issues needed to be investigated.

Question 2 - Have we identified the main challenges for transport in Cumbria?

Yes – main challenges were cuts to funding and the complex nature of the road network in Cumbria due to the difficult landscape.

Question 3 – Is the Transport Vision right Cumbria looking forward over the next fifteen years - Yes

Question 4 – Have we got the transport outcomes right? - Yes

Question 5 – With scarce resources should we focus our investment in transport?

- 1. In the urban areas where more people are affected*
- 2. Spread across the county where there may be more benefit to visitors*
- 3. In rural areas tackling isolated communities*

Question 6 – What should be the main priorities for investment in transport?

- 3. Increasing the number of journeys made on foot or cycle*

4. Supporting and improving public transport

Question 7 – How can we improve access to services and jobs for people living in rural areas when funding for bus services is limited?

Look at creative measures for rural areas including schemes such as car share or moped hire.

Question 8 – How do we support people to make travel choices that help to improve public health?

Increase in pedestrianisation and cycling, encourage as work initiatives.

Question 9 – What do you think should be the priorities for investing in reducing road casualties?

- 1. 20mph limits in all residential areas and outside schools*
- 3. More speed enforcement*

Question 10 – Big road and transport improvements are unlikely in the near future. What measures should we prioritise to improve journey times and reliability on the road network?

- 1. Look for improvements to improve local traffic flows in towns*
- 3. Encourage more people to walk and cycle and use buses and trains to relieve congestion*
- 4. Encourage more freight to move by rail*

Question 11 – Greatest priority should be given to maintaining which areas?

- 1. The main roads*
- 2. Town and City Centre roads and pavements*
- 3. Residential roads*

Question 12 – Where should funding be prioritised towards?

- 1. Rural bus services to improve accessibility by diverting bus services into settlements*

Question 13 – How should we attempt to reduce CO2 emissions from road transport

- 2. Increase investment in walking and cycling*
 - 3. Increase investment in public transport*
 - 4. Make sure new housing and employment sites are in places that reduce car and lorry mileage*
- (The Local Environment Portfolio Holder highlighted the work of the County Council in reducing the voltage of street lamps which was linked to answer 5 and Ms Goodridge highlighted work that was being carried out in relation to answer 6)*

Question 14 – Where should priority be given to improving the appearance of the local environment through highways and transport investment?

- 2. *Historic town centres and structures*
- 5. *City and town gateways or entrances*

Question 15 – Do you think that different approaches to transport problems are needed in different parts of Cumbria? Yes

Question 16 – How should we measure the success of our plans and our investments?

In line with the National Indicators and Local Indicators as set out on pages 24 and 25 of the consultation document. An annual review of the Plan.

Question 17 – Do you have any other comments on the core strategy?

Diagram 1 – Linkages to other Plans does not show linkage with the Right of Way Improvement Plan and the Countryside Access Strategy.

RESOLVED: 1) That the observations and responses of the Panel, as detailed above, be conveyed to the Executive

2) That the Panel support the overall vision of the Third Local Transport Plan 2011-2026

3) That the Panel supports, in principle, to a Carlisle Southern Bypass

4) That the Panel would support any move to changing the speed limit in residential areas and any area with schools to 20mph.

5) That the Third Local Transport Plan 2011-2026 be reviewed annually and the outcomes be monitored by this Panel.

EEOSP.63/10 MAKING SPACE FOR WATER

The Assistant Director (Local Environment) (Ms Culleton) gave a verbal update on the current position regarding Making Space for Water.

Ms Culleton reminded the Panel that the Making Space for Water Group had been set up following the Cumbria flooding event of 2005. The Group Members continued to meet 3 times a year and dealt with issues in a more proactive way and there was no intention to disband the Group.

The Group had two ongoing projects; flooding at the Village Hall at Burgh by Sands and flooding at Crosby on Eden. Both projects had just begun and an update would be given at a future meeting of the Panel.

Ms Culleton added that the Group meetings had become part of the regular work of the Council and asked the Panel to give consideration to future monitoring requirements.

The Chairman explained that the Panel had requested six monthly monitoring reports to monitor the funding aspects of the Group and understood that the funding had been completed. There was still some concern with regard to the funding in the Pitt Report which did not differentiate between single and two tier authorities. She asked that the next report included information on where the funding came from and how it was allocated.

The Local Environment Portfolio Holder commented that there had been a lot of benefits from the Group and felt it was important that the remaining funding was used to complete the projects at Crosby on Eden and Burgh by Sands. He added that the Carlisle Local Committee had provided additional funding for the Burgh by Sands project.

RESOLVED: 1) That the verbal update on the Making Space for Water Group be welcomed.

2) That the Panel looked forward to receiving a further update on the projects at Burgh by Sands and Crosby on Eden and details of the funding for the Group.

EEOSP.64/10 WASTE SERVICES – 6 MONTHLY MONITORING REPORT

The Waste Services Manager (Mr Gardner) presented report CS.22/10 which provided Members with an update on recent developments in the Council's Waste Services.

Mr Gardner advised that performance figures had been calculated and completed and showed that the figure for household waste recycled and reused was lower than that of 2008/09. However, that figure could be attributed to the fact that garden waste from the Rome Street Household Waste Recycling Centre was no longer included in the Council's performance figures.

The performance indicators were evidence that the Council's policies regarding the collection of household waste were successfully diverting waste from landfill whilst maintaining high recycling rates.

As part of the Council's Transformation process, a fundamental review of collection rounds was being carried out with a view to maximising efficiencies. Whilst efficiencies had already been made since the introduction of alternate weekly collections the financial pressures on the authority require further efficiencies to be delivered. Mr Gardner believed that would be a complex piece of work and it was proposed that the results of that work be reported to Members in due course.

Mr Gardner reminded Members that the Council awarded a new contract to FOCSA Services UK to undertake the Council's Greenbox kerbside recycling service that

commenced on 1 June 2010 and was expected to deliver a revenue saving of £290,000 this financial year and £1.7 million over the course of the 5 year contract.

The Council was exploring, with neighbouring authorities, through the Cumbria Strategic Waste Partnership, options for procuring new disposal contracts for the garden waste collected.

Mr Gardner advised that the Council had an extensive network of Neighbourhood Recycling Centres across the urban and rural district offering a comprehensive range of recycling facilities including 'Tetrapaks' that had previously been difficult to recycle.

The divestment of the Council's commercial waste collection service had been completed and the service was transferred to the new service provider on 1 July 2010. The divestment of the service had produced a capital receipt of £150,000.

Mr Gardner reminded Members that the Council was an active member of the Cumbria Strategic Waste Partnership (CSWP) who had recently received a report commissioned to assess the options available to the CSWP for enhanced partnership working. The CSWP was currently considering the report and officers from the City Council would consider the implications for the authority of any recommendations that the CSWP make and those would be reported to Members in due course.

Mr Gardner reminded the Panel that charges for Bulky Waste were introduced in 2009 and there had been a significant impact, the Council now carried out 70 a week compared to 80 collections a day before the charges were introduced.

He added that the statistics for Fly Tipping did not show an increase and this could be a result of more active scrap collections in the area and the restrictions placed on the disposal of commercial waste at the Rome Street Household Waste Recycling Centre.. The disposal of bulky commercial wastes was an issue that did need to be addressed.

Ms Culleton commented that one way to deal with commercial waste fly tipping was more enforcement of the producers of waste and additional resources would be required for this.

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

- *Some households in Carlisle did not have recycling collections, how could the Council encourage them to recycle?*

Mr Gardner explained that some small recycling facilities had been given to some areas, such as flats, that did not have recycling collections. He added that he would also look at any areas that did not have collections to tighten up any gaps.

- *There had been a successful pilot scheme for Greenbox 'hats' in some areas of Carlisle; would this be extended to the whole of Carlisle?*

Mr Gardner agreed that the Greenbox 'hats' had been successful and more 'hats' had been ordered using a grant from the Government and they would be distributed throughout Carlisle.

- *Members were encouraged by the introduction of the new Tetrapak facilities; were there any plans to introduce aerosol recycling facilities?*

Mr Gardner responded that he understood that the new contractors were able to collect aerosols. The next recycling calendars would be updated to show all items that could be recycled.

- *Was there a timescale for the review of collection rounds?*

Mr Gardner responded that it was a complex piece of work and he would update the Panel on progress in the next report.

RESOLVED: 1) That a monitoring report be brought before the Panel in six months time then be reported on an annual basis thereafter.

2) That the next report include detailed information on the review of collection rounds and enhanced partnership working.

3) That a report on the enforcement action of commercial waste fly tipping be presented to the next meeting of the Panel.

[The meeting ended at 12.50pm]