

ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

THURSDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2011 AT 10.00 AM

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Rutherford (Chairman), Councillors Bowditch, Craig, Mrs Farmer (until 11:30), McDevitt, Mrs Vasey and Watson

ALSO

PRESENT: Councillor Bloxham – Environment and Housing Portfolio Holder
Councillor Mrs Bowman – Economic Development Portfolio Holder

EEOSP.50/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillors Mrs Robson,

EEOSP.51/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- Councillor McDevitt declared a personal interest in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct in respect of any item with regard to the County Council. The interest related to the fact that he was also Member of Cumbria County Council.
- Councillor Watson declared a personal interest in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct in respect of any item with regard to the County Council. The interest related to the fact that he was also Member of Cumbria County Council.

EEOSP.52/11 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED – 1) That the minutes of the meetings held on 23 June 2011 and 28 July 2011 be agreed as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

EEOSP.53/11 CALL IN OF DECISIONS

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

EEOSP.54/11 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chairman announced that item A.3 on the agenda – Radio 1 Big Weekend – would be taken before item A.2 – overview report incorporating the work programme and forward plan items – to avoid delaying Ms Whitehead. The Chairman thanked Ms Whitehead for attending the meeting whilst on leave to give the presentation on the Radio 1 Big Weekend.

EEOSP.55/11 RADIO 1 BIG WEEKEND

The Project Director for the Radio 1 Big Weekend (Ms Whitehead) presented 2 videos as a result of the event. The first was a parody of Elton John's song "Your Song" with the words changed so that they were relevant to Carlisle. The second was a shorter video that would be used for record producers and promoters. Ms Whitehead advised that the City Council held the copyright for the song and that it would be presented to Council, at either a future Council or informal Council meeting. The videos were available to view via the Discover Carlisle website.

- *Officers should investigate how the videos could be used as a permanent exhibition in the Tourist Information Centre.*

Ms Whitehead gave Members a presentation of the outcomes of the Radio 1 Big Weekend event held in May 2011. She advised that the event had raised the profile of Carlisle globally by the use of Twitter from the announcement in March, throughout the weekend and until 2 weeks following the event. Ticket sales and viewing figures had been the highest ever recorded for a music programme and PR coverage was worth over £10million without the air coverage on Radio 1, BBC1, BBC2 and BBC3. There had been local coverage on BBC and ITV for Carlisle Tourism Partnership and the City Council and the outreach programme, Vernon's Volunteer Army had been very well received. The whole event had created a feel good factor for residents and visitors to the City.

Ms Whitehead advised that the gross economic impact was £1.707million and that 59% of local businesses felt that the event had had a positive impact on their business. Accommodation had been up 20-30% for the month of May and Radio 1 staff had used 1663 bed nights in the City. A total profit of £11,397 was generated, the first ever for a Radio 1 Big Weekend event that equated to a return of just over £7 per every £1 invested.

Ms Whitehead further advised that there was less waste collected than the event in Bangor in 2010, and that 62% was recycled. The figures for the event in Carlisle showed a 40% decrease in total waste and a 77% drop in waste to landfill compared to the event in 2010. At the event in Bangor none of the waste was recycled.

Live Nation had stated that the partnership between Carlisle Tourism Partnership and the City Council was the most professional and easiest to deal with for any festival and Radio 1 had said that the Project Management Team, that consisted of Carlisle Tourism Partnership, the City Council and Cumbria Constabulary) had been very professional and a pleasure to work with.

Ms Whitehead explained that the event had indicated a proved demand for high quality music festivals. Record promoters and labels were keen to work in Carlisle and Radio 1 were happy to work with the partnership again in 2012 to endorse any events that were staged. One proposed event was a legacy festival in 2012. Ms Whitehead paid tribute to the team and added that Officers had worked 100 hours over the 5 day period of the event.

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

- *Members agreed it was a pleasure to hear the event had been so successful.*
- *Was there any further information about the event proposed for 2012?*

Ms Whitehead advised that everyone involved agreed that something should be done to maintain the impetus of the weekend. There had been several ideas but the final decision would depend on available budget.

- *How could the event be matched in terms of success?*

Ms Whitehead stated that the event could not be matched as Radio 1 brought the event to Carlisle but it was important that future events were right for Carlisle and sustainable to encourage partners to commit. Radio 1 had confirmed that they would endorse any events held in 2012.

- *Members expressed their thanks to Ms Whitehead and her team for the success of the event and were happy with the outcomes of the event.*

Radio 1 and Live Nation had confirmed that the partnership that brought the event had delivered everything that they had been asked to deliver and more. There were many people involved in the event and the partnership approach would be good for the City.

- *People of all ages had visited the event and the youth in Carlisle had appeared happier than at any other time.*
- *At a recent function young people explained that there was to be a media study centre and that the aim was to hold an event similar to the Radio 1 Big Weekend.*
- *It was important that students interested in media studies were encouraged and set in the right direction with regard to quality courses.*

The Economic Development Portfolio Holder advised that there had been no issues raised by residents in the area around the event.

RESOLVED – 1) That the Panel thanked Ms Whitehead and her team for the hard work that led to the success of the event.

EEOSP.56/11 OVERVIEW REPORT INCORPORATING THE WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN ITEMS

The Scrutiny Officer (Mrs Edwards) presented report OS.25/11 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:

- The Forward Plan of the Executive covering the period 1 September 2011 to 31 December 2011 was published on 18 August 2011. Ms Edwards advised that consideration by the Executive of:

- **KD.015/11 – Parking Connect**
- **KD.019/11 – Highways Claimed Rights**, and
- **KD.026/11 – Denton Holme to Castleway Cycleway – Construction of final section**

Had been deferred and therefore would not be available for consideration by the Panel at their meeting on 20 October 2011.

- **KD.027/11 – Sustainable Energy Project at the Civic Centre, Carlisle** - decision to be taken by the Executive on 26 September 2011.
- **KD.022/11 – Botchergate Conservation Area Appraisal**

The above items would be available for consideration at the meeting on 20 October 2011.

- **KD.024/11 – Budget Process 2012-13** – available for consideration at the meeting on 1 December 2011.
- *Councillor McDevitt advised that the County Council were expected to adopt the bridge between Denton Holme and Thomas Street next week.*
- *The Chairman reminded Members that there would be a workshop on Claimed Rights at the end of the meeting that would provide input into any decision made by the Executive.*

The following issues had been considered by the Executive at their meeting on 26 July 2011:

EX.086/11 – Cumbria Strategic Waste Partnership’s ‘Enhanced Partnership Working Project’ – Conclusions of Stage 1

Minute Excerpt EX.086/11 was submitted setting out the decision of the Executive on 26 July 2011

The Executive had decided:

- “1. That the Executive received the conclusions of Stage 1 of the Cumbria Strategic Waste Partnership’s Enhanced Partnership Working Project, as detailed in Report LE.13/11.
2. That the conclusions of Stage 2 of the Cumbria Strategic Waste Partnership’s Enhanced Partnership Working Project be reported to a future meeting of the Executive.”

EX.087/11 – Sustainable Energy Projects

Minute Excerpt EX.087/11 was submitted setting out the decision of the Executive on 26 July 2011.

The Executive had decided:

- “1. That the Executive approved funding for initial feasibility reports on solar photovoltaic (PV) installations for 18 Nr of the Council’s properties at a cost of £2,500.
2. On completion of the feasibility studies, PV installation projects, expected to give a financial return of 8% or higher, would be selected up to a maximum value of £500,000. A further report with recommendations including costs and benefits would be brought back to the Executive for further consideration and determination of the way forward. The funding to be found from the Asset Review.
3. The Executive approved the Council’s involvement as a partner with Denton Holme Green Group to assist in development in the Holme Head Bay hydroelectric project and to investigate the feasibility of the project.
4. On completion of the investigation, subject to there being an acceptable level of return to the authority, a further report with recommendations including costs and benefits be brought back to the Executive for further consideration and determination of the way forward. The funding to be found from the Asset Review.
5. That the Assistant Director (Local Environment) be requested to investigate the feasibility of biomass heating at Longtown Community Centre.”

EX.092/11 – Reference from Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel – Development of Carlisle’s Visitor Economy – Project Initiation and Update

Minute Excerpt EX.092/11 was submitted setting out the decision of the Executive on 26 July 2011.

The Executive had decided:

- “1. That the Executive had considered the reference from the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel and thanked the Panel for their support.”

Mrs Edwards informed Members that the Enterprise Centre Task and Finish Group had held their initial meeting on 22 July 2011 to scope the review. The scoping document that included the Terms of Reference was included as an appendix to the report and Mrs Edwards requested Members to formally endorse the agreed Terms of Reference for the review. Mrs Edwards advised Members that the Task Group would be holding a site visit to the Enterprise Centre on 15 September 2011 and a draft report on the review would be presented to the Panel at their meeting on 1 December 2011.

- *The Enterprise Centre was set up to assist and support new businesses starting out. A Member requested the Task Group to ensure that if the Centre was to close there was another method to carry on that work. He requested information relating to how many businesses had been set up at the Enterprise and how many had been successful.*

The Chairman advised that, as there were not many items on the agenda for the meeting scheduled for October that a workshop could be held possibly on the economy of Carlisle with various partners. She suggested that there should be 2 sessions and that the first should focus on education and training with representatives from academies, college and training providers invited to attend. At a later stage a workshop could be held to discuss business interests. The Chairman suggested that the workshop could be held prior to/or following the 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.) That the scoping document for the Enterprise Centre Task and Finish Group be approved.

3.) That a workshop be held prior to or following the meeting in October to discuss the economy of Carlisle focussing on education and training.

EEOSP.57/11 IMPROVING THE VISITOR ECONOMY FOR CARLISLE

The Economic Development Manager (Mr Pearson) submitted report SD.05/11 that provided an update on the proposals to form a new “not for profit” company limited by guarantee, leading onto a formal Business Improvement District (BID) for the City Centre. The matter had been considered by the Panel at their meetings in January and June 2011.

Mr Pearson advised Members that the further discussions had been held with a range of parties active within the City Centre and the wider tourism industry within the Carlisle District. From those discussions it emerged that the setting up of a formal BID for the City Centre should be a priority and be overseen by a project Steering Group made up of parties with a more direct interest in the economy and activities of the City Centre. The final makeup of the group was yet to be decided.

Mr Pearson advised that an external consultant had been appointed to provide support and advice through the important stages of business engagement and consultation and to ensure all processes of setting up an appropriate BID were closely adhered to. The consultant would be initially working with a small working group that consisted of 2-3 businesses, the Economic Development Portfolio Holder and Officers. The work would focus on gaining a clear commitment and consultation strategy to take the BID forward. The group would look at what issues the BID would initially cover but was expected to include marketing, events, maintenance and management of the City Centre and skills development for City Centre businesses.

Other issues such as car parking and access to the City Centre may also be included in due course.

The City Council would be the overall Project Manager for the setting up of the BID and regular reports on progress would be brought before the Panel. Mr Pearson advised that there would be further discussion on the matter at a meeting of the Carlisle Tourism Partnership scheduled for 5 September 2011.

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

- *There was a concern that the original timetable had slipped. The last report had stated that a Board would be appointed. Had that happened?*

Mr Pearson advised that it had not yet been possible to appoint a Board but in the meanwhile he would be working with the appointed consultant to ensure ongoing progress with the project.

- *The original report stated that a Project Board would be in place by July/August. Had the project Board been finalised and who was on it?*

Mr Pearson advised that there were ongoing discussions on who would sit on the Project Board but advised that the Board would be business led.

- *Following the presentation about the outcomes of the Radio 1 Big Weekend it was important that the Board should pick up on some of the ideas put forward and asked that a new timetable be submitted by the next meeting of the Panel.*

The Economic Development Portfolio Holder stated that the BID was a huge project and that it had been the intention to have representatives from the Carlisle Tourism Partnership and the City Centre Partnership on the Board but that was proving difficult but the consultant would be able to advise to progress the matter. She added that while it had taken longer to progress than anticipated it was important that all relevant strands were pulled together efficiently.

- *Would there be representatives from small, local businesses on the Board?*

Mr Pearson stated that it was important that all sizes of businesses were included but it would be a huge commitment and may prove difficult for both small and medium sizes retail businesses to commit the amount of time that would be required. He added that local managers of large, national businesses tended to move on and it would be important to have representatives on the Board who would be committed to see the project completed.

- *A Member was concerned that the partnership would be perceived as being similar to Carlisle Renaissance. He hoped that the project would bring people together and that the Board would drive the project forward. Members agreed that the Project Board for the BID would be more focussed.*

Mr Pearson explained that that was why it was important to get the right people on the Board. The consultant had set up similar BIDs in other areas of the country so had relevant experience in relation to that particular issue.

- *The title of the report was the visitor economy of Carlisle and the discussion had referred only to the retail sector of the City. Many visitors come to the area to visit Hadrians Wall and Tullie House and not necessarily shopping. While retail was important it was hoped that the consultant would look at tourism and include the people who support tourism.*

Mr Pearson acknowledged that whilst the project was presently being mainly supported by the retail sector it was important that the wider tourism sector be engaged going forward. The current working group felt it was important to get the City Centre right and integrate with the tourism agenda and that a good start had been made with improvements to Castle Street and the Roman Gallery.

- *It would be useful to have the revised timetable prior to the meeting in December and also an indication of who would be on the Board.*
- *There were concerns that the project was slipping and that as there were empty shops in the City Centre and the income of the Lanes was reduced the project would be vital to the economy of Carlisle.*

Mr Pearson informed Members that there were very few vacancies in the Lanes and that one new shop was about to open in the City Centre, two others were undergoing a major re-fit and that there was at least one major retailer wishing to take space in the City Centre but were unable to find suitable premises.

- *When the Board was set up would there be cross party representation?*

The Economic Development Portfolio Holder advised that the Board would be decided by the Executive at the appropriate time. In response to a query about when the appropriate time would be Mr Pearson advised that there was a meeting with the consultant scheduled for 14 September 2011 and a clearer timetable would be produced then. He confirmed that the timetable would be distributed following that meeting.

The Economic Development Portfolio Holder advised that the Board would include representatives from the tourism sector.

RESOLVED: 1) That the Panel gave their support to the project as it was seen to be a vital part of the Carlisle economy.

2.) That Panel had concerns that the Board should not focus entirely on the retail economy but should include representatives from the tourism sector and service industries that provide support to the tourism sector.

3.) That a revised timetable to be circulated following the meeting with the consultant on 14 September 2011.

EEOSP.58/11 PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

The Policy and Performance Officer (Mr Oliver) submitted report PPP.14/11 being the first report of the revised 2011/12 Corporate Plan.

He informed Members that the report constituted the first quarterly report presented in the new style agreed by the Executive on 22 November 2010, adding that progress made in the delivery of each of the Corporate Plan Key Actions was documented along with any risks associated with the delivery of the action and relevant performance indicators.

Mr Oliver explained that each of the Key Actions had been assessed, in conjunction with Assistant Directors and Service Managers, and awarded a red, amber or green rating. He added that the majority of the Key Actions had shown good progress and would be green if the risks were mitigated.

Members' attention was also drawn to the summary of recent consultation findings, update on Transformation and key achievements provided within his report.

In considering the matter, Members raised the following comments and questions:

- *Members found the new format difficult to understand and requested that after 2 cycles the format be reviewed.*

Mr Oliver advised that the next report would include more explanation that should make the report easier to understand.

- *Members requested an explanation why, when targets appear to have been met the RAG rating still indicated red or amber.*

Mr Oliver explained the meaning of the progress bar and added that there was a raft of information behind the figures. From that information Officers were able to decide the RAG ratings.

The Environment and Housing Portfolio Holder agreed that the format was confusing. He added that Officers were only able to include information provided by managers.

The Assistant Director (Local Environment) (Ms Culleton) advised that the format was the first attempt at producing information in that way and added that it was important that Members' views were incorporated as well as managers'.

- *How were the surveys used to form the baseline of the report and monitor the impact of the Corporate Plan?*

Mr Oliver explained that information obtained from the survey in the Carlisle Focus magazine and the Citizen's Panel would provide that information and give an indication of the current position of the Council. He confirmed that there would be another survey that would inform progress of the Corporate Plan.

- *The report stated that litter and fly-tipping had improved over the period of the report but a Member believed that the issue had worsened particularly in the City Centre. Some of the main issues were seagull deposits and rainwater on seats and broken seats.*

In response to a query regarding the CCTV service Ms Culleton advised that following consultation of the service in 2010 a new rota had been drawn up and had been in place since 1 July 2011.

Ms Culleton also explained the role of the Wellbeing Manager post.

RESOLVED – 1) That there were concerns regarding the clarity of the report.

2.) That the Panel looked forward to receiving the next report and would request a review of the method of reporting should they continue to be dissatisfied with the layout of the report.

EEOSP.59/11 PARKING CONNECT

The Assistant Director (Local Environment) (Ms Culleton) submitted report LE.20/11 that provided an update on progress on Parking Connect and on-street parking enforcement. Ms Culleton reminded Members that the City Council had been working with the County Council on a business model to deliver on-street car parking enforcement across the County. A business case had been presented to the County Council that set out a model, costs and income for on street parking enforcement across the County. The model was flexible to allow incremental increases in service provision and included off street enforcement where desired by District Councils. The model was the Parking Connect proposal.

Ms Culleton explained the background to the issue and the proposals put forward by the County Council. Ms Culleton advised Members that a report from the County Council to Cumbria Chief Executives effectively abandoned the Parking Connect proposal and instead proposed to bring the service in-house to the County Council in a “minimal” parking model. That proposal provided significant reduced parking enforcement officers than Parking Connect.

Ms Culleton explained that in 2010/11 the operation of the on-street enforcement service by Carlisle was shown to be largely self-financing within Carlisle, providing that the Residents Parking Permit scheme was subsidised. As an alternative to Parking Connect, the City Council proposed a revised Agency Agreement with the County Council for Carlisle and potentially Eden which removed the Resident Parking scheme from the Agreement but continued with the on-street enforcement element of the service.

Ms Culleton recommended that the service be retained by the City Council as it was of benefit to the residents of Carlisle through the provision of car parking enforcement by one provider for on and off street. The City council could continue to provide face to face customer service and cash payment options at the Contact Centre and that could remove the risk of any deficit in income for the County Council

for on-street enforcement operations. At the same time, the right number of car parking enforcement officers would be provided so that traffic could move freely in the City Centre without any detrimental impact of the drastic reduction of resources proposed by the County Council “minimal” in-house service.

Ms Culleton explained that since writing the report Andrew Moss from the County Council had written requesting discussions about Parking Connect. She advised that matters seemed to be moving quickly and that the matter would be discussed by the County Council in October 2011.

The Environment and Housing Portfolio Holder explained that the County Council wished to take on-street parking enforcement in-house but believed that there could be difficulties if that happened. The County Council had the same financial pressures as the City Council who had demonstrated that on street parking enforcement could be carried out with no deficit.

In considering the matter, Members raised the following comments and questions:

- *With regard to residents parking permits it had been suggested that it may be cheaper to provide permits according to property rather than residents. What was the legal agreement and would the current method continue or could it be reviewed?*

The Environment and Housing Portfolio Holder reminded Members that the issuing of resident and visitor permits was a County Council function and that the City Council had carried out the administration of the scheme and therefore was not in the remit of the City Council to amend.

- *The City Council provided a good service and was able to sort out local problems. The City Council were losing money as they were not subsidised by the County Council as other district councils were.*
- *There was a danger that it may have been perceived by other district councils that Carlisle were taking over on-street parking enforcement. The Member stated that he could see the point of withdrawing from the scheme as the City Council had proved it could manage the scheme.*
- *The report referred to the right number of car parking enforcement officers being provided to ensure that traffic moved freely in the City Centre. The Member was concerned that enforcement officers would not necessarily be in the problem areas and that he would prefer to see a focus on those areas where there were problems.*

Ms Culleton advised that the City Council issued more tickets per patrol than any other district in the area but that the areas covered were where most obstacles occurred.

RESOLVED 1.) That the Panel supported the City Council in the proposal to continue on street car parking enforcement.

2.) That the Panel wished to see further discussion in relation to the resident and visitor parking permit scheme and that an update be provided at a future meeting.

(The meeting ended at 12.20 pm)