

EXECUTIVE

WEDNESDAY 19 JANUARY 2011 AT 1.00 PM

PRESENT:

Councillor Mitchelson (Chairman and Promoting Carlisle Portfolio Holder)
Councillor J Mallinson (Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder)
Councillor Bainbridge (Housing Portfolio Holder)
Councillor Bloxham (Local Environment Portfolio Holder)
Councillor Mrs Bowman (Economic Development Portfolio Holder)
Councillor Ellis (Performance and Development Portfolio Holder)
Councillor Mrs Geddes (Community Engagement Portfolio Holder)

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillor Allison (Chairman of the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

CALL-IN

The Chairman reported that the Mayor had agreed that the following items should be exempt from call-in as call-in procedures would overlap the special City Council meeting on 1 February 2011:

- Revenue Estimates – Summary of Overall Budgetary Position 2011/12 to 2015/16
- Provisional Capital Programme 2011/12 to 2015/16
- Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy 2011/12
- Executive Response to the Budget Consultation and Recommendations for the 2011/12 Budget

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest affecting the business to be transacted at the meeting.

MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings of the Executive held on 25 October, 8 and 22 November; and 13 December 2010 were signed by the Chairman as true records of the meetings.

EX.001/11 BUDGET 2011/12 – CONSIDERATION OF CONSULTATION FEEDBACK (Key Decision)

Portfolio Governance and Resources

Subject Matter

The Leader reported the submission of the following documents in response to consultation on the draft Budget proposals:

(a) Minutes of the budget consultation meeting with the Large Employers Affinity Group - 7 January 2011

(b) Minutes of the budget consultation meeting with representatives of Trade Unions - 7 January 2011

(c) Minutes of the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel - 6 January 2011

In addition, comments received from staff / a member of the public in response to the budget consultation process had been circulated to Executive Members prior to the meeting.

The Chairman of the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel made reference to the very complex nature of the budget process which in turn made the Executive's Budget Proposals difficult to understand. It was difficult to consult with the public and other Members of the Council on that basis. He further referred to the consultation methodology adopted by Cumbria County Council in relation to its budget and suggested that in future the Executive present its budget proposals in plain English.

The Chairman further indicated his agreement with the decisions taken by the Executive and the City Council regarding the Discretionary Rate Relief Policy.

In response, the Leader acknowledged that the budget was complex in nature and the Executive had been working to a very tight timetable. There was, however, a great deal of information available in the public domain. He emphasised that, unlike the County Council, the Executive had made its draft budget proposals available for consultation since they recognised the importance of adhering to the proper process. That exercise afforded people the opportunity to comment and input into the budget proposals.

Referring to the decision taken by the City Council on 11 January 2011 concerning the Discretionary Rate Relief Policy, the Leader stressed that money remained

available in the budget for future applications for rate relief. The next step involved the development of criteria under which applications for discretionary rate relief would be considered and Members of Overview and Scrutiny would have a role in development thereof for the benefit of the community.

The Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder felt that both the City and County Councils could learn lessons from each other in terms of consultation on their respective budgets. The Portfolio Holder thanked the Chairman of the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel for his support, commenting that he did not consider it appropriate for individual applications for discretionary rate relief to be submitted to Overview and Scrutiny. Such decisions were delegated to the Executive under the Council's Constitution. The Portfolio Holder added that he had already sought the assistance of Overview and Scrutiny in the development of that criteria.

The Community Engagement Portfolio Holder said that Officers and Portfolio Holders recognised the need for Overview and Scrutiny to feed into development of the criteria.

The Leader thanked all those who had taken the time to respond to the budget consultation process. He believed that the majority of people sympathised with the very difficult and challenging financial position in which the Council found itself, and recognised that difficult decisions had to be made to ensure the future sustainability of the authority.

The Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder paid particular tribute to the Large Employers Affinity Group and representatives of the Trade Unions for their very helpful contributions at the budget consultation meetings held on 7 January 2011.

Summary of options rejected None

DECISION

1. That the Minutes of the consultation meetings with the Large Employers Affinity Group and Trade Union representatives, attached as Appendices B and C; the Extract from the Minutes of the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel and comments received from staff / a member of the public be received.
2. That the consultation feedback be received, it being noted that the comments had been taken into account by the Executive when formulating its final recommendations for the City Council's 2011/12 budget to be submitted later in the meeting.

Reasons for Decision

To take into account any consultation feedback when formulating recommendations on the 2011/12 Budget.

EX.002/11 BUDGET 2011/12 – REVENUE ESTIMATES: SUMMARY OF OVERALL BUDGETARY POSITION 2011/12 TO 2015/16
(Key Decision)

(In accordance with Paragraph 15(i) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, the Mayor had agreed that call-in procedures should not be applied to this item)

Portfolio Governance and Resources

Subject Matter

Pursuant to Minute EX.220/10, the Assistant Director (Resources) submitted report RD.70/10 providing an update on the Council's revenue budget position for 2011/12 to 2015/16. He informed Members that the report had been amended to mirror the Executive's draft Budget Proposals which were issued for consultation purposes on 22 December 2010, and updated to take account of any further known changes since that date. He then outlined the changes for the benefit of Members.

The Assistant Director (Resources) summarised the General Fund Budget Projections for 2010/11 revised to 2014/15. He added that any budget shortfall would need to be met by appropriation from Council reserves. He further detailed the projected impact on the Council's revenue balances.

The overall budgetary summary set out in the report incorporated the significant savings required. In 2010/11 £3 million recurring savings had been built into the budget. However, given the current pressures, a further £2.5 million in savings were required from the Revenue Budget.

It should be noted that some information remained outstanding, particularly on Government Grant Allocations. Depending upon the timing of any announcements the final figures would be reviewed in the Executive's budget proposals presented to Council on 1 February 2011.

Summary of options rejected None

DECISION

That the Executive received and noted the draft updated budget projections for 2010/11 to 2015/16, together with the potential use of balances and reserves, in order to recommend a budget to Council on 1 February 2011.

Reasons for Decision

To enable the Executive's draft budget proposals for consultation purposes to be prepared.

EX.003/11 BUDGET 2011/12 – PROVISIONAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2011/12 TO 2015/16

(In accordance with Paragraph 15(i) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, the Mayor had agreed that call-in procedures should not be applied to this item)

Portfolio Governance and Resources

Subject Matter

Pursuant to Minute EX.221/10, the Assistant Director (Resources) submitted report RD.73/10 on the Council's Capital Programme for 2011/12 - 2015/16. He informed Members that the report had been updated to reflect the Executive's budget proposals together with any other known changes. The report detailed the revised capital programme for 2010/11 and proposed capital programme for 2011/12 to 2015/16, together with the proposed methods of financing.

The Assistant Director (Resources) added that, due to the severe resource constraints on the capital programme over the next 5 years, a fundamental review had been undertaken to prioritise capital schemes with the aim of ensuring the Council maintained a minimum level of capital receipts, the outcome of which was incorporated within the report. The report also summarised the implications of the review on the proposed programme for 2011/12 to 2015/16 in light of the capital bids submitted to date for consideration. It further summarised the estimated and much reduced capital resources available to fund the programme.

Summary of options rejected None

DECISION

That the Executive:

1. Agreed the Revised Capital Programme and relevant financing for 2010/11 and provisional Capital Programme from 2011/12 to 2015/16 in the light of the capital bids submitted to date, together with the estimated available resources, for recommendation to Council on 1 February 2011 including carry forwards of £4,063,400, new schemes for 2010/11 totalling £421,500 and £99,700 being returned to reserves.
2. Approved the release of £1,638,000 from the Asset Management Reserve to support the Asset Review and to fund improvements to Industrial Estate Roads in 2011/12.
3. Recommended to the City Council that any capital scheme approved by Council may only proceed after a full report, including business case and financial appraisal, had been approved by the Executive, following detailed consideration by the Project Assurance Group.

Reasons for Decision

To prepare a draft Budget proposal for 2011/12 for recommendation to the City Council.

EX.004/11 BUDGET 2011/12 – TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT, INVESTMENT STRATEGY AND MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION STRATEGY 2011/12

(Key Decision)

(In accordance with Paragraph 15(i) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules the Mayor had agreed that call-in procedures should not be applied to this item)

Portfolio Governance and Resources

Subject Matter

Pursuant to Minute EX.222/10, the Assistant Director (Resources) submitted report RD.71/10 setting out the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2011/12 which had been prepared in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management. He added that the Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy for 2011/12 were also incorporated as part of the Statement, as were the Prudential Indicators as required within the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.

He added that those requirements came into operation on 1 April 2004 under the provisions of the Local Government Act 2003. Part 1 of the Act allowed a local authority to borrow money for any purpose that was within its control or for the purposes of the prudent management of its financial affairs. Since April 2004 there had been no statutory limit to the amount that could be borrowed. There was, however, a requirement for full compliance with CIPFA's Prudential Code; the key objectives of which were to demonstrate that the proposed capital investment plans had been assessed by the Council as affordable, prudent and sustainable. Section 3(1) of the Act placed a duty on the Council to determine before the start of the financial year and keep under review the maximum amount that it could afford to borrow. That amount was called the Authorised Limit and was discussed at Appendix A to his report.

The Assistant Director (Resources) reminded Members that the draft Statement had been considered by the Executive on 22 December 2010 prior to the consultation period on the budget proposals for 2011/12. It had also been considered by the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel and the Audit Committee.

An Extract from the Minutes of the Audit Committee on 14 January 2011 (AUC.12/11) had been circulated, confirming that the Committee received the report.

Summary of options rejected None

DECISION

That the Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2011/12, which incorporated the Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy, together with the Prudential Indicators for 2011/12, as set out in Appendix A, and to increase the Counterparty limit for Lloyds Group Banks and RBS Group Banks to £8 million as highlighted in paragraph 9.1.7 of Report RD.71/10, be approved for submission to the City Council on 1 February 2011.

Reasons for Decision

To recommend the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy for 2011/12 to the City Council.

EX.005/11 DRAFT PENSION FUND VALUATION (Key Decision)

(With the consent of the Chairman, and in accordance with Rule 15 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules, this item was included on the Agenda as a key decision, although not in the Forward Plan)

Portfolio Governance and Resources

Subject Matter

The Assistant Director (Resources) submitted report RD.74/10 updating Members on the draft Actuarial Valuation of the Cumbria Local Government Pension Scheme as at 31 March 2010 in respect of the City Council.

He outlined the background to the matter, commenting that the Pension Fund was revaluated every three years and the draft results of the actuarial valuation had recently been received from the Fund's Actuary. The new contribution results arising from the valuation would apply for the three year period commencing 1 April 2011.

A range of options had been provided for the contribution rates. Fixed contribution rates had been provided based upon a 19 year deficit recovery period with options to extend that to 25 years (but no longer). However, a shorter period could be adopted if required. Any increase in contribution rates from April 2011 could be implemented on a phased approach over a maximum three year period.

The Assistant Director (Resources) informed Members that the draft results also provided options with regard to the future funding of past service costs, which had previously been recovered as a percentage of the authority's pensionable pay. The Actuary had provided 2 options, namely to continue funding past service costs as a percentage of pensionable pay; or to pay a lump sum expressed as a £ amount.

The budget made an assumption of a 1.5% increase in the employer's contribution rate over each of the next three years, equating to £206,000 per annum. Early indications were, however, that the increase could be much higher and as much as 4.5%, although changes announced by the Government in June altered the way in which public sector pensions would be increased and the basis from RPI to CPI

resulting in a lower cost to authorities. In the event, the suggested increase was slightly below the initial forecast with the fixed rise on a 25 year recovery period coming in at 0.9% over the three years. The rate for the 19 year recovery period at 2.7% was above the forecast. All of the figures included assumptions for recovery of the deficit i.e. past service costs.

Members' attention was drawn to the table at section 1.5 of the report detailing the estimated cost of the various options, compared to the sums set aside as contained in the revenue budget. It should be noted that those sums were all based upon the current level of payroll costs with no specific provision having been made for any changes arising from the transformational process, shared services, inflation, etc.

It was recommended that the Council retained its current policy of making a fixed rate contribution over three years, rather than moving to a phased rate of increase over that period. There were advantages in that course of action in terms of budget stability.

The Assistant Director (Resources) outlined the implications for the Council of the following options:

Option 1 - 19 year recovery period

Option 2 - up to 25 year recovery with the deficit recovered as a percentage of pensionable pay

Option 3 - up to 25 year recovery with the deficit paid as a lump sum

He reported that both options 2 and 3 could be accommodated within the existing budget provision, with option 2 generating more savings at £79,000 per annum. Option 3, although more costly to the authority, would mitigate any further past service pension liabilities arising in future actuarial valuations and, for that reason, it was recommended that Option 3 be approved. The additional £10,000 costs could be funded from the increase in the 2011/12 tax base equating to £16,000 per annum.

The Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder stated that he was in full agreement with the Assistant Director's recommendation, believing that Option 3 constituted a very sensible and prudent step for the future. Accordingly he moved that recommendation.

Summary of options rejected Options 1 and 2 as set out in the report

DECISION

That the Executive:

1. Noted the information received from Cumbria County Council.
2. Agreed that Option 3 be the preferred option with regard to deficit recovery periods as set out in the body of Report RD.74/10.

Reasons for Decision

To ensure that the Cumbria Local Government Pension Scheme was adequately resourced in the medium term in order that all the employing bodies could meet their future liabilities falling on the Fund. In particular, actuaries had assessed the contributions that the City Council would have to make in the next three years in order to be able to adequately fund those liabilities in the longer term. Various options had been provided for making those contributions and the option 3 was the recommended option. In terms of balancing risk management and affordability, that was also regarded as the most advantageous option.

EX.006/11 EXECUTIVE RESPONSE TO THE BUDGET CONSULTATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE 2011/12 BUDGET (Key Decision)

(In accordance with Paragraph 15(i) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules the Mayor had agreed that call-in procedures should not be applied to this item)

Portfolio Governance and Resources

Subject Matter

The Leader referred to the Executive's Budget proposals for 2011/12, copies of which were tabled at the meeting, and pointed out that some minor alterations had been made subsequent to the Executive meeting held on 22 December 2010.

The Leader informed the meeting that this was a most difficult and challenging budget for the City Council, particularly bearing in mind the substantial implications of the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review. Referring to the background to and context of the 2011/12 budget, the Leader said that previously focus had centred upon the Transformation Programme and the need to achieve £3m in savings over three years. The achievement of those savings had gone a long way towards the total figure required in 2011/12 and he paid tribute to the considerable amount of work undertaken by the Town Clerk and Chief Executive, and Members of the Senior Management Team in that regard.

Of particular note for residents was the fact that there would be no increase in Council Tax during 2011/12.

The Leader set out the key principles for delivering additional savings, namely to reduce the discretionary services provided by the Council; look at Shared Services, re-modelling of service provision and commissioning of services in the medium to long-term; and seek to increase income generation via the Asset Review. Although the capital programme was significantly reduced money was still available for investment in important projects for the City, including the Resource Centre and new families accommodation.

In conclusion, the Leader recommended that the Budget Proposals for 2011/12 be forwarded to the City Council on 1 February 2011 for approval.

The Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder said that the decision to embark upon the Transformation Programme had been extremely fortuitous for the City Council. That did not, however, belittle the difficulties everyone faced in relation to the current very difficult budget process. The Portfolio Holder was of the belief that the budget proposals tabled struck the correct balance between a structural change within the authority and the aim of ensuring that the effect upon service provision was minimised. He considered that the proposals constituted a robust and sustainable model which would serve the authority well into the future.

The Economic Development Portfolio Holder and Performance and Development Portfolio Holder echoed the thanks expressed for the work undertaken by the Town Clerk and Chief Executive, and the Senior Management Team.

The Community Engagement Portfolio Holder reported that to date several meetings had taken place with people in receipt of grants from the City Council, and no-one was in disagreement with the way forward in that regard. She looked forward to working with partners and organisations in moving the matter forward.

Summary of options rejected

A number of options which had been considered as part of the Council's 2011/12 budget deliberations as identified in various reports.

DECISION

That the Executive Budget proposals for 2011/12, attached as Appendix D, be forwarded to the City Council for approval on 1 February 2011.

Reasons for Decision

To produce the Executive's budget proposals for 2011/12 for recommendation to the City Council.

EX.007/11 POLICY FRAMEWORK (Key Decision)

Portfolio Cross-Cutting

Subject Matter

Pursuant to Minute EX.171/10, the Assistant Director (Governance) submitted report GD.08/11 concerning the Council's Policy Framework.

The Assistant Director (Governance) reminded Members that they had on 25 October 2010 considered Report GD.54/10 on the matter and, as a result, agreed that

consideration should be given to streamlining the Council's Policy Framework as specified in its Constitution.

He then outlined the purpose of the Policy Framework, together with results of the consultation feedback, details of which were provided.

The matter had been considered by the Community; Environment and Economy; and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panels and Minute Extracts COSP.87/10, EEOSP.88/10 and ROSP.115/10 circulated prior to the meeting.

In conclusion, the Assistant Director (Governance) recommended improvements to the Policy Framework via a reduction in the number of policies reserved to Council thus streamlining both the Framework and the Council's decision making process. If the Executive was supportive of the proposal the intention was that a report with a recommendation would be presented to the City Council at its meeting on 1 March 2011.

The Chairman of the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel stated that the cross-party workshop held on 21 December 2010 had been excellent. Members were content with the proposed reduction of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework, recognising that it would clarify decision making within the authority.

On behalf of the Executive, the Leader expressed appreciation for the work undertaken by the Assistant Director (Governance) and team, and input from Members of the Council. He therefore looked forward to cross-party support when the matter was considered by Council on 1 March 2011.

Summary of options rejected None

DECISION

That the Executive recommended to Council that it:

1. Support and approve the reduction of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework from the existing 80 plus plans, policies and strategies to the 12 as specified in Report GD.08/11;
2. Amend Article 4 of the Constitution and revise its Budget and Policy Framework as specified in Appendix 2; and
3. Authorise the Assistant Director (Governance) to amend the Council's Constitution accordingly.

Reasons for Decision

As detailed in Report GD.08/11, the proposed changes would lead to a reduced Policy Framework which would streamline the decision making process and improve the clarity of decision making and, in particular, the responsibility for decisions.

EX.008/11 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME 2011-2014
(Key Decision)

Portfolio Economic Development

Subject Matter

The Assistant Director (Economic Development) submitted Report ED.02/11 setting out the Local Development Scheme for the period 2011-2014.

The Local Development Scheme attached to her report provided an up-to-date work programme for the production of Carlisle's Local Development Framework (LDF) Development Plan Documents (DPDs) the Core Strategy and Land Allocations.

The Assistant Director (Economic Development) informed Members that delivery of the LDF in line with the milestones set within the LDS was essential to ensure that the Council had an up-to-date and effective Planning Policy Framework against which planning decisions could be made. There was a risk that pressures on staff time, due to competing work streams, could result in slower than timetabled progression on LDF, resulting in an uncertain Planning Policy Framework for Carlisle. It was therefore vital to ensure that the LDF was recognised as a key priority for the City Council at the corporate level. She then set out details of the key milestones, commenting that work on the evidence base to support the preparation of the documents referred to, as well as supplementary planning guidance, was ongoing.

The LDS differed from the previous version 2008-2011 in that there was no longer a requirement to provide a timetable for the production of proposed Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). However, a list of intended SPDs for production along with the evidence base to support the production of the LDF was still included within the LDS.

The Assistant Director (Economic Development) said that the existing version of the LDS included an Area Action Plan (AAP) for St Nicholas / Botchergate South. However, the preparation of AAPs had to follow on from the production of the Core Strategy to ensure it aligned to the overall spatial strategy. That would lead to considerable delay before the work could be progressed. She added that, having regard to the timing and resource availability over the next few years it had been concluded that an AAP should not be progressed, a more practical option being to ensure that the specific issues and requirements relating to areas of the City Centre would be best met through their consideration within the Core Strategy DPD. Further detail on specific areas could then possibly be provided through the production of area specific SPDs. The same approach would apply to the Rickergate Area which was to be incorporated within the City Centre Area Action Plan.

A Members' workshop had taken place on 26 November 2010 when details of the planning documents listed within the LDS were discussed, along with the proposed timescales for their production. A general overview of the LDF and current work on the evidence to support new policies and strategy was also provided. Members had valued the workshop and requested greater involvement during production of the work which would add value. It was, therefore, proposed that a Member Working

Group be established to work with Officers on the development of the Core Strategy, Allocations DPD and progression of the evidence base, thus ensuring that the Council's corporate priorities were recognised.

The Economic Development Portfolio Holder said that she was enjoying the challenge presented by this area of work. She recommended that a cross-party Working Group be established as soon as possible to ensure that Members had greater knowledge and involvement in the process.

Summary of options rejected None

DECISION

1. That the Local Development Scheme, as appended to Report ED.02/11, be approved and submitted to Government Office.
2. That a Local Development Framework Members' Working Group be set up to give guidance to assist in the preparation of the documents detailed in the LDS.
3. That the report be made available to the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel for consideration.

Reasons for Decision

To establish the planning policy work programme for the next three years.

EX.009/11 ACQUISITION AND DISPOSAL POLICY (Key Decision)

Portfolio Performance and Development

Subject Matter

The Assistant Director (Community Engagement) submitted report CD.27/10 setting out the content and purpose of the Acquisition and Disposal Policy for Carlisle's Museums and Art Gallery Service. The Acquisition and Disposal Policy formed part of the Museums Libraries and Archives' (MLA) Accreditation Scheme which set nationally agreed standards for museums in the UK, and supported them in identifying opportunities for further improvement and development.

He informed Members that all museums were required to review their Acquisition and Disposal Policies at least every five years to ensure that they were up to date and reflected changes in current thinking. It was important that the Council recognised its responsibilities in acquiring additions to its collections to ensure the care of the collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections met the requirements of the Accreditation Standard. A number of other documents needed to be submitted to the MLA in addition to the Acquisition and Disposal Policy, details of which were provided.

The Assistant Director (Community Engagement) then outlined for Members' details of the Accreditation Scheme which encouraged innovation and improvement through the use of other materials and resources produced by MLA and its partners relating to the care of collections, access, learning, inclusion and diversity. Those materials provided support and guidance in meeting and exceeding the current standards.

In conclusion, he drew attention to the Acquisition and Disposal Policy appended to his report, commenting that it was particularly relevant as it would be referred to in the legal contracts for change of governance.

The Performance and Development Portfolio Holder commented upon the importance of the document in terms of the collections.

Summary of options rejected None

DECISION

That the Executive:

1. Approved the Acquisitions and Disposal Policy for Carlisle's Museums and Art Gallery Service, as appended to Report CD.27/10, and agreed that it be submitted to the Museums Libraries and Archives to meet the standards for the national Accreditation Scheme.
2. That the approved Acquisitions and Disposal Policy be incorporated in the Collection Loan Agreement (one of the suite of legal agreements underpinning the transfer of the Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery to a Trust) and that procedures be developed for administering acquisitions and disposals to ensure that the Council's policy is adhered to.

Reasons for Decision

The Museums Service would submit the Acquisition and Disposal Policy as part of the national Museums Libraries and Archives Accreditation Scheme. For Tullie House it was particularly relevant as Accreditation and the Acquisition and Disposal Policy would be referred to within the legal contracts being prepared in readiness for change of governance. Accreditation enabled museums and governing bodies to assess their current performance, and it supported them in planning and developing their services.

Details of the scheme were set out in the report.

EX.010/11 DEVELOPMENT OF CARLISLE'S VISITOR ECONOMY (Key Decision)

(With the consent of the Chairman, and in accordance with Rule 15 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules, this item was included on the Agenda as a key decision, although not in the Forward Plan)

Portfolio Economic Development

Subject Matter

The Strategic Director submitted report SD.02/11 providing Members of the Executive with an overview of the outline proposals to bring together the Carlisle Tourism Partnership and the City Centre Partnership to form a new 'not for profit' company limited by guarantee.

The Strategic Director explained in some detail the background to the matter, together with details of the visitor economy position statement. He informed Members that the Cumbria Local Economic Assessment (November 2010) data showed that there were 2.3m visitors to Carlisle in 2008 generating an estimated £120m in business revenue and supporting approximately 2,100 jobs within the district. Although those figures represented a modest but steady growth in spend from 2000 - 2008, that growth had not been as high as other areas of Cumbria and employment in hotels and restaurants had remained fairly static. Other trend data also indicated that, although Carlisle was recognised as having an attractive city centre, there had been a fall in retailing and wholesale employment since 2005.

Cross sector partnership working to support the visitor economy during that period had been led by two Groups, Carlisle Tourism Partnership and the City Centre Partnership Steering Group, the aims; achievements and current financial position of which were provided.

As Members were aware, the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review had brought significant negative implications for the Council's Revenue and Capital Budgets. Those challenges had been addressed in the draft Budget for 2011-12 and the revised draft Medium Term Financial Plan. The Council's capacity for revenue investment in external partnerships had been significantly reduced due to external spending pressures and consequently a revised approach was required in order to make progress on Carlisle's visitor economy and city centre development.

The Strategic Director stated that, in order to address the financial constraints referred to and also align those plans with the work of the Cumbria Enterprise Partnership, Local Strategic Partnership and Economic Development and Enterprise Theme Group, a working group of Officers together with the Portfolio Holder had developed proposals which sought to bring together into a more cost efficient model the two partnerships outlined above. In addition to the functions of the two partnerships the proposed model also sought to incorporate a working relationship with further and higher education partners, and to seek Government grant support for the creation of jobs via the Regional Growth Fund.

The Strategic Director further outlined details of the company roles; company development; and proposed funding arrangements for the new company. In conclusion, he requested that the Executive consider the outline proposals contained

within his report prior to seeking the views of the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel on the proposed way forward.

The Community Engagement Portfolio Holder emphasised the importance of building upon the work of the Carlisle Tourism Partnership and the need to keep that momentum going.

In response, the Economic Development Portfolio Holder thanked the Community Engagement Portfolio Holder for her support. The Carlisle Tourism Partnership had proved to be a successful venture and she paid tribute to its work and achievements. Unfortunately, further to the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review the Partnership now faced significant financial challenges in terms of available revenue for its operation and staffing resources in 2011/12 and beyond.

She reported that work continued on the new partnership proposals outlined in the Strategic Director's report. A Conference had taken place, to which all businesses had been invited with a view to keeping them fully informed, and which had resulted in a great deal of support being received.

In conclusion, the Economic Development Portfolio Holder moved the recommendation set out in the report.

The Leader commented that the proposals outlined needed to be considered for the reasons stated. For the foreseeable future the focus should centre around moving the new Partnership forward and bringing the City Centre into that equation.

Summary of options rejected None

DECISION

That the Executive had considered the outline proposals on the development of Carlisle's visitor economy contained within Report SD.02/11 and made the report available for consideration by the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

Reasons for Decision

To provide Members with an overview of the outline proposals for development of Carlisle's Visitor Economy.

EX.011/11 FORWARD PLAN
(Non Key Decision)

Portfolio Cross-Cutting

Subject Matter

The Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 January 2011 to 30 April 2011 was submitted for information.

The Assistant Director (Local Environment) had been scheduled to report back on the Parking Connect - Joined Up On/Off Car Parking Enforcement for Cumbria (KD.031/10). She was not, however, in a position to report at this time as further information was awaited from Cumbria County Council.

The Assistant Director (Resources) had been scheduled to report on the Revised Procurement and Commissioning Strategy 2010-12 (KD.005/11). Further clarification was required and the matter was therefore deferred.

Summary of options rejected None

DECISION

That the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 January 2011 to 30 April 2011 be received.

Reasons for Decision

Not applicable.

EX.012/11 SCHEDULE OF DECISIONS TAKEN BY OFFICERS (Non Key Decision)

Portfolio Performance and Development; Governance and Resources

Subject Matter

Details of decisions taken by Officers under delegated powers were submitted.

Summary of options rejected None

DECISION

That the decisions, attached as Appendix A, be received.

Reasons for Decision

Not applicable.

EX.013/11 JOINT MANAGEMENT TEAM MINUTES (Non Key Decision)

Portfolio Various

Subject Matter

The Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Management Team held on 25 November 2010 were submitted for information.

Summary of options rejected None

DECISION

That the Minutes of the Joint Management Team held on 25 November 2010, attached as Appendix E, be received.

Reasons for Decision

Not applicable.

EX.014/11 CUMBRIA LEADERSHIP BOARD (Non Key Decision)

Portfolio Various

Subject Matter

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cumbria Leadership Board held on 12 November 2010 were submitted for information.

Summary of options rejected None

DECISION

That the Minutes of the Cumbria Leadership Board held on 12 November 2010 be received.

Reasons for Decision

Not applicable.

(The meeting ended at 1.57 pm)