

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

### Resources

Report of  
Chairman:

**COUNCILLOR**  
**Reg Watson OBE**

The Chairman attended the first meeting of the Scrutiny Chairs Group on 3<sup>rd</sup> July. Members considered the groups terms of reference, the Council service standards for 2013, scrutiny of welfare reform, budget scrutiny and how scrutiny could be proactive.

The Panel met on 26<sup>th</sup> July. The following issues were discussed:

The Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to set up a small task group to undertake a one day scrutiny of Councillors Small Scale Projects Grants.

It was further agreed that a Task and Finish Group be set up to look at reducing the amount of paper used by the Council and working in a paperless manner.

#### **Projects Assurance Group**

The Panel was advised that the new project – Automating Services – was to be undertaken at a time of very significant changes in email / website accessibility and electronic self service administration. Local Authority Customer Contact Systems would need to keep pace with and anticipate future developments in demand.

The services initially targeted would be Revenues and Benefits, Waste Services and the Enterprise Centre and one customer account for all City Council Services would also be developed.

Concern was expressed about the cost of social housing in Carlisle which led to a wide ranging discussion regarding land use and the cost of land and affordability of housing in the area. Also what part the Council could play in providing more homes.

#### **Corporate Risk Management**

The Redundancy Payment Provision would be removed as reserves had now been topped up by £250,000 as part of the year end accounts and it was anticipated that the Council now had sufficient funds to meet potential redundancy costs in 2012/2013.

Sickness absence processes and procedures were currently being revised along with more robust reporting on sickness statistics. Although there was a concern expressed about sickness absence being removed from the risk register the Panel will continue to monitor throughout the year.

#### **Asset Review Disposal Programme**

The Panel was pleased to receive reassurances that local Councillors would be informed as early as practical of any land or property sale or purchase in their ward area.

**Councillor Reg Watson OBE**

**Chairman, Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee 28.08.12**