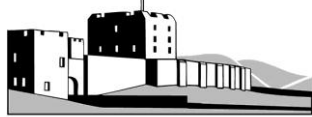


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# **ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

## ***Panel Report***

### **Public**

**Date of Meeting:** 19<sup>th</sup> January 2012

**Title:** Overview Report and Work Programme

**Report of:** Overview and Scrutiny Officer

**Report reference:** OS 04/12

### **Summary:**

This report provides an overview of matters related to the Environment & Economy O&S Panel's work. It also includes the latest version of the work programme.

### **Recommendations:**

Members are asked to:

- Decide whether the items on the Leader's Forward Plan should be included in the Panel's Work Programme for consideration.
- Note and/or amend the Panel's work programme (Appendix 4)

**Contact Officer:** Nicola Edwards

**Ext:** 7122

## **1. Forward Plan Items**

The Forward Plan of the Executive covering the period 1<sup>st</sup> January – 30<sup>th</sup> April 2012 was published on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2011. The following issues contained in this Forward Plan that fall into the remit of this Panel are as follows and full details can be found at Appendix 1:

**KD.032/11 Cumbria Strategic Waste Partnership's Enhanced Partnership, Working Project Conclusions of Stage 2** - To consider the Council's participation in the Cumbria Strategic Waste Partnership's 'Enhanced Partnership Working project – The Executive will make the decision on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2012 and the report is available for scrutiny on 23<sup>rd</sup> February. A short workshop will be held on the rise of the Panel today.

## **2. References from the Executive**

The following references have been received from the Executive and full details can be found at Appendix 2.

**EX.165/11 Budget 2012/13** – Feedback from the Overview and Scrutiny Panels on the draft Budget reports

**EX.69/11 Carlisle Enterprise Centre** – separate agenda item.

**EX.173/11 Charges Review**

## **3. Work Programme**

The Panel's current work programme is attached at Appendix 3 for comment/amendment.

**EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE  
EXECUTIVE  
HELD ON 12 DECEMBER 2011**

**EX.165/11 BUDGET 2012/13 – FEEDBACK FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
PANELS ON THE DRAFT BUDGET REPORTS**  
(Key Decision)

**Portfolio** Governance and Resources

**Subject Matter**

The Minutes of the meetings of the following Overview and Scrutiny Panels relating to the draft Budget reports considered by the Executive on 22 November 2011 were submitted:

- (a) Community - 24 November 2011 (COSP.95/11)
- (b) Environment and Economy - 1 December 2011 (EEOSP.74/11 and EEOSP.77/11 (Car Parking Study); and EEOSP.75/11)
- (c) Resources - 6 December 2011 (ROSP.85/11 - ROSP.93/11)

Copies of the above Minute Excerpts had been circulated.

The Leader then invited the Chairmen of the respective Overview and Scrutiny Panels to speak:

(a) The Chairman of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel was in attendance and outlined the debate, highlighting in particular the Panel's comments / concerns in relation to the Olympic Torch Relay; Income below target; the impact of water charges upon allotment holders; and the Hostel Service.

In response, the Leader advised that the Olympic Torch Relay was a major event in which Carlisle would participate. Although planning was underway, relative costs were not yet available. Overview and Scrutiny would be able to obtain further updates as the matter progressed.

The Environment and Housing Portfolio Holder further explained that the need for increased water charges over a period of time had been agreed with allotment holders some years before. Under that agreement, the Council undertook to take steps to ensure that more than one water connection was available within the larger allotments and work had been done in that regard.

Referring to the Hostel Service, the Portfolio Holder recognised that the charges did not include a support element and emphasised the need to look very seriously at the service and information provided by the City Council. He was quite concerned that the Council had been

unsuccessful in securing Supporting People funding. In conclusion, he applauded Overview and Scrutiny Members for their views on the Resource Centre.

The Community Engagement Portfolio Holder made reference to the terminology used with regard to the Olympic Torch Relay, pointing out that Carlisle would host a 'stage' rather than a 'leg'. She added that the relay was scheduled to pass through areas where there were many sporting facilities, and expressed the hope that everyone would engage with the City Council in showcasing the facilities available within Carlisle.

Referring to the concerns expressed with regard to the impact of the proposed Council Tax freeze, the Performance and Development Portfolio Holder stressed that the Council had a long history of maintaining Council Tax freezes for the benefit of the people of Carlisle. In his view, failure to take up the Government's offer would reflect badly upon the authority.

The Leader emphasised, for the avoidance of doubt, that the Executive proposed to work towards bringing forward budget proposals which included no increase in Council Tax, and would not depart from that stance.

The Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder reiterated the Executive's resolve to freeze Council Tax. He was aware of the concerns put forward in terms of the impact thereof on the 2013/14 budget and outlined some of the options available to address the position (e.g. Budget profiling). The Portfolio Holder considered rejection of Government support in freezing Council Tax to be ludicrous, and the Executive would not on behalf of the people of Carlisle advocate such a course of action.

(b) The Chairman of the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel presented the Minutes of the Panel meeting on 1 December 2011 commenting that the Panel was somewhat disappointed that there was little scope for manoeuvre in terms of charges set nationally (e.g. Planning, Building Control and Dog Fouling). She commented upon the very visible issues of litter and dog fouling, expressing the view that increased charges to address concerns around those areas would constitute a 'win win' situation. Members had requested Portfolio Holders / Officers to continue to lobby central Government.

She outlined the Panel's deliberations with regard to car parking and the serious issues around on street parking. Members felt that the proposed allocation of the City Council's car parks into four categories would give greater flexibility and supported the proposed charges.

The Chairman further outlined the Panel's comments with regard to Parks and Green Spaces; Talkin Tarn and the Assembly Room, the detail of which was set out within the Minute Excerpt.

Referring to the issue of dog fouling / enforcement, the Environment and Housing Portfolio Holder believed that improved education may be the way forward, rather than increasing charges in those areas. The Assistant Director (Local Environment) was looking at how that could be taken forward in conjunction with schools, greater advertising, etc. It was important

for the Council to take a hard stance with regard to dog fouling, particularly bearing in mind the possible health implications for children. He further believed that people using parks and green spaces for business use (e.g. Dog walking businesses) should contribute to the upkeep thereof. That would of course be dependant upon whether such use could be enforced. Further consideration required to be given to the proposed annual registration fee for swimmers at Talkin Tarn and the Assistant Director (Local Environment) was investigating the matter.

In summary, the Environment and Housing Portfolio Holder expressed his gratitude for the work undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny, particularly with regard to car parking.

In response, the Economic Development Portfolio Holder said that announcements would be made in due course as part of the Localism Bill, and it may be possible to lobby Government further to enable Local Authorities to set their own charges with regard to Development Control. She also reminded Members that a review of the Old Town Hall was currently taking place, the outcome of which was awaited.

The Leader indicated his agreement with the sentiments expressed by the Environment and Housing Portfolio Holder with regard to dog fouling, emphasising the importance of concentrating on education and the development of a better relationship with the public around awareness / responsibility.

(c) The Chairman of the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel referred the Executive to Minute ROSP.87/11 and the request that the Executive give consideration to retaining the Small Scale Community Projects Budget which was extremely valued and appreciated in the community. Referring to the Investment Strategy (Minute ROSP.91/11) he added that the Panel had agreed a commitment to a workshop session, post the Morton sale, to better inform Members of the issues/options involved.

The Leader stated that the Small Scale Community Projects Budget constituted a valuable asset for Councillors to assist their constituents.

The Environment and Housing Portfolio Holder also valued that Budget. He noted that certain Members had not made use of their allocation and pled with them to do so for the benefit of people within their Wards.

The Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder agreed that there was mixed take up of the Small Scale Community Projects Budget across the Council. He found it to be very useful in the Longtown Ward and encouraged everyone to utilise that resource. Although the Portfolio Holder could not give an assurance that the Budget would be retained, he said that the matter would receive careful consideration as part of the overall Budget process.

He was also receptive to the idea of a workshop on the Investment Strategy to promote a wider understanding and would discuss the matter further with Overview and Scrutiny.

The Portfolio Holder apologised that it had not been possible for him to attend the Panel meeting on 6 December 2011. He did, however, wish to thank Members for their consideration of the draft Budget reports.

In conclusion, the Leader thanked Overview and Scrutiny Panel Members for their comments which would be taken on board by the Executive when considering and formulating its budget proposals for 2012/13.

**Summary of options rejected**      None

## **DECISION**

That the Overview and Scrutiny Panels be thanked for their consideration of the draft Budget reports and their comments, as detailed within the Minutes submitted, taken into account as part of the Executive's deliberations on the 2012/13 budget.

## **Reasons for Decision**

The views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels will be taken into account as part of the 2012/13 Budget process

**EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE  
EXECUTIVE**

**HELD ON 12 DECEMBER 2011**

**EX.173/11 CHARGES REVIEWS**

(Key Decision)

**Portfolio** Cross-Cutting

**Subject Matter**

Pursuant to Minutes EX.141/11, EX.142/11, EX.143/11 and EX.144/11, further consideration was given to the Charges Reviews in respect of charges falling within the responsibility of the Local Environment; Community Engagement; Economic Development and Governance Directorates. Copies of reports LE.23/11, CD.25/11, ED.39/11 and GD.62/11 had been circulated.

In addition, the Assistant Director (Local Environment) had updated her Charges Report (LE.23/11), copies of which had also been circulated to all Members on 9 December 2011.

Copy Minute Extracts from the meetings of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 24 November (COSP.95/11); Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 1 December (EEOSP.74/11, EEOSP.75/11 and EEOSP.77/11); and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 6 December 2011 (ROSP.90/11) in respect of the charges were also submitted.

The Leader indicated that the Executive had taken on board feedback from the Overview and Scrutiny Panel meetings in formulating its budget proposals, and thanked Panel Members for their contribution.

The Environment and Housing Portfolio Holder then moved the recommendations contained in updated report LE.23/11 in respect of the Local Environment Directorate, subject to the deletion of the proposed charge in respect of 'Low key' commercial use by Dog Walking Companies (Table 5 referred).

The Environment and Housing Portfolio Holder further moved the recommendations contained within report CD.25/11 (Community Engagement Directorate), noting that the majority of the Hostel Services charges had been approved with an implementation date of 1 October 2011, and that the proposed charges for 2012/13 would take effect from 1 April 2012.

The Economic Development Portfolio Holder moved the recommendations contained within report ED.39/11 in respect of the Economic Development Directorate.

The Leader moved the recommendations contained within report GD.62/11 with regard to the Governance Directorate.

**Summary of options rejected** a number of alternative charges as detailed in the above reports

## **DECISION**

1. That the fees and charges as set out within updated Report LE.23/11 and relevant appendices be approved with effect from 1 April 2012 in respect of services falling within the remit of the Local Environment Directorate, with the exception of :  
  
(a) the proposed charge for 'Low key' commercial use by Dog Walking Companies; and  
  
(b) the fees and charges relating to car parks which are approved with effect from the earliest practicable date.
2. That the fees and charges, as set out in report CD.25/11 be approved with effect from 1 April 2012 in respect of the Hostel Services falling within the Community Engagement Directorate.
3. That the fees and charges, as set out in the relevant Appendices to report ED.39/11, be approved with effect from 1 April 2012 for areas falling within the responsibility of the Economic Development Directorate.
4. That the fees and charges, as set out in Appendix A to Report GD.62/11, be approved with effect from 1 April 2012 in respect of the service areas and functions falling within the Governance Directorate.
5. That the Executive noted the Licensing Charges which had been approved by the Regulatory Panel on 19 October 2011.
6. That the Overview and Scrutiny Panels be thanked for their consideration of and contribution to the matter.

## **Reasons for Decision**

The proposed charges and options reflected the Corporate Charging Policy as set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan, whilst attempting to recognise service pressures and trends.





# ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2011/12

Date last revised: 16 January 2012



Issue	Type of Scrutiny					Comments/status	Meeting Dates							
	Performance Management	Forward Plan Item/Referred from Executive	Policy Review/Development	Scrutiny of Partnership/External Agency	Monitoring		23 Jun 11	28 Jul 11	08 Sep 11	20 Oct 11	01 Dec 11	19 Jan 12	23 Feb 12	05 Apr 12
<b>THIS MEETING 19<sup>th</sup> January 2011</b>														
Cumbria Waste – Enhanced working		✓				To consider Options for CSWP Project		✓			Workshop 19/1/12	?		
Economy of Carlisle Cllr Bowman Jane Meek				✓		Report of workshop held 15/11/11			Workshop 15/11/11		✓			
Environmental Performance of the Council Cllr Bloxham Arup Majhi			✓		✓	Regular monitoring of performance, including progress updates on Climate Change Strategy, Carbon Trust and Green Travel Plan.					x	✓		
<b>TASK AND FINISH GROUPS</b>														
Enterprise Centre			✓			To receive Executive response to Task Group report			✓			✓		

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Portfolio Holder & Lead officer														
<b>Area Working</b>			✓			To monitor Task Group Recommendations	✓						✓	
<b>Car Parking</b> Cllr Bloxham			✓			Update on implementation of Task Group Recommendations				✓				
<b>FUTURE MEETINGS</b>														
<b>Dog Fouling</b> Cllr Bloxham Angela Culleton			✓			To receive a report on the Enforcement of Dog Fouling							?	
<b>Performance Monitoring Reports</b> Cllr Ellis/Bloxham/Bowman Steven O'Keefe	✓				✓	Monitoring of performance relevant to the remit of Panel	✓		✓		✓		✓	
<b>City Centre Partnership</b> Cllr Bowman Darren Crossley				✓		Workshop with Consultant 20/10/11	✓		✓	✓				
<b>Sustainable Energy Strategy</b>		✓				Awaiting feasibility study for sustainable energy projects		✓						

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	Performance Management	Forward Plan Item/Referred from Executive	Policy Review/Development	Scrutiny of Partnership/External Agency	Monitoring		23 Jun 11	28 Jul 11	08 Sep 11	20 Oct 11	01 Dec 11	19 Jan 12	23 Feb 12	05 Apr 12
<b>Core Strategy</b>		✓				To consider issues and options paper as part of consultation		✓						
<b>Transformation Programme of Carlisle City Council</b> Cllrs Bloxham/Bowman Angela Culleton/Jane Meek		✓				Monitoring of Transformation of Directorates under the remit of the Panel				✓				
<b>Control of Seagulls</b> Cllr Bloxham Angela Culleton			✓			12 month update						✓		
<b>Waste Services</b> Cllr Bloxham Angela Culleton			✓	✓	✓	Annual update								✓
<b>Scrutiny Annual Report</b>			✓		✓	Draft report for comment before Chairs Group								✓
						Area Working recommendation re monitoring of complaints etc								✓
<b>COMPLETED ITEMS</b>														

# ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2011/12

Date last revised: 16 January 2012



Issue	Type of Scrutiny					Comments/status	Meeting Dates							
	Performance Management	Forward Plan Item/Referred from Executive	Policy Review/Development	Scrutiny of Partnership/External Agency	Monitoring		23 Jun 11	28 Jul 11	08 Sep 11	20 Oct 11	01 Dec 11	19 Jan 12	23 Feb 12	05 Apr 12
<b>Budget</b> Cllrs Mallinson /Bloxham/Bowman Peter Mason/Darren Crossley		✓	✓			To consider budget proposals for 2011/12					✓			
<b>Car Parking Study</b> Cllr Bloxham/Angela Culleton/Keith Poole			✓			To consider results of car parking study				✓				Update Oct 12
<b>Botchergate Conservation Area Appraisal</b>		✓				To consider report prior to Council for adoption as part of the LDF				✓				
<b>Radio One Big Weekend</b>						A presentation showing the economic impact of the event			✓					
<b>Parking Connect</b> Cllr Bloxham Angela Culleton		✓				Update on response from County Council			✓					
<b>Claimed Rights</b> Cllr Bloxham Angela Culleton		✓				To hold workshop to consider options for future of Claimed Rights in Carlisle				W/Shop 8/9/11				