

(Approved by Council 26 April 2011)

ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

THURSDAY 7 APRIL 2011 AT 10.00 AM

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Rutherford (Chairman), Councillors Bowditch, Craig, Hendry (from 11:50 to 1:15), Mrs Luckley (until 12:55) and Nedved (substitute for Councillor Mrs Vasey).

ALSO

PRESENT: Councillor Bloxham – Local Environment Portfolio Holder (until 1:30)
Councillor Mrs Bowman – Economic Development Portfolio Holder (until 1:35)

EEOSP.19/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mrs Robson and Mrs Vasey.

EEOSP.20/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

EEOSP.21/11 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED – 1) That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2011 be noted.

- *What did the meeting of the City Centre Partnership resolve in respect of the work on seagulls?*

The Economic Development Portfolio Holder advised that a meeting had been held but as there were insufficient people at the meeting for a full discussion no resolution was made and the matter was deferred to the next meeting of the partnership to be held in June.

EEOSP.22/11 CALL IN OF DECISIONS

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

EEOSP.23/11 OVERVIEW REPORT INCORPORATING THE WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN ITEMS

The Scrutiny Officer (Mrs Edwards) presented report OS.11/11 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 April 2011 to 31 July 2011 was published on 18 March 2011. The issues that fell within the remit of the Panel were:
 - KD.012/11 – Regional Spatial Strategy – Revocation. Since writing the report it had been agreed that the Regional Spatial Strategy would not be a key decision and would not therefore be included in the Forward Plan and a decision would be made by the Executive at their meeting on 18 April 2011. The Assistant Director (Economic Development) (Mrs Meek) advised that there was nothing new in the strategy and that it was clarification for planning officers and external partners.
- Shop Doctor – the Chairs of the Community and Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panels had met with the Economic Development Portfolio Holder on 6 April 2011 to discuss the work of the Shop Doctor. The Portfolio Holder advised that the scheme had been very successful and explained some of the activities that had happened within the district. She advised that, following the advice given to 33 rural businesses, 22 stallholders within Carlisle market hall had taken the opportunity to obtain advice from the Shop Doctor. Following that some funding remained; therefore advice was offered to businesses in deprived areas of the city and 16 businesses were being assisted. Unless grants could be found there would be no further funding available to continue the Shop Doctor scheme. The Portfolio Holder stated that there had been very good feedback from those businesses who had used the scheme.

In response to a Member's query the Portfolio Holder advised that the City Council no longer employed mystery shoppers but there were agencies who did.

- Scrutiny Chairs Group Meeting – 1 March 2011 – A meeting of the Scrutiny Chairs Group was held on 1 March 2011. The Chair drew Members' attention to the notes of the meeting and advised that the main item for discussion had been the revised Protocol on Relations Between Overview & Scrutiny and the Executive. While the protocol was largely positive it was felt that there had been problems due to a lack of communication. It had been suggested that tripartite meetings would be introduced to discuss issues in future Forward Plans, policy development and the Panel's Work Programme. It was hoped that the introduction of those quarterly meetings would lead to better communication and more efficient working. There had also been discussion on attending meetings and the importance of the Chair attending Executive following a specific piece of work was stressed. It was also agreed that the Portfolio Holder should present reports at Panel meetings relating to policy matters and officers present reports relating to more technical

issues. The meeting had also considered support arrangements and while there had been problems initially the support was working well.

- Work Programme – Members agreed that a development session would be held at the rise of the Panel meeting on 23 June 2011.

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 a development session would be held at the rise of the Panel meeting on 23 June 2011.

EEOSP.24/11 NEIGHBOURHOOD WORKING TASK AND FINISH GROUP REPORT

The Scrutiny Officer (Mrs Edwards) submitted report OS.08/11 which included the draft report of the Neighbourhood Services Task and Finish Group.

Mrs Edwards reminded the Panel that the Task and Finish Group was a joint Group between the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel and the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel. The Group had produced the draft report which set out a number of recommendations for action for the Executive.

Mrs Edwards took the Panel through the background and methodology of the Task and Finish Group and highlighted an update on Cumbria County Council's Task group on Locality Working.

Mrs Edwards drew Members attention to the recommendations in the report and asked for their comments.

- *A Member of the Task Group stated that whilst they were happy with the recommendations the work undertaken by the Task and Finish Group was not that which the Panel thought the Group would focus on. It was believed that the report would focus more on the work around area maintenance and how Officers would work with partners to obtain the best results for the Council.*

The Local Environment Portfolio Holder stated that he agreed and that the Council needed to look at area based working.

The Assistant Director (Local Environment) (Ms Culleton) added that the emphasis of the report was on community engagement and that the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group had not looked at the delivery of environmental services in depth. She explained that transformation and the consideration of area working had been held back to allow for the Task and Finish work to be completed. Ms Culleton explained that savings for next year must now be found and Officers were working on ways to find savings by changes in service delivery and she was keen for Panel Members to be involved. Ms Culleton advised that staff workshops had been arranged for end of May and Early June to enable staff to have input into those

changes and asked that she meet with the Chair of the Panel for a short meeting for the Panel's input. It was then expected that firm proposals would be in place by the end of June.

- *What are the next steps and when will the proposals be implemented?*

Ms Culleton explained that the outcome of the workshops would lead to the proposals and there would be consultation with staff before those proposals could be implemented. While Officers were aware of the work the County Council were doing in respect of community engagement, the City Council were looking at more multi-agency working and work within the Neighbourhood and Green Spaces Team to arrange services and deliver services to the community.

The Strategic Director (Mr Crossley) explained that once the report had been considered by the Executive Officers could begin work on timetabling the required work.

Ms Culleton added that the work was part of the Corporate Plan and all the actions were included in the Covalent system and that was monitoring progress and updated quarterly.

Mr Crossley advised that the process for the changes was underway and that the recommendations from the Community and Environment and Economy Scrutiny Panels would be taken to the Executive for consideration. If the Panel wished to add more recommendations with regard to more practical work it was important that that was done quickly to keep momentum and to work with the meeting cycle.

- *The Panel's development session to be held in June would look at those monitoring changes and look at changes in the practical work of the Council. Performance Indicators could be produced that would monitor those change.*

Mr Crossley believed there needed to be more clarity on service delivery and methods of service delivery and that multi-agency working would be useful. While he agreed that the report seemed biased towards community engagement there was not a lot of work to be done to add more recommendations. That work could be done by the Panel or a sub-group and should focus on any additional recommendations for inclusion in the report.

The Panel agreed that the Members of the Task and Finish Group from this Panel would meet on 11 April 2011 at 1:00pm to consider further recommendations.

RESOLVED – 1) That the recommendations as set out in the Neighbourhood Working report be agreed and the Panel give delegated responsibility to members of the Task and Finish Group to provide additional recommendations following their meeting on 11 April 2011;

2) That the Neighbourhood Working report be referred to the Executive for a formal response to the recommendations.

EEOSP.25/11 CAR PARKING TASK AND FINISH GROUP

The Local Environment Portfolio Holder (Councillor Bloxham) gave an update on the recommendations from the Car Parking Task and Finish Group. He advised Members that actions that had been taken so far were as indicated below:

1. Residential parking schemes should break even and consideration needs to be given to how this can be achieved. The Portfolio Holder explained that that was a County Council responsibility and that at present there were no plans to levy charges on residents. In Carlisle the cost of operating the various Residents Parking Disc Zones cost £44,000 annually to operate. As the County Council had not yet agreed to fund those costs Officers were taking steps to minimise operational costs by not renewing permits on an annual basis. As part of the discussion related to Parking Connect the issue of funding those schemes needed to be resolved by the County Council to ensure the City Council did not incur any costs.

There was discussion about how the scheme could be amended but as the County Council had agreed to maintain the status quo there was no need to inform residents apart from advising that new permits would not be issued when current ones expired but that residents could continue to use the current permit.

2. A review should be undertaken into all of the disc parking zones within the City with consideration to narrowing zones if they are deemed too wide. The Portfolio Holder advised that that was a County Council responsibility and circumstances had changed since the zones were set up. The County Council had proposed to review Zones A, C and D looking at the extent of the zones and the waiting times permitted by those using parking discs. Local residents would be fully consulted as part of the review process and it was expected that other zones would be reviewed as part of an ongoing process. The Portfolio Holder explained that there was no timetable for any changes but that he was due to attend a meeting at the County Council on 11 April 2011 and would feed back to the Panel any relevant information. The Portfolio Holder suggested that he would write to the County Council requesting the information.

3. That the Executive instructs an Officer to look at how car park assets can be maximised. The Portfolio Holder explained that car park charges were reviewed annually and Officers were also aware that development proposals may arise that may involve the use of existing car parks. He advised that Officers would respond to such issues to ensure that car park assets were used to maximise benefit.

4. That consideration is given to offering a larger discount for contract parking for Devonshire Walk Car Park. The Portfolio Holder advised that in the past discounts had been offered on the car park but they had proved ineffective in increasing usage or income. Officers were planning to implement a number of initiatives to increase usage including a promotion in the Focus magazine. Members were aware that Devonshire Walk car park was underused and that contract parking was reducing in general but suggested that if discounts were given for Devonshire Walk car park that could move some of

the parking issues from Swifts car park and increase contract parking. The Portfolio Holder hoped that when the Sainsbury development was underway and the underpass was open that could attract more people to use the car park and that regardless of when the Sainsbury development started there were initiatives being considered in relation to contract parking on Devonshire Walk car park.

5. That contract parking is available at a pro-rata cost for parking on set days of the week. The Portfolio Holder advised that a decision had been delayed pending the outcome of Parking Connect. He explained that people's work patterns were changing and more drivers were only working part of the week and would see no benefit of obtaining a 5 or 6 day permit. When parking charges were next reviewed Officers would consider offering the option of contract permits for part of the week and would be considered as part of next year's budget cycle. There were also problems when people who were part of a car sharing scheme parked their car on the street.

- *Has anyone looked at reducing parking charges?*

The Portfolio Holder advised that the Council had reduced charges in the past and that year had been the worst year in relation to income. The Economic Development Portfolio Holder added that free parking was introduced over the Christmas period in an attempt to stimulate the economy but that no major impact had been identified.

The Assistant Director (Local Environment) (Ms Culleton) advised that some of the increase in the charges this year was due to the increase in VAT.

The Portfolio Holder advised that when Officers were considering the budget implications the economy of Carlisle as a whole was taken into consideration.

- *How reliable was the information on car park screens on the approaches to the City?*

The Portfolio Holder advised that the information was very reliable.

- *The signage to Devonshire Walk car park could be improved.*

6. That the Executive give consideration to linear parking charges. The Portfolio Holder advised that a decision had been delayed pending the outcome of Parking Connect. He had been advised that the machines currently in use could not be adapted to give change and the introduction of linear charging may be confusing to customers. On balance it was decided that the existing charging structure should remain but to allow for those without change a pay by phone system should be considered.

7. That consideration is given to introducing Pay by Phone parking. The Portfolio Holder advised that a decision had been delayed pending the outcome of Parking Connect. Officers were currently meeting with a number of firms who offer a pay by phone system. Drivers would be able to pay for parking by

phoning a pre-arranged number and the facility could be included to extend a stay by making a second call. When the systems on offer had been assessed a report would be presented to Members. That method of payment would reduce the amount of cash to be collected from machines that would result in a saving. Similar systems were currently being trialled in Allerdale and South Lakes.

8. Parking Connect. The Portfolio Holder reminded Members that the City Council had been working with the County Council to develop a business plan under which all on street parking enforcement in the county could be carried out by the City Council under the name "Parking Connect". An update report was presented to the Executive at its meeting on 14 February 2011 outlining the potential risks and benefits. Officers of the County Council would present a report to their Cabinet in May and a decision was awaited. The Portfolio Holder paid tribute to Ms Culleton and her team for the hard work carried out in respect of Parking Connect.

RESOLVED: 1) The Panel thanks the Portfolio Holder for the update and looked forward to further updates when the recommendations were implemented.

2.) That a progress report be brought to the Panel in 6 months.

EEOSP.26/11 CARLISLE TOURISM PARTNERSHIP

The Director of the Carlisle Tourism Partnership (Ms Whitehead) presented report ED.16/11 that provided the Panel with a 6 monthly review of the Carlisle Tourism Partnership Action Plan.

Ms Whitehead reminded Members of the background to the Partnership and the reasons why the Partnership was set up. She stated that the challenge was to improve the appeal of Carlisle as a destination by raising the quality and diversity of the facilities available and communicating those improvements to markets that were more inclined to visit. Ms Whitehead advised that there was a major role to play in leadership and co-ordination in terms of tourism related activities and capital programmes and stated that although the partnership would be unable to deliver individual projects there was a need for leadership and an understanding of roles and responsibilities of key organisations.

Ms Whitehead gave a summary of the Partnership's key achievements since July 2009 and some events scheduled for the coming months and advised Members how those events would be marketed.

Ms Whitehead gave an update on the Tourist Information Centre and explained the immediate priorities and projects and also the achievements to date. Some of those achievements included:

- the successful completion of the training programme provided by Cumbria Tourism
- an increase by 5% of visitor numbers into Carlisle TIC over the last 2 years
- an increase in accommodation booking of 90%

- stocks of Carlisle Utd and Eddie Stobart souvenirs
- working with Carlisle college and Richard Rose Academy to provide work experience for students, attending open evenings and giving talks
- Carlisle TIC was now an agent for Superbreak Holidays
- the generation of £8,000 from Carlisle angling membership since becoming an agent for them.

Ms Whitehead advised members of the Marketing Collateral and the new website for Carlisle – discovercarlisle.co.uk. Ms Whitehead explained about partner marketing and PR and explained that Carlisle continued to receive excellent publicity and had hosted journals from local, regional, national and international locations. She advised that the Partnership were working on developing several clusters of food and drink operators and were carrying out some filming around Carlisle's more contemporary food and drink outlets that would be used as a PR tool and to encourage travel writer visits.

Ms Whitehead advised Members about the Capital programme including the Roman Frontier Gallery at Tullie House, the Roman Gateway Public Realm Works and the Old Town Hall.

Ms Whitehead continued with an update on issues relating to improving the quality and profitability of Cumbria's business tourism market. She gave an update on activity in relation to the website, www.myplacecumbria.co.uk and the Cumbria Ambassador training programme.

Ms Whitehead further advised that the Partnership Development post would end on 31 March 2011 but that she would continue on secondment until the end of May to cover the One Big Weekend event. The Regional Growth Fund bid was submitted in January 2011 and was the only one of the Cumbria bids to receive LEP endorsement. A response was anticipated late March/early April. With regard to funding Ms Whitehead explained that the partnership had been able to secure additional funding from a variety of sources to deliver all of the activity included in the report. She gave an outline of the funding and added that the funding from the City Council was used to generate an additional £440,000 to support tourism and marketing of the City.

Ms Whitehead had worked with partners in marketing Carlisle as a Heritage City that targeted residents in North America and Canada who had a high level of disposable income but wanted to know that they were safe in the city.

Since the report had been produced the City Council had announced that Radio 1's One Big Sunday event would take place in May at Carlisle airfield. This was a major project that the Carlisle Tourism Partnership had been working on for several months. There had been concerns about the choice of site but after consideration Radio 1 representatives had agreed that the airfield was the only venue suitable. Letters had been sent to 5500 residents near to the airfield advising them of the event and the associated practical arrangements. The announcement had resulted in national publicity in newspapers and magazines. Ms Whitehead had been interviewed with representatives from Breakfast TV and Radio Cumbria.

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

- *The Panel thanked Ms Whitehead for all the work she had done.*
- *A current programme on TV focussed on a farm in Cumbria. There were several references to Cumbria and the programme gave a positive picture of the area. It was difficult to get conferences to come to Cumbria but people were interested in the rural areas and work had to be done to try to convince conference organisers to bring conferences to the area.*

Ms Whitehead advised that the Ambassador Leadership Group consisted of partners and looked to bring conferences relating to education, rural issues and nuclear issues to the area.

- *What was the cost to the City Council for the One Big Weekend event? And if there was a cost was it covered within the budget?*

Ms Whitehead explained that there were 10 main functions of the event and some would create income, some would have a cost and some would be a resource issue. She advised that Carlisle Tourism Partnership were trying to ensure that all costs would be covered. The biggest issue would be waste management and the County Council were negotiating with Cumbria Waste Services to manage costs. All parties and organisations were minimising costs for supply of services including the police, medical and waste management provision.

- *Carlisle United home games play host to 20,000 to 30,000 away fans each season and the Football Association was keen to make football matches family events. That should also be included in the Tourism strategy for the future of Carlisle.*

The Portfolio Holder advised that an event was to be organised involving Carlisle United and the trophy.

- *Were the costs for the One Big Weekend being met by marketing initiatives?*

Ms Whitehead advised that there would be advertisements on the City Council website and within the tourism guides. At the One Big Weekend event there would be only one commercial tent and the City Council had secured that. Information on English Heritage, University of Cumbria, Carlisle Tourism Partnership and Hadrians Wall Heritage Site would be available. The BBC had ensured that the Carlisle Tourist Information Centre would have the booking income from the event.

- *Carlisle railway station brings 1.7 million people into the city. How effectively does the Council use those gateways to advertise the City?*

Ms Whitehead explained that various methods of advertising had been tried at the railway station and that Officers were looking at reviewing the matter. Officers ensure a presence in the station when tourist trains are scheduled providing guided tours. Whilst it would be useful to have a Tourist Information satellite centre at the station it would not be cost effective. Ms Whitehead stated that Carlisle was highlighted in articles in the free magazines on Virgin trains.

- *Why does Carlisle station have no litter bins or left luggage facilities?*

Ms Whitehead explained that the lack of litter bins was due to security issues and that bike lockers had been provided.

The Assistant Director (Economic Development) (Mrs Meek) advised that the tourism service would be reviewed over the next 12 months looking at how to provide better services. The old town hall would be examined and a report presented to the Panel at a future meeting.

- *There were no cafes open in the city centre after 7:00pm. Had any of the local retailers made plans to remain open longer over the weekend of the One Big Weekend event?*

Ms Whitehead advised that she had been working with retailers and members of the nighttime economy group to put on after show parties that would be family based. There had been a number of offers and a free souvenir guide would be produced containing offers for local retailers.

Ms Whitehead confirmed that she had been working with members of the nighttime pastor scheme.

In response to a comment about the site of the Tourist Information Centre Mrs Meek advised that there were a number of issues to be examined and the options would be presented to Members.

- *Members had previously had sight of proposals for the Old Town Hall and agreed a way forward. Unfortunately funding had been lost but it was important that the Centre remained a high profile within the City Centre. Had Officers been investigating alternative funding?*

The Economic Development Portfolio Holder stated that Officers would continue to look at the Old Town Hall and while she was disappointed that the Council could not obtain heritage funding, funding had been applied for through the Regional Growth Fund and English Heritage.

The Strategic Director (Mr Crossley) advised that a report being presented to the Panel in June would include an update on the Old Town Hall.

The Economic Development Portfolio Holder stated her thanks to Ms Whitehead for all the work she had done during her post as Director of Carlisle Tourism Partnership and that she hoped the work would continue. Ms Whitehead confirmed that the Officers in the Tourism department were enthusiastic and would continue to work with partners and there was also a very good team based at the Tourist Information Centre.

RESOLVED – 1) The Panel thanked the Officer for the report on the Carlisle Tourism Partnership, which was positive and a pleasure to read.

2) The Panel were concerned about funding for the Old Town Hall initiative and urged the Executive to give its full support when looking at Capital Projects and funding allocations.

3.) The Panel were pleased that the work would not end when the Carlisle Tourism Partnership ended.

4.) The Panel understood that there was the possibility that the Tourism Partnership could be merged with the City Centre Partnership Group and that they looked forward to an update in June.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 and reconvened at 12:40.

EEOSP.27/11 CONNECT2 CYCLEWAY

The Assistant Director (Local Environment) (Ms Culleton) presented report LE.07/11 that provided the background to and an update on the Connect2 Cycle Scheme. The project sought to connect the North and South of the City with a continuous cycleway. Sustrans had decided to withdraw their funding from the scheme, despite the City Council submitting information to show that the scheme was on programme for completion by the March 2013 deadline.

Ms Culleton explained that during the past 2 ½ years the City and its partners had completed approximately 2000m of the Connect2 scheme. Other elements of the scheme were under construction or due to commence in the next few months. Despite the progress it became apparent that completion of the full original scheme was unlikely due to the financial climate. Sustrans recognised the risk and placed the scheme “at risk”. The City Council submitted a revised scheme to which Sustrans requested answers to specific questions and additional information which was supplied. Within the information was a requirement for Sustrans to confirm their commitment to the amended scheme and the funding by 10 December 2010. Unfortunately that confirmation was not forthcoming and Sustrans insisted that the City Council continue with the programmed activities up to the end of February without a guarantee that funding would be secure thereafter.

Ms Culleton advised that at that time the city judged that it had provided sufficient information for the “at risk” level to be removed. However, Sustrans did not agree and a letter was received from Sustrans in February 2011 stating that they had applied to the Big Lottery Fund for agreement to withdraw the funding offer of £975,000.

Ms Culleton explained that it was anticipated that the Castleway ramp element would be provided with the Sainsbury’s development and an interrupted route of 2700m from the Sheepmount to Strand Road would be available when a short section near the Sands was provided.

The City Council remained firmly committed to the delivery of the whole scheme subject to financial support from partners, including Sustrans. That commitment was clearly demonstrated by the continuing work on cycle routes as detailed and the City

Council believed that the amended scheme was still deliverable and that the situation was improved with recent offers of assistance towards the scheme from the County Council. The City Council would continue to progress the scheme as funds became available and hoped that it was not the end of Sustrans involvement. Since February 2011 Sustrans had agreed to meet with Council representatives following discussions with the County Council.

The Local Environment Portfolio Holder advised that a letter had been received from Sustrans at 3:15pm on Friday 25 February 2011 requesting answers to questions by Monday 28 February 2011. It was anticipated that the Sainsbury development would go ahead and the County Council had engaged in a brokering meeting with the City Council and Sustrans. County Council Officers had visited Sustrans in Bristol on 4 April and had been advised that funding had been withdrawn and were given several excuses for that decision.

Officers had repeatedly requested meetings with Sustrans and requested further information but had received no response. The Portfolio Holder confirmed that the City Council was still committed to the scheme but that there was still some work to be done. He believed that a letter should now be sent to the Big Lottery, either from the Leader of the Council or the Chief Executive, to explain the situation from the City Council aspect as the reputation of the City Council was at risk.

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

In response to a query the Portfolio Holder advised that Sustrans was a registered charity. The Assistant Director (Local Environment) (Ms Culleton) confirmed that there was no complaints or appeals procedure on Sustrans' website.

- *Sustrans was formed before the millennium to set up a cycle way from John O'Groats to Lands End and were awarded £43m at that time. That scheme had not been achieved and it was not clear whether that funding had been spent.*
- *It may be useful to send a joint Parliamentary letter regarding the matter as the Council were being blamed for the matter when they were not at fault. It may also be useful to write to Prince Charles as he was keen on Cumbria and rural issues in general.*
- *It would be useful to have a briefing paper on lessons learned and what was happening next.*
- *Has the money allocated for the scheme been allocated elsewhere and would there be any recourse if it had?*

Sustrans had advised that they had other schemes under review.

- *In dealings with charitable organisations in the past if there was any deviation from a charity funded scheme, or if the scheme was not to continue, permission had to be sought for the change or some of the money returned. If the Big Lottery had allocated money for a specific scheme would Sustrans not be legally bound to change the scheme without consultation?*

The Portfolio Holder advised that the scheme had been put “at risk” as the City Council did not have the funding for a new bridge over the River Eden. However alternatives had been submitted but no confirmation had been received that the alternative had been accepted.

Ms Culleton advised that Sustrans had confirmed that they could not guarantee the funding. She had requested information regarding their variation procedure as there had been no formal approval of the amendments and had been advised that they could not guarantee the funding.

The Portfolio Holder confirmed that 2000 metres had been completed and that the remainder of the scheme would be completed by the deadline of 2013.

- *A formal complaint should be made to the Big Lottery if Sustrans had no appeals process.*

While it was acknowledged that Sustrans was a registered and had done some good work it was important that the reputation of the City Council was maintained.

RESOLVED: 1) That the report on Connect2 Cycleway be noted.

2) That the Panel were grateful for the explanation regarding the situation and the work that had been done and was planned for the future.

3.) That the Panel supported the Executive’s decision with regard to sending a letter to the Big Lottery to explain the Council’s position on the matter.

EEOSP.28/11 SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

During consideration of the above Item of Business, it was noted that the meeting had been in progress for 3 hours and it was moved, seconded and RESOLVED that Council Procedure Rule 9, in relation to the duration of meetings be suspended in order that the meeting could continue over the time limits of 3 hours.

EEOSP.29/11 WASTE SERVICES 6 MONTHLY UPDATE REPORT

The Assistant Director (Local Environment) (Ms Culleton) presented report LE.08/11 that provided a 6 monthly update on recent developments in the Council’s Waste Services as requested by members of the Panel at an earlier meeting.

Ms Culleton presented the Waste Service Performance Indicators and explained that the figures were broadly similar to those of last year and were on target to meet the current year’s target of 47%.

Ms Culleton updated Members on the refuse collection service, including the purple sack review, the Greenbox multi-material kerbside recycling service, plastic and cardboard kerbside recycling collection service, garden waste and neighbourhood recycling centre.

Ms Culleton explained that the Council was an active member of the Cumbria Strategic Waste Partnership (CSWP) who had received a report to assess the options available to the CSWP for “enhanced partnership working”. The aim of the proposed Enhanced Partnership Working Project was to identify the most appropriate model for future partnership working between Cumbria’s 6 Waste Collection Authorities and the Waste Disposal Authority. At its meeting on 14 January 2011 the members of the CSWP received a report from Cumbria County Council that recommended that the CSWP initiate an “Enhanced Partnership Working Project” to further develop work carried out to date and presented a draft “Project Plan” for approval.

Ms Culleton outlined the key elements of the Project Plan and advised that in terms of governance of the project, the CSWP would undertake the role of the Project Board whilst ensuring that matters requiring decisions by the participating Authorities were fed into the relevant decision making structures within each authority. Ms Culleton explained that the terms of reference for the CSWP would be agreed in its capacity as Project board, a separate Officer Group, comprising officers from each of the 6 districts and the County Council would act as a project Delivery Team.

At its meeting on 14 March 2011 the Executive:

- agreed to the Council’s participation in the project
- appointed the Portfolio Holder for Local Environment to be the City Council’s representative on the Project Board
- appointed the Assistant Director (Local Environment) (or her deputy) to be the Council’s representative on the Project Delivery Team, and
- agreed that matters relating to the project requiring decisions by the participating authorities were referred to future meetings of the Executive.

Ms Culleton advised that the CSWP had appointed a project Manager to deliver the project including the Options Report and implementation business plan for the project and that the County Council had allocated the necessary funding for the project. Ms Culleton explained that the timetable for implementation was ambitious with the aim to implement agreed changes from April 2012.

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

- *There were a lot of Bank Holidays in April and May. What arrangements had been made for the collection of refuse on those days?*

Ms Culleton advised that all the information was on the calendars provided to householders regarding refuse collections. The Local Environment Portfolio Holder collections scheduled for a Bank Holiday were usually collected the following day. He added that some of the difficulties over the Christmas period were due to weather conditions and people dropping litter.

- *The collection routes had been amended. Would that have an impact on the Bank Holiday collections?*

Ms Culleton explained that the new routes were more productive and that the collections would be made as if a normal day. The Portfolio Holder advised that he and Officers were working with Planning Officers to extend services when developments extended into the City. Any increase in collection services would have to be built into the budgets.

- *Were the revised routes working well?*

Ms Culleton confirmed there had been few problems or complaints.

- *Are the hats for boxes available to residents?*

Ms Culleton advised that they were on sale in some areas of the City.

- *In a previous report an Officer had stated that there was no appetite for partnership working. How would that affect the Cumbria Strategic Waste Partnership (CWSP)?*

The Portfolio Holder advised that the CWSP was working well and that the comment was with regard to a united system throughout Cumbria. With regard to the enhanced partnership consultants were working to move to a more cohesive system that may suggest changes to the way waste and recycling were collected. He advised that he was awaiting a date to meet with partners and suggested that the Chair of the Panel should be involved.

RESOLVED: 1) That the report on Waste Services 6 Monthly Update be noted.

2) That reports in future would be presented annually.

EEOSP.30/11 MAKING SPACE FOR WATER

The Assistant Director (Local Environment) (Ms Culleton) presented Report LE.06/11 that provided information on progress made by the Making Space for Water (MSFW) Group. Ms Culleton gave the background to the report and advised that the group continued to meet regularly in order to review and prioritise individual flooding problem areas. The last meeting was held on 14 September 2011 and the next due meeting was April 2011.

Ms Culleton explained the group's present priorities which were:

- Harraby – Garlands
- Rickerby
- Low Crosby, and
- Burgh by Sands

With regard to funding, Ms Culleton explained that contributions from the Environment Agency, United Utilities, Cumbria County Council and Carlisle City

Council made up the MSFW budget. The funding was held on the group's behalf by the City Council. She advised that the group had identified capital funding requirements for flood defence at Crosby-on Eden and Burgh-by-Sands and contractors were currently on site. There was also a revenue funding requirement for work at Burgh-by-Sands for investigation works that were completed in Summer 2010 and Durrhill Beck that was due to start.

Ms Culleton advised that the group continued to discuss and feedback progress of the group through the Environment Agency to the Pitt Review as Carlisle had one of the most advanced groups set up in the country.

The Local Environment Portfolio Holder stated that a lot of work had been done and that the people who had benefitted were very grateful.

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

- *The scheme had worked well and there had been some good inter agency working to gain solutions to problems.*

The Economic Development Portfolio Holder advised that the project in Low Crosby had made a big difference to the community. However there was not a lot that could be done in the Rickerby Park area and no further action would be taken.

Ms Culleton explained that bids would be put forward for available funding around specific projects.

- *Members were concerned that as there was no funding available in the Council's budget for projects there could be a delay in starting projects while bids were made.*
- *There was a concern that it was not clear how funding would come from central Government. It was assumed it would be held by the County Council and district councils would have to bid for specific projects.*

Ms Culleton confirmed that she would keep the Panel updated on the issue.

RESOLVED: 1) That the report on Making Space for Water Update be noted.

2.) That future updates would be presented as part of other reports from the Assistant Director (Local Environment).

EEOSP.31/11 TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME OF CARLISLE CITY COUNCIL

The Assistant Director (Economic Development) (Mrs Meek) presented report ED.15/11 that provided an update on the outcome of the staff consultation on phase two of transformation proposals in Economic Development, the response to the consultation and the subsequent changes to the structure and implementation. A structure chart showed the revised structure of the directorate.

Mrs Meek explained that phase 2 related to all staff below the level of Service Managers across the 3 sections of Planning, Economic Development and Building Control, excluding Tourism as that would be addressed in the next phase.

Consultations with Trades Unions and staff on the proposals were completed on 21 January 2011 and that was followed by a Directorate wide meeting that summarised the responses and set out the timetable for implementing the responses. Mrs Meek explained the general issues that had been raised regarding service support, generic job descriptions, Rural Development Officer and Conservation/Urban Designer.

In responding to the comments Mrs Meek advised that additional factors had been taken into account when drawing up the proposals. The NWDA had supported a number of initiatives and projects across the city and that support had been withdrawn or was in the process of being withdrawn while a number of projects were still in the process of being implemented.

Mrs Meek explained that in view of the Council's objective to support economic growth across the City a number of the key actions in the draft Corporate Strategy would be led or delivered by the Directorate and Officers would ensure that the Directorate was fit for purpose.

A key factor in the transformation process was to ensure that the service to the customer was maintained and consequently, it was necessary to look at how things were done in order to deliver an effective and efficient service as well as savings.

Mrs Meek advised that as a result of the responses, and in view of those additional factors, the Senior Management Team had agreed to amend the draft structure slightly. In addition, the revised proposals would aim to simplify the structure and remove any anomalies. Mrs Meek indicated the changes to the Administration Team, Rural Development, Regeneration Officer, Principal Planning Officers' job descriptions and the Conservation/Urban Design post.

Mrs Meek stated that individual letters to staff had been issued, including those who had applied for voluntary redundancy. Staff had 10 days to appeal against the assimilation decision, following which interviews for those posts that had been ring fenced were held during week commencing 21 March. The posts of Senior Administration Officer/Performance Manager and Heritage Officer had been filled and the posts of Regeneration Officer and Economic Development Officer would be advertised.

In conclusion, Mrs Meek advised that the transformation proposals would generate budget savings of £208,000 in 2011/12 and £241,000 from 2012/13 onwards. She also explained that the next phase of the transformation proposals would focus on Tourism and the Enterprise Centre. The Directorate would also be reviewing business processes to ensure efficient and effective services and to improve services to the customer.

Mrs Meek circulated copies of the structure of the department showing before and after Phase 2 of the transformation process. Some of the staff from Carlisle Renaissance who had been seconded to the programme had been moved back into

Economic Development and those issues had had to be dealt with. As well as saving money and addressing the economic situation the transformation process had had to address anomalies in posts and secondments. Mrs Meek explained that the next phase would be to make efficiency savings on how services were delivered.

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

- *Now that Carlisle Renaissance no longer existed was there still a budget for Carlisle Renaissance as detailed in the report?*

Mrs Meek explained that that pot of money had been made available from 1 April 2011 and was now part of the City Council budget.

- *There was concern about the admin support. It had been suggested there would be one central admin support but the Economic Development directorate had maintained their own separate support.*

Mrs Meek explained that the admin staff often had to take calls for Building Control officers who were often out of the office on site visits. They were often required to take telephone calls, contact officers and give technical information. She believed that there would be a central admin system but that the next step would be training admin staff across the directorate with the aim of a corporate admin team.

- *Why had there been adverts for vacant posts when staff were being made redundant leading to a financial cost and a loss of expertise.*

Mrs Meek explained that Officers had kept costs to a minimum and transferred staff where they could. In the current phase there had been 3 compulsory redundancies, one of which had applied for another post within the Council but had been unsuccessful.

In response to a query from a Member Mrs Meek explained how the job specifications for the Regeneration Officer and Economic Development Officer differed and that it would not be possible to merge the two posts.

Mrs Meek advised that an update on the Tourism section would be included in the next report as part of the next phase of the transformation process.

RESOLVED: 1) That the report on the transformation programme of Carlisle City Council be noted.

EEOSP.32/11 SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT

The Scrutiny Officer (Mrs Edwards) presented the Draft Scrutiny Annual Report (report OS.07/11).

Mrs Edwards explained that the Report aimed to summarise the work carried out in the Civic year and to discuss issues for the future. Comments made by the three Overview and Scrutiny Panels would be used to amend the draft before it is

considered by the Scrutiny Chairs Group. Following the Chairs Group the report would then be submitted to Council for consideration.

Mrs Edwards outlined the layout of the report and drew Members attention to part 2 of the report which gave a summary of the progress made with regard to the recommendations which arose from the review of the scrutiny process. Mrs Edwards asked the Panel for their opinion on the implementation of the recommendations and asked them to give their comments for insertion into the 2010/11 update.

The Panel discussed the recommendations that had been made in the 2009 review of scrutiny and the progress made on each one.

- *A Member asked the Panel to give consideration to changing the name of the Panel back to Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Panel. Following discussion the Panel agreed that the name should remain as Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel.*
- *A Member was concerned that there had been no clear direction for the work of the Task and Finish Groups and that there should be clearer Terms of Reference from the start.*
- *The Task and Finish Group did not seem to focus on the work they had been tasked to do and that more information was needed. The Member looked forward to the Government's White Paper relating to committee structures.*
- *Having lead Members working on particular topics had not worked well last year but worked better this year and it had been easier to arrange meetings when the Member was working with a particular Officer. It had also been easier to obtain information on topics on which the lead Member was working.*
- *There had been a good working relationship with the Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer over the past year.*

RESOLVED – That the comments and resolutions as set out above be incorporated into the Annual Scrutiny Report in conjunction with recommendations made by the Resources and Community Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

[The meeting ended at 1:45pm]