

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

THURSDAY 19 JUNE 2014 AT 10.00 AM

PRESENT: Councillor Harid (Acting Chairman), Councillors Ellis, Gee, McDevitt, Caig (for Councillor Burns), Mrs McKerrell (for Councillor Mrs Prest), Mrs Stevenson and Mrs Vasey

ALSO

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Bradley, Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder

OFFICERS: Director of Economic Development
Deputy Chief Executive
Overview and Scrutiny Officer
Policy and Performance Officer
Private Sector Housing Technical Team Manager

COSP.26/14 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR FOR THE MEETING

In the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair it was moved and seconded that Councillor Harid be appointed as Chairman of the Panel for the meeting.

It was also moved and seconded that Councillor Ellis be appointed as Chairman of the Panel for the meeting.

Following a vote it was:

RESOLVED: That Councillor Harid be appointed Chairman for the meeting.

Councillor Harid thereupon took the Chair.

COSP.27/14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Burns and Mrs Prest. Apologies were also submitted by Councillor Mrs Riddle, Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder.

COSP.28/14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Harid declared a registrable interest in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct in respect of that part of Agenda Item A.2 relating to the discussion around the Food Law Enforcement Service Plan and would therefore leave the meeting at that point. The interest related to the fact that he was involved in the food industry. It was agreed that Councillor Ellis would chair the meeting during that discussion.

COSP.29/14 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED – 1) That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2014 and 27 March 2014 be agreed as a correct record of the meetings and signed by the Chairman.

COSP.30/14 CALL-IN OF DECISIONS

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

COSP.31/14 OVERVIEW REPORT AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer presented report OS.16/14 which provided an overview of matters relating to the work of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel and included the latest version of the work programme and Key Decisions of the Executive which related to the Panel.

- The Overview and Scrutiny Officer reported that the Notice of Key Executive Decisions, published on 23 May 2014, included the following items which fell within the remit of this Panel.

KD.04/14 – Playing Pitch Strategy – the strategy would be available for consideration by the Panel at its meeting on 31 July 2014

Having declared a registrable interest in the following item Councillor Harid left the meeting. Councillor Ellis took the Chair.

KD.05/14 – Food Law Enforcement Service Plan – the Plan would be available for consideration by the Panel at its meeting on 31 July 2014 for information. The Deputy Chief Executive advised that the report would be circulated ahead of the meeting. If Members who were new to the Panel required further information someone from the Environmental Health team would be happy to meet with them.

Councillor Harid returned to the meeting and resumed his position as Chairman.

KD.10/14 – Business Plan – Arts Centre – the Business Plan would be available for consideration by the Panel at their meeting on 31 July 2014.

KD.12/14 – Implementation of the Mobile Homes Act 2013 – the item was on the agenda for consideration later in the meeting.

- The final report of the Hate Crime Task and Finish Group had been presented to the Executive on 7 April 2014. The Executive's responses to the Panel's recommendations were attached as an appendix to the report. The Overview and Scrutiny Officer advised that the Chair of the Task and Finish Group had attended a conference hosted by AWAZ who had been impressed with the work undertaken by the Group. It was agreed that the matter would be included in the Work Programme in six months time to monitor the implications of the recommendations made by the Group.
- The Overview and Scrutiny Officer informed Members that SMT officers would be available for the meeting of the Panel scheduled for 11 September 2014 and would be accompanied by colleagues from the LGA who would observe the meeting as part of a peer review.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer further informed Members that the meeting scheduled for 15 January 2015 clashed with a Cumbria County Council Full Council meeting. As there was only one Member that would be affected by the clash it was agreed that a substitute could be arranged for that meeting.

- It was agreed that as the Chairman and Vice-Chairman were not in attendance issues to be added to the Work Programme for the forthcoming year would be considered at the next

meeting of the Panel. The Overview and Scrutiny Officer suggested that if Members had any ideas for issues they would like to be included they could forward them to her. A Member suggested that the Panel look at the implementation of the Play Areas Review including the future investment in key sites.

RESOLVED – 1) That, subject to the issues raised above, the Overview Report incorporating the Work Programme and Notice of Executive Decisions items relevant to this Panel be noted.

2) That issues for the Work Programme for the forthcoming year be considered at the next meeting of the Panel.

COSP.32/14 END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT 2013/14

The Policy and Performance Officer submitted report PC.05/14 that updated the Panel on the Council's service standards relevant to the Panel that helped measure performance and customer satisfaction. The report also included updates on relevant key actions contained within the Carlisle Plan.

The Policy and Performance Officer explained the background to the report for the benefit of those Members who were new to the Panel. The Officer advised that there was an emerging programme in respect of the Arts Centre and it was anticipated that the Centre would open in Spring 2015. Some events had already been pencilled in.

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

- *How many benefits applications were received by the Council?*

The Policy and Performance Officer advised that some of the delays were caused because the relevant information was not received with the initial application. Whilst it was difficult to give an exact figure he believed there was a decent number.

- *Did the delays in processing the applications affect local private landlords' decisions to take on tenants?*

The Policy and Performance Officer believed that applications were dealt with as they were received. He agreed to investigate the issue and circulate the answer to Members prior to the next meeting of the Panel.

- *How was the City Council involved in the work being undertaken jointly with the County Council in respect of de-cluttering?*

The Deputy Chief Executive assured the Member that the City Council was involved in the Working Group and advised that there had been a substantial amount of work undertaken to identify which signs should be removed and/or replaced. The City Council's Heritage Officer was a member of the Task Group. The issue had also been raised at the Highways and Transport Working Group. The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that he would advise Members of the Panel of the timetable for the work.

- *A Member requested further information on the prioritisation of the Public Realm projects as there would be financial implications.*

The Deputy Chief Executive advised that there would be a table of priorities with costs attached and where funding was being obtained from. The Deputy Chief Executive suggested that could be a future item to be included in the Work Programme for the Panel.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer advised that the issue would be picked up by the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel as part of the work on the Old Town Hall.

The Policy and Performance Officer advised that an update would be included in the first quarter performance report.

- *How many people had benefitted from the Homelife Carlisle scheme and the Community Neighbour scheme?*

The Policy and Performance Officer was not sure of the figures but agreed to circulate the information to Members.

- *How much involvement did City Council Members have in the production of the Prospectus for Carlisle?*

The Deputy Chief Executive advised that the relevant Portfolio Holder and the Executive had been involved but that the prospectus had been developed by the Carlisle Story panel which was business led who had signed off the prospectus.

- *As the Council had paid for the prospectus Members should have had more involvement.*

RESOLVED: 1) That report PC.05/14 – End of Year Performance Report 2013/14 – be noted.

2) That information in relation to how benefits claim applications were prioritised, and how many people had benefitted from the Homelife Carlisle scheme be circulated prior to the next meeting.

COSP.33/14 IMPLEMENTATION OF MOBILE HOMES ACT 2013

The Private Sector Housing Technical Team Manager submitted report ED.20/14/LE.10/14 that outlined proposals for the introduction of the Mobile Homes Act 2013 and the changes that would directly impact upon protected sites in the district. The new Act introduced new conditions for those sites and a fee structure was to be implemented for funding the Council's cost for licensing the sites.

The matter was scheduled to be considered by the Executive at their meeting on 23 June 2014.

The Private Sector Housing Technical Team Manager outlined the background to the Mobile Homes Act and the reasons for the changes to the legislation. An implementation policy had been produced to enable relevant fees to be incorporated into the Council's 2014/15 Fees and Charges schedule.

The Private Sector Housing Technical Team Manager explained the proposals of the Act and the consultation that had been undertaken. Amendments had been made to the draft policy following feedback from that consultation.

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

- *Which sites were affected by the Act and in particular which sites in the Carlisle District were affected?*

The Private Sector Housing Technical Team Manager explained that there were currently fourteen protected sites, seven of which would need licensing under the new legislation. Three of those sites, for which the Private Sector Housing team were responsible were Gypsy and Traveller sites and the remaining four were the responsibility of the Environmental Health team as holiday/residential sites. The Private Sector Housing Technical Team Manager confirmed that the site at Orton Grange would be included in the policy. Some of the sites were part residential and part holiday and would therefore need two licences ie under the Mobile Homes Act and the original legislation.

The Private Sector Housing Technical Team Manager further confirmed that Dalston Hall Caravan Park would not require a licence as it was primarily a holiday site.

RESOLVED: 1) That report PC.05/14 – Implementation of Mobile Homes Act 2013 – be noted.

(The meeting ended at 10.40am)