

Environment & Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Agenda
Item:

A.2

Meeting Date: 14 April 2016
Portfolio: Cross Cutting
Key Decision: No
Within Policy and
Budget Framework
Public / Private Public

Title: OVERVIEW REPORT AND WORK PROGRAMME
Report of: Overview and Scrutiny Officer
Report Number: OS 09/16

Summary:

This report provides an overview of matters related to the Environment and 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 Notice of Key Executive Decisions should be included in the Panel's Work Programme for consideration.
- Comment on the draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2015/16
- Note and/or amend the Panel's work programme.

Contact Officer: Sarah Mason Ext: 7053

Appendices attached to report:

1. Draft Scrutiny Annual Report 2015/16
2. Environment and Economy O&S Panel Work Programme 2015/16

1. Notice of Key Executive Decisions

The most recent Notice of Key Executive Decisions was published on 4 March 2016. This was circulated to all Members. No items fall into the remit of this Panel.

2. References from the Executive

There are no references from the Executive's meeting on 7 March 2016.

3. Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report 2015/16

The Scrutiny Annual Report has been drafted and is attached at Appendix 1. Panel Members are asked to comment on the draft which is being considered by all three O&S Panels. The report will then be formally approved by the Scrutiny Chairs Group prior to being presented at Council on 26 April 2015.

4. Work Programme

The Panel's current work programme is attached at Appendix 2 for comment/amendment.

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: None

Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2015/16

Annual report to full Council on the workings of the O&S
Panels with recommendations for future work programmes
and amended working methods if appropriate.

April 2016



Cllr Reg Watson OBE

Lead Member, Scrutiny Chairs Group



I am pleased to present the 2015/16 Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report to Carlisle City Council.

Even in times of austerity the Scrutiny panels continue to monitor and challenge the chief officers and Executive Members, trying to squeeze out the last drops of efficiency from a reducing budget. This year all of the scrutiny panels have done well and I thank them for their efforts.

I would also like to thank the scrutiny support officer, chief officers and Members of the Executive for their help and openness throughout the year. I hope we can continue to add value during the following year.

Cllr Colin Glover, Leader of the Council



Throughout 2015, Carlisle has grown in confidence and there has been a positive attitude to the future from both inside the Council and the wider community. The December floods had a devastating effect on residents and businesses in the city, but it is a credit to the people of this great city, how everyone came together, supporting each other to recover, rebuild and become more resilient into 2016 and beyond.

There is no doubt that the pressures on Local Government are greater than ever before. Reducing budgets mean that difficult decisions have to be made and expectations of the Council for positive leadership of the city continue to grow. Our Overview and Scrutiny Panels play a key role in developing the direction and priorities for the future. Over the past year members have questioned and challenged the Executive and officers to ensure good decision making and planning of the services we provide. There is no doubt that Scrutiny is at its best when it is positively contributing to the development of policies and services, through panel meetings and focussed task and finish groups. This provides valuable input to inform the way decisions are made by the Executive and Council and I would like to thank members who have made that positive difference to the work of the Council.

Continued...



Cllr Colin Glover, Leader of the Council - continued...

I also want to thank the Scrutiny officer staff who provide support and guidance to our Panels.

Scrutiny Panels have considered a wide range of subjects and the past year has seen the development of two significant areas of work which will guide the direction of the Council in the coming years. The Local Plan has been developed to give a clear vision of how the city will grow and prosper and the Carlisle Plan, which sets out our priorities for the next few years. Detailed examination and contributions by Scrutiny Panels and wider public consultation have been valuable in guiding the development of these plans.

We are fortunate at Carlisle City Council to have committed and confident staff who have regularly provided updates on their work and plans for the future. We owe them all our thanks for their dedication, often going over and above what would be expected of them.



Introduction

Scrutiny is considered to be the main check and balance to the power of the Executive and involves many of the Councillors who are not on the Executive. Individual Councillors are selected by their political parties to sit on the scrutiny panels.

The key roles of scrutiny are:

- ◆ ensuring the Executive is accountable. This means questioning members of the Executive and senior officers about decisions that have been made or are about to be made. It also involves looking at how well the Council is doing against its policy objectives and targets for achievement.
- ◆ reviewing and developing policies. In this role, scrutiny can help the Council to develop its policy and budgetary framework. This might involve research and consultation with the community and other agencies on policy issues, good practice and looking at alternative ways of doing things.
- ◆ ensuring the continuous improvement of Council services. Scrutiny can make suggestions to the Executive for service reviews. Members of scrutiny panels are often involved in individual reviews where a particular service or function of the Council is thoroughly examined.

In Carlisle, scrutiny operates through three panels - Community Overview and Scrutiny, Resources Overview and Scrutiny and Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny. The Scrutiny Chairs Group (Chairs and Vice Chairs of the three Scrutiny Panels) meets on an ad hoc basis to deal with any overarching scrutiny issues.

There are eight non-Executive members on each panel and each panel is politically balanced (i.e. the proportions of each political party on the panel are the same as on the Council as a whole).

This annual report provides an overview of the work of the scrutiny function during the 2015/16 civic year. The report provides brief details of the work of the individual panels and gives details of Task and Finish Group work.



Setting of Scrutiny work programmes

Scrutiny agenda planning

Consideration was given early in the civic year to decide the content of each Panel's work programme for the year ahead.

Consideration to forthcoming decisions and issues was given and where focus of scrutiny should lie in order to gain the maximum value. Panel Members, SMT officers and Portfolio Holders have been involved in developing each Panel's work programme for the year 2015/16. The following questions were asked when deciding what should be included in a work programme:

Will scrutiny activity add value to the Council's, and / or partners' overall performance?

Is the issue strategic and significant?

Is consideration of the item likely to lead to effective outcomes?

Will Scrutiny involvement be duplicating the work of another Committee?

Is the Scrutiny activity timely?

Regular meetings have continued throughout the year with SMT officers and Chairs of EEOSP and COSP to discuss forthcoming agendas in more details. This helps to ensure that access to appropriate information is available. Scrutiny Members need to be confident that the information provided is an accurate picture of the Council's (and it's partners) performance.



Community Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Personal View from Cllr Rob Burns, Chair of Community O&S Panel



To quote Will Rogers, not to be confused with Roy, 'Last year we said 'Things can't go on like this' and true enough, they didn't, they got worse'.

It is tempting to reflect that, at the end of another municipal year, things have got worse and in some ways they have, with more budget cuts, fewer staff delivering services, less room for optimism and growing disillusion in the community.

On the face of it, in the words of another old gunslinger, Cpl Fraser in Dad's Army 'We're doomed, we're doomed'.

But actually, perhaps surprisingly given those circumstances, that's not strictly the case.

There is I believe a general sense of achievement in the Council at the end of this year and at COSP meetings, there have been many items which have been uplifting in some way, including;

- ◆ The presentation from the Carlisle Youth Council when some young people presented us with an encouraging view not only of some of their activities, but their enthusiasm and skill in presenting them. Clearly some of them had their minds set on filling some of the seats on the other side of the committee table in the not too distant future!
- ◆ Initial discussions about devolution and the Cumbria Deal (or no deal). If you thought the issues around membership of the EU were complicated....
- ◆ The exciting prospects emerging from the renewal of the Leisure Contract which hopefully will not only produce financial benefits, but will bring much needed upgrading to some tired old facilities.
- ◆ The development of the new Community Plan which offers an intriguing vision of a vibrant, socially and economically viable city.

But of course there were also times when it seemed that things couldn't actually get any worse and the December floods were a reminder of how fickle life can be.



As usual in such circumstances, we saw extraordinary feats of human kindness, courage and resilience and COSP received reports detailing the Council's own exemplary response, which of course remains on going. It sounds trite to say that we learn from our experiences, when there are so many personal tales of hardship and trauma which cannot be so easily dismissed, but it is a fact that we had learnt much from our previous response ten years ago, which made the initial and continuing recovery processes more timely, relevant and appropriate.

Cllr Jessica Riddle, Portfolio Holder for Communities, Health and Wellbeing



Overview and Scrutiny has an essential role in ensuring that Executive decisions are fair and properly informed. I continue to value their input and robust questioning.



I have rarely found it greatly comforting when in the depths of despair, to know that someone is worse off than me, but there was a great sense of the whole Cumbrian community sharing the experience in December which was indeed comforting and positive.

It has been a great privilege to be Chair of this Panel again this year and I would like to thank fellow Panel Members for their forbearance and support.

We have not found too much to disagree about which is due in many ways, to the input from Officers who have presented the issues to us in a straightforward and open style which has encouraged positive exchanges.

The input from Portfolio Holders and representatives of other agencies has also been key in encouraging constructive debate.

But most of all, the efficiency and effectiveness of Scrutiny would almost certainly be diminished if it were not for the diligence and skills of the Scrutiny Support Officer and the Committee Clerks who perform possibly one of the most under-appreciated jobs on the Council, that of being able to read, write, listen and understand all at the same time (I hereby declare myself ineligible for any future vacancies), in order to produce minutes which are invariably accurate, informative and well written and are of inestimable value to the smooth running of the Council's democratic processes.

At the end of my second year, I have defied those naysayers who said I'd soon get fed up with being a Councillor, indeed my enthusiasm has grown.

Part of that has been due to my involvement with COSP and I hope I will be given the opportunity to continue to be a Member of the Panel in the new municipal year, which is sure to be 'full of things that have never been'!

Bring it on!

Cllr Anne Quilter, Portfolio Holder for Culture, Health, Leisure and Young People



I fully appreciate the contribution of the Community O&S Panel to the decision making process of the Executive and Full Council.

By attending the meetings as Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Young People I am able to appreciate the wider view of members thinking and thank all concerned for their valuable input.



Environment and Economy Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Personal View from Cllr Paul Nedved, Chair of Environment and Economy O&S Panel



It has been a privilege to Chair the Economy and Environment Panel for a second year in what has been an extremely busy and challenging agenda.

I have both valued and enjoyed the robust scrutiny undertaken by Members and Substitutes of the Panel and thank all for their considerable contributions to what has been at times vigorous discussion and at others in depth monitoring of the items before the Panel. I welcome the valued input from new Members to both the Panel and the Council as well as the well healed who can always be relied upon to provide in depth scrutiny.

My thanks extend to Directors and Officers who have presented a wide ranging series of well received Reports and updates which at times included vigorous questioning from Members. Portfolio Holders have been supportive of the Panel's work and I thank them for consistent attendance and input.

The invaluable advice, support and guidance of the Scrutiny Manager has to be singled out. Preparation for each meeting has been of a high standard and briefing notes a very useful tool to scrutiny consideration. A thank-you also to the unenviable task of the Committee Clerks and Member Support Officers for providing substantial Minutes, Notes and research.

Both the discussions at the outset with the Panel, Directors and Officers to develop the work programme coupled with regular agenda setting meetings with the Deputy Chief Executive and Scrutiny Manager have allowed us to adapt to changing priorities. A series of Scrutiny Training sessions were undertaken which added value. The recommendations of the Peer Review in the previous year for re-examining scrutiny structure have as yet not yielded any significant changes although Call-In procedures have been modified.

The value of Task and Finish Groups for providing in-depth examination of specific areas has proved especially useful and enjoy cross party support.

Work Programme undertaken by the Panel 2015/16:

- ◆ Budget
- ◆ Rethinking Waste Business Case and Vehicle Procurement Update on Clean Carlisle



- ◆ Clean Neighbourhood Enforcement Policy
- ◆ Clean Up Streets Petition
- ◆ Contaminated Land Strategy
- ◆ Car Parking Development Plan
- ◆ Carlisle Plan
- ◆ Major infrastructure projects in Cumbria
- ◆ Implications for Carlisle Enterprise Zone and Tourist Information Centre
- ◆ Performance Monitoring
- ◆ Carlisle South Masterplan
- ◆ City Centre Development Framework
- ◆ Update on Public Realm
- ◆ Local Enterprise Partnership (presentation Graham Haywood, LEP Director)
- ◆ New Infrastructure Projects for Cumbria (Guy Kenyon, Lead Officer Cumbria CC)
- ◆ Carlisle Economic Potential
- ◆ Performance Monitoring Reports, Reports and updates which included vigorous and at times critical questioning
- ◆ Flood 2015 Report
- ◆ Skills Audit (deferred)
- ◆ Business Support Task and Finish Group

Central themes dominating Local Environment scrutiny have been the ongoing review of Waste Services (Rethinking Waste project) with a series of Reports on the redesign of waste and recycling services and vehicle procurement by 2017. The Cross Party Working Group has proved to be especially valuable and is to be continued. Two Reports on Clean Up Carlisle always provokes considerable discussion and questioning on subjects as diverse as gull sack implementation, dog fouling, education, campaigns and future planning coupled with equating the perception from the public of these campaigns in both rural and urban wards. The Panel was also the vehicle for a Clean Streets Petition which led to vigorous debate and recommendations.



A wide range of presentations have come before the Panel under the Economy brief.

Highlights have been the LEP presentation and discussion with Graham Haywood, Carlisle Economic Potential from the Deputy Chief Executive and Major Infrastructure Projects in Cumbria presented by Guy Kenyon. Equally the embryonic report on the Carlisle South Masterplan brought about interesting discussion and analysis. Public Realm including ongoing discussions of street signage and the first Performance Monitoring Report of the Tourist Information Centre (April Panel) after the major refurbishment are also key priorities for this Panel.

A Task and Finish Group on Skills was deferred awaiting the Skills Audit undertaken by the Local Enterprise Partnership which has been recently published. However the Scrutiny Manager and myself by way of preparation attended the Skills Summit at the Carlisle College of the Arts and the Skills Fair. A gender pay gap element will also be looked into as part of this T and F.

A special thanks goes to the Business Support Task and Finish Group for the exhaustive overview of business support in the District, included Panel meeting last year at the Business Interaction Centre, visits to the Growth Hub and contacts with the Federation of Small Business, University of Cumbria, Chamber of Commerce, City Officers and Members. The scoping and evidence gathering were considerable which led to a series of recommendations contained in their report and have subsequently been received by the Executive with a generally favourable response. This was a significant piece of work by all Task and Finish Members and required their considerable input and time.

The Draft Local Plan 2015-30 will be in part scrutinised by the Local Plan Working Group in this civic year and will be revisited by the E and E Panel for further scrutiny at a later stage.

The Panel overall had a heavy agenda this year with 8 meetings, all of which had key themes and agenda items being scrutinised by the Panel.

Special thanks must also extend to the Director of Resources for steering us through detailed budget considerations and the Director of Local Environment for the substantial reports and preparedness at all times to update and be subject to detailed questioning by the Panel.



The flood of 2015 reporting will be a key element moving forward with presentations to the April and subsequent E and E and Panels and the "grassroots " impacts to residents and business to be the subject of Task and Finish working moving forward.

Overall this has been a most enjoyable and challenging year and I am extremely grateful for the support I have received from the Panel. Invariably good humoured and at times understanding when there has been full agendas!

Looking forward to next year's work programme!

Cllr Elsie Martlew, Portfolio Holder for Environment & Transport



Overview and Scrutiny is a vital piece in the democratic process. As the council is run on a "cabinet" style basis it is essential that the Executive can be held to account. As Portfolio Holder I welcome this safeguard and I value the input from O & S members prior to major policy decisions being taken by the Executive.



Business Support Task Group

The Economy & Environment Scrutiny Panel commissioned a Task Group to look at Business Support as they had concerns about the provision of business support in the District. Members required more of an understanding of what role Carlisle City Council has, as this has changed over time. The Task Group were asked to look at the roles of the difference agencies and how they work in partnership.

The group evidenced that there is a great deal of advice and support on offer, however this is not presented in a simple way in a single location. It is clear that there is no expectation from local businesses that the Council provides business support, but we could facilitate access to support with smarter signposting. There are examples, from across the North West, where authorities have created webpages or supported the creation of websites dedicated to business support and growth.

The Council role is not to have all the answers; it can help business people find the right answers as easily as possible. To play this role effectively will require further work on mapping out the existing sources and networks offering business support and an ongoing commitment to keeping this mapping current and accurate.

A number of recommendations were made to Executive in November 2015.

Executive gave assurance that the close relationship with providers of business support would continue, that the Council's new web-site would include signposting to help businesses, and the review of the Enterprise Centre would look at all aspects of the Centre's operation including renaming and rebranding.



Cllr Heather Bradley, Portfolio Holder for Economy & Enterprise



As a former member of scrutiny panels, I view their role in scrutinising decisions and helping to develop policy as essential. As a Portfolio Holder, I have found the comments and questions of the Environment & Economy and of the Community Scrutiny Panels helpful and sometimes challenging.

I appreciate the work of Task & Finish Groups and the way in which their efforts can assist in developing policy and in informing future Council decisions. I should like to thank the Chairs and members of the panels for the contribution they make to the Council.



Resources Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Personal View from Cllr Reg Watson, Chair of Resources O&S Panel



Scrutiny has an important role to play in times of austerity to ensure efficiency and thrift.

The Panel probed a number of areas including:

Asset Management Plan – we must keep a close eye on this as it is the main part of our future funding

Performance monitoring – ensuring value for money

Sickness management – doing well despite the cuts and the floods

I would like to thank our Scrutiny Support Officer and Chief Officers for their advice and support and a big thank you to fellow Panel Members for their support over the last 12 months. I hope we can continue to add value to Council deliberations.

Cllr Dr Les Tickner, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance & Resources



This has been a challenging year for ROSP due to the number and ambition of the Executive proposals. I am pleased by the level of detailed challenge into the proposals particularly where the investment required for the business case has to be justified. I would also like to place on record my thanks and appreciation to the scrutiny staff for their tireless work behind the scenes researching for the task and finish projects, preparing the panel and facilitating the meetings.



Pre-decision scrutiny

Pre-decision scrutiny

Throughout the year a number of items have been scrutinised by panels prior to an Executive decision. 'Pre-decision scrutiny' is where Overview and Scrutiny Panels look at a planned decision shortly before it is made by the Executive. This is often seen as a contrast with post-decision scrutiny through the Council's call-in arrangements, whereby the implementation of decisions can be delayed.

According to the Centre for Public Scrutiny¹, looking at decisions before they are made provides an important means to influence those decisions, and to improve them. It gives scrutineers an opportunity to challenge assumptions that may have been made as the decision was developed; it also gives them the chance to consider how decision-makers have considered what risks might arise from the implementation of the decision, and how those risks might be mitigated. Scrutiny councillors bring a different perspective to the decision-making process than that provided by Cabinet members or officers, which can help decisions to be more robust. Looking at a decision before it is made can often be seen as a more effective means of scrutiny than looking at a decision after it is made

¹*Pre-decision scrutiny, Practice Guide 2—Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) June 2014*

Pre-decision scrutiny items in the past year include:

- ◆ Low cost home ownership
- ◆ Carlisle Plan 2015-16
- ◆ Sports and Leisure new contract
- ◆ Rethinking Waste Business Case and Vehicle procurement
- ◆ Tullie House Business Plan
- ◆ Revised Equality Policy
- ◆ Tullie House Business Plan



- ◆ Contaminated Land Strategy
- ◆ Clean Neighbourhood Enforcement Policy
- ◆ Draft Budget 2016/17 (to all three panels)
- ◆ Asset Review Business Plan
- ◆ Asset Management Plan 2015-2020
- ◆ Digital Vision and Technology 5 year Strategy

Call-in

Call-in provides a mechanism for Councillors to intervene when they feel that a decision being made by the Executive needs to be revisited (or possibly changed). It provides a key check and balance in the leader/cabinet system of governance.

In the 2015/16 Civic year one request for Call-in was received.

Decision Ref	Issue	Overview & Scrutiny Panel	Outcome of Call-in Meeting
OD 184/15	Appointment of Leisure Contract Retender Advisor	Community	That the decision not be referred back to the decision making body.



Scrutiny of the 2015 Flood

Scrutiny of the 2015 Flood

Following the Floods in December 2015, Members of Environment and Economy O&S Panel have suggested that a Task and Finish Group be set up to consider any future response to the flood, investigate any possible ways that the Council could influence flood prevention measures and also look at the Council's first response to the flood and take away any lessons learned.

The Scrutiny Chairs group on 4 April agreed that a workshop be set up in the current civic year. This would provide an overview of the issues and plans for recovery and future resilience. Further consideration would then be given to the scope of Flood scrutiny including the best timing of review work.

It has also been agreed that regular flood update reports would be provided to each Panel, to receive updates on issues within the remit of that Panel.



Conclusion

Conclusion to follow



Appendix 2 ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY O&S PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

Date last revised: 04 April 2016



Issue	Type of Scrutiny					Comments/status	Meeting Dates							
	Performance Management	Key decision Item/Referred from Executive	Policy Review/Development	Scrutiny of Partnership/External Agency	Monitoring		25 Jun 15	30 Jul 15	17 Sep 15	29 Oct 15	26 Nov 15	21 Jan 16	3 Mar 16	14 Apr 16
Contact Officer														
CURRENT MEETING - 14 April 2016														
Scrutiny Annual Report Sarah Mason			✓		✓	Draft report for comment before Chairs Group								✓
Flood Update Report Darren Crossley					✓	Update report on flood recovery programme								✓
Update on Clean Carlisle Scott Burns					✓	6 monthly update report			✓					✓
Tourist Information Centre Jane Meek	✓				✓	Performance monitoring report for Tourist Information Centre (Old Town Hall)								✓
City Centre Development Framework Garry Legg					✓	Report and presentation on City Centre Development Framework								✓
TASK AND FINISH GROUPS														

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Contact Officer														
Flood 2015						Discussed at Scrutiny Chairs Group: Flood update items to each Panel. Informal Council Briefing on the Floods 7 April.								
Skills Audit						T&F group deferred until after Flood T&F group. To include gender pay gap.								
FUTURE ITEMS														
COMPLETED ITEMS														
Work Planning Session							✓							

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Contaminated Land Strategy		✓				Scrutiny of Executive report	✓							
Enterprise Zone						Verbal update		✓						
Rethinking Waste		✓				Rethinking Waste Business Case and Vehicle Procurement (pre-decision Scrutiny)			✓					
Carlisle Plan		✓				Pre-decision consultation on the draft Carlisle Plan 2015-2018			✓					
Major infrastructure projects in Cumbria - implications for Carlisle Jane Meek						Presentation on the major infrastructure projects in Cumbria and the implications for Carlisle				✓				
Car Parking Development Plan Angela Culleton			✓		✓	Scrutiny of car parking development plan				✓				

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Clean Neighbourhood Enforcement Policy Scott Burns		✓	✓			Scrutiny of revised Enforcement Policy				✓				
Update on Public Realm Mark Walshe					✓	Update on the proposed city centre orientation improvements (including signage and car park renaming).					✓			
Local Enterprise Partnership Jane Meek				✓		Updated report Cumbria LEP ED 19 14 and presentation by Graham Haywood, LEP Director					✓			
Budget Peter Mason		✓	✓			To consider budget proposals for 2016/17					✓			
New infrastructure projects for Cumbria (inc. nuclear new builds) Sarah Mason						Presentation by Guy Kenyon, Lead Officer - Infrastructure Planning, Cumbria CC.						✓		
Carlisle Economic Potential Darren Crossley		✓	✓			Update of projects following March 2015 report		✓				✓		

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Clean Up Streets petition Rachel Rooney												✓		
Rethinking Waste Project Angela Culleton/Colin Bowley					✓	Report – Update / monitoring of project.							✓	
Carlisle South Masterplan Garry Legg			✓			Presentation – Introduction to Carlisle South Masterplan							✓	
Performance Monitoring Reports Gary Oliver	✓					Monitoring of performance relevant to the remit of Panel	✓		✓		✓		✓	