

**Resources Overview & Scrutiny Panel**  
**Chairman's Report**  
**Meeting held Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2012**

Before proceeding to the main Agenda items, an issue had to be resolved with regard to public and press. A letter had been received with regard to the Asset Review Business Plan and its inclusion in Part B.

After seeking legal advice it was decided that the item remain in Part B because of the commercially sensitive information contained. However, it was recommended that in future a report would be prepared for the public part of the meeting, with a second report considered in the private part of the meeting.

Members expressed concern that, whilst the sensitivity of some information had to be protected, they were not always in a position to answer residents' concerns.

The Overview Report incorporating the Work Programme and Forward Plan items was noted and the Scoping Document for the Shared Services Task & Finish Group was approved.

A report providing information about the City Council's sickness absence in 2011/12 was submitted by the Deputy Chief Executive. Following discussion of aspects of the report, it was resolved that a report would be submitted to the Panel in June. This would consider reasons for absence, advise on numbers of staff in each directorate, to make percentage totals more meaningful, give a breakdown of shared service proportions, suggest remedies to address the year on year increase in sickness absence and indicate how Carlisle City Council compares to other authorities.

The Corporate Plan – Third Quarter Performance Report was noted.. There was a suggestion that more Member involvement in developing Performance Indicators would be welcomed and that more detail about how projects were progressing could be included in the report.

The Organisational Development Plan report was noted with thanks. Members commented favourably on the Healthy Hearts Event. Questions were asked about the e-learning site, the holiday purchase scheme, the employment of disabled people within the authority, courses on safeguarding children and on the subject of flexible working plans.

The Transformation Board Draft Terms of Reference, asset out in SD.03/12 were agreed and it was resolved that reports be submitted to the Panel on a six monthly basis.

The Capital Budget Overview & Monitoring Report April to December 2011 was noted, as was the Revenue Budget Overview & Monitoring Report April to December 2011. The Financial Services Manager highlighted a number of key issues: Salary Turnover Savings Budget, budgets for staff recruitment, likely rent income shortfall from the Lanes during 2011/12, spiralling fuel costs, shortfall on Development Control fees, a new prioritisation system for Disabled Facilities Grants.

Members attention was drawn to the Business Plan for Talkin Tarn Country Park, where it would operate as a discrete business unit, surpluses retained and used to improve services and facilities.

A letter from the Vice Chairman was read to the Panel, regarding options for the early repayment of the £15m loan. It was resolved that information regarding this loan be circulated to all members.

The Asset Review Business Plan was considered in Part B. It was resolved that officers look at the procedures for sale of assets to ensure they are robust and appropriate.

One of the assets was causing concern to local residents and ward councillors and it was resolved that the sale be deferred pending further consideration.

Cllr. Stephen Layden

February 2012