

Meeting Date: 4 March 2014

Public/Private\*: Public

Title: **Community Overview and Scrutiny Chairman's Report –  
Councillor Mrs Luckley**

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In January, considerable study and questioning was given over to the report on the Sports and Physical Activity and Facilities Strategies and the Private Sector Housing Enforcement report.

On the Sports and Physical Activity Strategy and the Sports Facilities Strategy a great deal of the questioning was around the condition and requirements of the present facilities and the funding required to action the strategies. The Panel were concerned at the present lack of information as to where that funding would be obtained. The various points and subjects discussed and questioned in what was a lengthy scrutiny, are contained in the Minute Book. The Panel looks forward to further reports on the development of the strategies and their funding as they become available.

The Panel also examined the Private Sector Housing Enforcement report. The report covered the information provided by a P.S. Housing Stock Condition Survey, the Housing Need and Demand Survey and the resulting draft Enforcement Policy. After their questioning upon the present situation in this sector of the housing market, the Panel recommended that for the benefit of tenants, the information regarding private sector housing on the Council's web site, could be clearer and easier to access. Also, that the Council should consider issuing a printed leaflet for those without access to a computer. As this is a larger and larger part of housing provision in our district, the Panel recommended to the Executive that consideration be given to re-examining the current charges for HMO registration fees in order to ensure adequate income is being generated so that the resources required to carry out the work involved, are sufficient.

In February, the first hour of questioning was taken up by the half yearly report on the Partnership between Riverside Cumbria and the City Council. The questioning produced detailed evidence of a more positive situation than the previous year in all aspects of housing needs. That working with partners such as Riverside on prevention, had meant that the figure for the number of people accepted by the Council for secure

accommodation was lower than the previous year. Following the questioning on the Choice Based Letting Scheme in regard to accessibility, location and affordability, the Panel recommended that the Executive examine those issues to ensure that all aspects of housing need was encompassed within the Housing Strategy and Action Plan.

The Panel received a report from Councillor Bowditch, the Council's representative on the Cumbria Health and Well Being Scrutiny Committee and the Cumbria Police and Crime Panel. Details of his report can be found in the minutes of the meeting.

A meeting has taken place with Managers of the Community Centres and the members of the Task and Finish Group, who earlier this year, had examined and made recommendations on the relationship between the Centres and the Council. The Lead member, Councillor Prest, was able to report to the Panel a much improved relationship following the action taken on the Group's recommendations. A welcome and satisfactory outcome.

The Panel scrutinized a report presenting the Carlisle & Eden Community Safety Partnership Strategic Assessment for 2014/15. It is the evidence base on which the CSP identify their key priorities for the coming year. The crime figures had decreased in Carlisle and the Panel found the assessment informative as to the types of crime that remain a priority. Also, the report was useful in regard to the information provided on individual wards and therefore a factual aid for ward members to consult on the situation in their areas.

The last two items on the February agenda were reports on the third quarter performance of services within the Panel's remit and a report on the Customer Access Strategy both of which evidenced the satisfactory outcomes of a great deal of hard work by the staff concerned.

Councillor Olwyn Luckley

Chairman