

## **ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

**THURSDAY 2 AUGUST 2012 AT 10.00 AM**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Layden (Chairman), Councillors Bainbridge, Betton (as substitute for Councillor Graham), Ms Gallagher (as substitute for Councillor Bowditch), McDevitt, Nedved and Whalen

**ALSO**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Glover (Economy and Enterprise Portfolio Holder)  
Councillor Mrs Martlew (Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder)  
Councillors Allison and Mallinson (J) (Observers)

### **EEOSP.42/12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Bowditch, Graham and Watson.

### **EEOSP.43/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Betton declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct in respect of Agenda item A.4 – Enterprise Centre. The interest related to the fact that he is a tenant of a property of which the Council is the Landlord. Councillor Betton indicated that he would withdraw from the meeting during consideration of the matter.

### **EEOSP.44/12 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

**RESOLVED** – (1) That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 April 2012 be agreed as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

(2) That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2012 be noted.

### **EEOSP.45/12 CALL IN OF DECISIONS**

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

The Deputy Chief Executive (Mr Crossley) presented report OS.21/12 providing an overview of matters relating to the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel's work. Details of the latest version of the work programme were also included.

Mr Crossley reported that:

- The Forward Plan of the Executive covering the period 1 August 2012 to 30 November 2012 had been published on 18 July 2012. There were two items that related to the work of this Panel:
  - KD.025/12 – Local Environment Enforcement Policy – the item was scheduled for consideration by the Executive at their meeting on 6 August 2012. Details of the draft policy were set out within the Clean Up Carlisle report to be considered later in the meeting and the Panel's comments would be forwarded to the Executive
  - KD.026/12 – Public Realm Works (as referred to in Sainsbury Section 106-687 document) – the Executive was scheduled to consider the report at their meeting on 3 September 2012. The decision was to agree the release of funds and include the project in the Capital Programme.
- The following two minute excerpts from the meeting of the Executive on 2 July 2012 were appended to the report:
  - EX.073/12 – Botchergate Conservation Area Appraisal
  - EX.076/12 – Events Guidance Document 2012-2017
- The first meeting of the Scrutiny Chairs Group had taken place on 3 July 2012. The minutes were appended to the report for Members' information.
- The Panel had agreed that a small Task and Finish Group be established to consider the future of Tourist Information Centres. Membership of the Task and Finish Group comprised of Councillors Bainbridge (Lead Member), Bowditch, Franklin and Nedved. Copies of the draft Scrutiny Review Scoping Document were tabled for approval by Members.
- The ballot for the Carlisle Business Improvement District Bid (BID) was scheduled to take place between 26 July 2012 and 23 August 2012 with the result to be announced on 24 August 2012. An update would be provided to the Panel at their next meeting on 13 September 2012.
- On the rise of the previous meeting, Members had held a session to consider the work programme for the current municipal year. Mr Crossley highlighted the items that had been considered for inclusion on the Work Programme and, in particular, that:

Small Scale Grants Project for Councillors - Councillor Bainbridge would represent the Panel;

Economic Partnership Report – the draft Potential of Carlisle report would be submitted to the Panel on 13 September 2012;

Transformation of Local Environment and Economic Development – arrangements were being made for a special meeting of the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel, further details in relation to which would be provided in due course;

Use of Green Infrastructure – it may be suitable to provide an overview to Members at the meeting of the Panel scheduled for 29 November 2012.

Councillor Bainbridge informed Members that the first meeting of the Tourist Information Centre Task and Finish Group had taken place. He outlined the purpose / direction of the Review, commenting that it would focus upon Tourist Information Centres, rather than tourism in general. Task Group Members intended to visit Tourist Information Centres with a view to gaining a better understanding of the services provided. It would also be necessary to consider what could be done within the available budget so that the best possible service could be provided. He further drew Members' attention to the draft Scrutiny Review Scoping Document submitted for approval.

In response to a question, the Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder advised that implementation of the new Local Environment Database was in its infancy. She suggested that a broad indication of how it was working could be provided to Members by January 2013.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the Panel would receive reports:

- Economic Partnership Report – 13 September 2012
- Use of Green Infrastructure – to a future meeting
- Implementation of new Local Environment Database – 17 January 2013

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 the Panel approved the Terms of Reference for the Tourist Information Centre Task and Finish Group.

(3) That the Panel looked forward to receiving further reports as outlined above.

## **EEOSP.47/12 CLEANING UP CARLISLE**

The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder introduced Report LE.23/12. She outlined the background to the matter, advising that an additional £155,000 for two years had been agreed which would improve the cleanliness of Carlisle, targeting dog fouling, littering and staining. It would also support the transition to a more

programmed approach to the street cleansing operations. She further highlighted the areas for improvement, details of which were provided.

Referring to draft Enforcement Policy (a copy of which was appended to the report), the Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder stated that the document had been submitted to the Panel in order that the Executive may benefit from the expression of wide ranging opinion on the matter.

She explained that a clean local environment made a difference to the quality of life for communities in Carlisle and also made a contribution to the local economy by encouraging investment into the City and by supporting local tourism. It was clear that, whilst significant resources were spent in cleaning up Carlisle's streets, parks and open spaces, the local environment could quickly deteriorate due to high levels of litter being dropped, fly tipping at hot spots and the continuing dog fouling prevalent in some areas of the City. The City Council was therefore adopting a broader approach to cleaning up Carlisle and keeping it clean through a three stand approach of education, enforcement and improved clean up. The combined approach would jump start the initiative for a cleaner Carlisle which residents could be proud of.

The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder wished to make it clear that statutory guidelines were in place (Dog Control Orders) to deal with the issue of dogs on leads; and gave an assurance that the treatment of young offenders was being considered within the Policy and would be appropriate.

She further reported that the 'Love Where You Live' educational campaign had been launched on 1 August 2012 in the City Centre to raise awareness of what was acceptable, the response to which had been very positive.

The Director of Local Environment (Ms Culleton) commented that work had already begun on cleaning up Carlisle. She informed Members that three new street cleaning machines had been delivered over recent weeks and Officers were in the process of designing new rounds for each of the machines with an estimated completion date of 1 September 2012.

She also explained the impact on funding of that investment. A response team would be set up to provide a street cleaning service for requests to enable the core street cleaning resources to concentrate and focus on delivery of the planned programme of work. That would mean that all streets and pavements would be cleaned on a regular basis and, over time, the need to request street cleansing would reduce.

A new team was being set up within Environmental Health to provide education and enforcement on environmental crime such as dog fouling and littering and the more serious offence of fly-tipping. It was recognised that to have maximum impact the work would focus on education and raising awareness and, as such, regular campaign work would be delivered to encourage people to pick up after their dogs and not to drop litter. The new team would work across the directorate to address issues that may contribute to littering and fly-tipping in terms of helping residents to

access the excellent recycling and waste collection services and to identify and target locations and times for education opportunities.

The education work referred to would be followed up with hard hitting enforcement activity such as the issue of warning letters, fixed penalty notices, other legal notices and ultimately prosecution. Successful enforcement would be publicised to act as a deterrent to others; to get the message across that such behaviour would not be tolerated and that there would be sanctions.

The Environmental Health Manager (Mr Burns) advised that the draft Enforcement Policy (appended to the report) sought to ensure a fair, open, proportionate and consistent enforcement for individuals, businesses and the community. He added that the issue of serving fixed penalty notices on young offenders was considered within the Policy and Officers had met with the Police and Cumbria's Youth Offending Service to discuss that particular aspect.

Mr Burns further pointed out that minor changes may still be required to the Enforcement Policy and recommended that any such changes should be made in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

The report also recorded that the two year funding would compliment core street cleansing services and aid the transition to stronger area working and programmes of work. The funding would be spent on a dedicated response team, more staffing resource for enforcement and education, equipment and operational costs.

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

*Whilst recognising that a cultural change was required, a Member considered the Clean Neighbourhoods Enforcement Policy to be a very positive step forward. He highlighted the need to educate the public against putting rubbish bags out for collection earlier than necessary, commenting that he had witnessed seagulls tearing the bags open as a result of which waste was littered about the pavements. The Member suggested that issue be added to the list at paragraph 1.2 of the Policy.*

*The Member further highlighted the dangers to children from dog fouling and stressed that it was incumbent upon everyone to keep their community clean and tidy. Notwithstanding the above, he appreciated the considerable amount of hard work which had been undertaken to date.*

The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder was in agreement with the sentiments expressed, emphasising that it was up to the whole community to take ownership. She too recognised the good work undertaken by the Council's street cleaners.

Ms Culleton said that the draft Enforcement Policy enabled flexibility of approach, but within defined standards. She drew Members' attention to the section regarding Formal Enforcement within her report.

Mr Burns added that further consideration was being given to the issue of seagulls and a report back would be provided to a future meeting of the Panel.

*A Member asked whether a commitment had been received from the Youth Offending Team in terms of the timely provision of advice regarding young offenders.*

*He also noted that there was no mention of the rural areas and questioned the level of potential to “buy in” by the Parish Councils with a view to ensuring that amenity spaces were cleaned up.*

*The Member further raised the issue of accessibility in terms of reporting problems, commenting that he had experienced difficulty in finding the appropriate page on the Council website. He felt its prominence needed to be raised so that people could report problems more easily.*

In response, Ms Culleton advised that new rounds were under development for both the city and rural areas, part of which would include consideration of better methods of cleansing footpaths in the rural area. The intention was to work outwards from the centre.

Ms Culleton undertook to raise the issue of website accessibility with the Customer Services Manager.

With regard to the Youth Offending Team, Mr Burns explained that use was being made of the existing meeting structure and engagement was taking place.

*A Member questioned whether the new street cleaning machinery referred to would be utilised within the rural area.*

The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder stated that consistency was a key element.

Ms Culleton reiterated that each of the new machines would be deployed to cleanse a schedule of streets. Testing was required which would take time, but it was hoped that the initial rounds could be undertaken by September 2012 (with a roll out period of between 8 – 10 weeks). Footpaths within the rural area were a separate issue.

*A Member expressed concern, commenting that dog fouling was just as serious for children in the rural area as it was within the city. In Brampton it was considered that the provision of additional bins would constitute a good solution. Whilst additional bins could be purchased from the Small Scale Community Projects Budget, funding to meet the costs of emptying the bins was problematic.*

The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder replied that there should be no revenue implications emanating from small scale community projects. The provision of additional bins could potentially result in significant revenue costs in terms of emptying the bins. That was not the answer, particularly bearing in mind the current difficult economic conditions.

*A Member said that people within the St Aidan’s Ward had been cleaning up, which culture needed to be installed more widely.*

Ms Culleton expressed thanks to the people of St Aidan's, commenting that the Council was very grateful for that support and demonstration of community pride. She added that, whilst there were constraints around the total number of litter bins which could be provided, it would be possible to review the location thereof so that the service could be provided without an overall increase in revenue costs. If an identified gap remained it may be possible to address that via a growth bid.

*A Member thanked the Press for the publicity being given to the current efforts to clean up Carlisle. He then raised questions regarding the equal and fair treatment of people with disabilities; the procedures for issuing fixed penalty tickets; and the numbers of reports received from the public.*

*The Member also believed that there should be a policy of zero tolerance in respect of dogs not being on leads around children's play areas. Another Member believed that the policy adopted a common sense approach to dogs on leads.*

In response, the Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder confirmed that dogs had to be kept on leads within a certain proximity of play areas; and the Council did wish to know if offences were being committed, including details of specific dates / times. She emphasised that the Council was not targeting dog walkers in general, adding that people should enjoy walking their dogs.

On the issue of statutory exemptions, Mr Burns explained the content of the three Dog Control Orders adopted by the Council in 2007, details of which could be found on the Council website.

*Whilst welcoming the report, a Member believed that there was scope for improvement in terms of cleaning up litter and dog excrement. The most significant issue for him was ensuring that, when members of the public contacted the Council to report problems, the issues raised were not overlooked.*

*The Member sought clarification with regard to the new street cleaning programmes; whether there would be consistency in terms of delivery; mechanisation; the proposals for spend; monitoring / policing of the policy and whether Panel Member would be made aware of progress on the matter.*

*He also suggested that a postal education campaign be put in place and that signs should be erected in dog fouling hot spots as a permanent reminder.*

The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder acknowledged that the problems highlighted with regard to contacting the Council should be looked at.

Ms Culleton added that the new Local Environment database would feed into the Customer Contact Centre. She reiterated that implementation was at an early stage and, following a six month roll out of the integration, further detail could be provided. New street cleansing programmes were being developed and would be rolled out from 1 September 2012. She cautioned, however, that work had to be undertaken within the resources available.

On the issue of mechanisation Ms Culleton outlined the range of vehicles available to the authority. She drew Members' attention to page 15 of the report which provided a breakdown on the budget allocation for 2012/13 – 2013/14.

With regard to signage, Mr Burns accepted that the 'wrap around' signs were not very good. Twenty large high visible "Priority Surveillance" signs had been obtained and would be erected firstly in Currock and Harraby and later moved around the district. The Service was also changing the smaller signs and it was hoped these would start being put up from September 2012.

The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder stressed that people were well aware that they should clean up after their dogs and not drop litter. It was up to all elected Members to get out there and reinforce that message.

Ms Culleton then outlined the Officer resources and training currently in place to carry out enforcement. That included working in partnership with Riverside Carlisle.

*A Member said that in Stanwix a high level of emphasis was placed upon local campaigns. He expressed the hope that passion would continue moving forward.*

*The Member sought further details with regard to the rapid response team.*

The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder commended the people of Stanwix for undertaking litter picks and generating publicity, which represented good examples of community involvement.

On the issue of the rapid response team, Ms Culleton explained that the service had been reactive in the past. The intention was to move away from that, the aim being that core street cleaning resources could concentrate and focus on delivering the planned programme of work. Over time the need to request street cleansing would reduce.

*A Member asked whether use could be made of the CDRP's environmental camera.*

Mr Burns replied that the camera could be booked through the CDRP, but could only be fitted in certain locations. A covert camera had also been purchased, but could only be used in compliance with the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

In response to a question, the Chairman confirmed that monitoring of the matter could take place in conjunction with the report on Waste Services at the 25 October 2012 meeting.

*Referring to Appendix 1, a Member noted that £13,000 was being spent on the purchase of a motorcycle in the first year. He questioned whether training would be provided so that other staff could also use such expensive pieces of equipment during periods of leave / absence.*

Ms Culleton advised that a number of staff within the team would be trained to use such assets and there would not therefore necessarily be a dedicated driver.

Ms Culleton stated that the discussion today had been very helpful. She further highlighted the six principles of the 'Love Where You Live' campaign for Members' information.

In conclusion, the Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder thanked Members for what had been a very robust and helpful discussion.

RESOLVED – That the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel –

(1) had scrutinised Report LE.23/12 in detail and recognised that there was a balance between cleaning, education and enforcement.

(2) supported the Cleaner Carlisle: Love Where You Live Campaign.

(3) looked forward to receiving an update at their meeting on 25 October 2012.

the meeting adjourned at 11.27 am and reconvened at 11.35 am

#### **EEOSP.48/12 UPDATE ON THE MANAGEMENT OF THE ENTERPRISE CENTRE FOLLOWING THE REVIEW OF ITS OPERATION**

Councillor Betton, having declared a disclosable pecuniary interest, withdrew from the meeting room during consideration of the matter.

The Director of Economic Development (Mrs Meek) submitted report ED.28/12 updating Members on the management, administrative and operational issues relative to the Enterprise Centre following the review of the Centre, as concluded in March 2012. The report also updated the position with regard to repairs and maintenance of the building.

Mrs Meek introduced the Economic Development Officer (Ms Martin) who was responsible for the Enterprise Centre and present at the meeting to respond to Members' questions.

Mrs Meek then outlined the background to the matter, reminding Members that the review of the Enterprise Centre had been wide ranging; looked at every aspect of the operation and management of the building; together with the services provided to tenants. The most tangible outcome of the review was that the Centre would in future be managed centrally from the Civic Centre. That had resulted in the loss of two onsite posts. In order to ensure that the City Council continued to provide a suitable service to tenants a team of Officers had worked collaboratively to develop a new operational and management regime, together with more efficient administrative processes for the tenants. A series of meetings and consultation events had taken place with tenants to ensure that they were fully engaged during the transition from on-site management to management from the Civic Centre.

The consultation ran between April and June 2012, culminating in an open meeting at the Centre to which all tenants had been invited. Individual meetings had also taken place with individual tenants as and when required. The main areas of concern raised by the tenants related to health and safety, building security and business continuity, all of which had been addressed within the revised service provision.

The Economy and Enterprise Portfolio Holder advised Members that the resultant situation regarding service provision for the tenants fell into three categories. These were no change to services / operation of the building; enhanced or new service provision for tenants; and removal of services. Details of the main issues within those categories were provided.

The report also set out details of the progress which had been made over recent months and the associated budget; the schedule for the planned repairs and maintenance and the up to date estimated cost. The major repair and maintenance issue continued to be the poor condition of the roof and the problems with water ingress. Although clearly substantial capital investment needed to be made on roof repairs/replacement, no funding was currently earmarked in the 2012/2013 capital programme. That would need to be considered as part of the 2013/2014 budget process.

In conclusion, the Economy and Enterprise Portfolio Holder said that the Enterprise Centre would continue to play a significant part in the support for small business in the Carlisle area, especially to those who wanted flexible affordable space adjacent to the City Centre.

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

*A Member noted that the Centre was now managed centrally from the Civic Centre. He questioned how service provision to tenants would work in reality, particularly over weekends, and the Christmas Period; what the knock on effect would be in terms of their insurance; whether the Centre constituted a long term solution for people wishing to start up businesses; and how new business could become established.*

Ms Martin replied that the reference to 24 hours per day related to the ability of tenants to access the property, rather than service provision by the Council and therefore there was no change for tenants. Contact details would be provided in the Tenants' Handbook. She added that the new management arrangement had no bearing upon Tenants' insurance.

In response to a question, Ms Martin stated that the occupancy rate of the Enterprise Centre was 63%. She further advised that she had conducted a number of viewings during the week. Enquiries were still being received and the availability of conference facilities was a positive factor.

Mrs Meek added that Officers would work with partners on the issue of delivery of business start ups.

*A Member asked whether there was a place for the Enterprise Centre within the Council's property portfolio in the longer term.*

In response, the Environment and Economy Portfolio Holder indicated that so long as the property met a need it would form part of the property portfolio.

Mrs Meek added that clearly businesses and their respective requirements changed over time, but Officers would keep a watching brief.

*A Member sought clarification with regard to marketing of the site and the businesses located there. He noted that the website contained no details of the businesses or their product ranges. An A – Z would be useful; as would banners / hoarding displays.*

Ms Martin replied that the Council was looking to improve and enhance the outward appearance of the Enterprise Centre through redecoration, new signage and lighting. She added that the transition from on site management to management from the Civic Centre was on schedule and under budget.

Referrals occurred via word of mouth, driving traffic through the website and the property search facility promoted in the district and beyond. Consideration was also being given to re-profiling current information. A full list of all tenants was available in reception, but the agreement of tenants would be required prior to greater detail being made available.

Mrs Meek added that work was ongoing on the Discover Carlisle website. The role of the City Council was to promote the Enterprise Centre, rather than individual businesses.

*A Member believed that people did not necessarily welcome change and may indeed feel that they were now receiving a less immediate service. He questioned how the service would be monitored.*

Ms Martin outlined the consultation which had already taken place with tenants, in addition to which she had personally engaged with every tenant. That engagement had provided an opportunity for tenants to raise any concerns and ensure that they were comfortable with the new reporting procedure. In summary a monitoring process was in place and issues would be addressed as they arose.

*Another Member stated that a site visit would be beneficial.*

The Environment and Economy Portfolio Holder suggested that the Panel may wish to hold a future meeting at the Enterprise Centre.

Following discussion it was agreed that Mrs Meek would make arrangements for those Members who wished to do so to visit the site. A future meeting of the Panel may also be held at the Centre.

RESOLVED – (1) That Report ED.28/12 be received; and the new management, administrative and operational arrangements put in place for the Enterprise Centre as a result of the Review of the Centre (completed in March 2012) be noted.

(2) That the Panel noted the progress made with regard to repairs and maintenance of the Centre, together with the ongoing schedule of planned repairs.

(3) That the Panel looked forward to monitoring the matter at a future meeting.

(4) That the Director of Economic Development be requested to make arrangements for a site visit by Members of the Panel; a future meeting may also be held at the Enterprise Centre.

(The meeting ended at 12.10 pm)