

HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY PANEL

THURSDAY 22 JULY 2021 AT 10.00AM

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Finlayson (Vice Chair), Councillors Ms Ellis-Williams (as substitute for Councillor Miss Whalen), Glover, Mrs McKerrell, Shepherd, Sunter and Mrs Tarbitt.

ALSO

PRESENT: Councillor Ellis, Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder
Jane Maggs, Chair of Food Carlisle

OFFICERS: Deputy Chief Executive
Policy and Communications Manager
Carlisle Sustainable Food City Co-ordinator
Policy and Performance Officer

HWSP.44/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf Councillors Paton and Miss Whalen.

HWSP.45/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were submitted.

HWSP.46/21 PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED - It was agreed that the items of business within Part A be dealt with in public and Part B be dealt with in private.

HWSP.47/21 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED - That it be noted that, Council at its meeting of 20 July 2021 received and adopted the minutes of the meetings held on 8 April and 10 June 2021. The Vice Chair signed the minute book 48(1).

HWSP.48/21 CALL IN OF DECISIONS

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

HWSP.49/21 CARLISLE PLAN 2021-23

The Policy and Communications Manager gave an overview of the progress made regarding the adoption of a new Carlisle Plan, which formed part of the Council's Policy Framework (PC.25/21).

In considering the update the Panel raised the following comments and questions:

- In discussing the consultation a Member asked:
if it would be possible to amend the questions to add some closed response questions?
would the Panel have the opportunity to view the consultation responses?
could the consultation responses be monitored to give an idea of the demographic of responders?

The Policy and Communications Manager responded that the questions had been amended following suggestions from the Business and Transformation Scrutiny Panel, he agreed to look at the questions and create a blend of open and closed questions. He added that a summary of the consultation responses would be prepared for the Executive and could be shared with the Panel and he agreed to look at how the responses could be monitored to profile where they were coming from.

- The Panel had, at their meeting in April, had concerns that the words “prosperity being the most important determinant of health and wellbeing” had been included in the Plan and felt that the word ‘most’ could be changed to ‘an important’. The Member questioned whether this had been considered by the Executive and, if so, why it had not been changed.

The Deputy Chief Executive responded that it was difficult to determine what the most important driver for a good quality of life was and prosperity reflected the direction of the Executive. The feedback had been that work, employment and level of salary was important and was highlighted at the start of the document, this also tied in with the future aspirations of the City.

The Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder added that the term would not be changed. He felt strongly that an impoverished city could not improve the health and wellbeing of its citizens and that prosperity was a driver for everything else.

The Panel asked that the Executive reconsider the comments of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel and the Business and Transformation Scrutiny Panel and re word the line to ‘prosperity is an important determinant of health and wellbeing’.

- The Plan only made one reference to mental health. The pandemic had affected the mental health of many people and the Plan should have clear steps to show how the Council supported mental health, managing and addressing mental health were two separate issues which needed to be dealt with as such.

The Deputy Chief Executive highlighted a number of areas which the Council worked, with partners, to manage and support mental health issues. He agreed to include some of the key areas within the Plan.

- The Local Government Reform announcement had been made and it was suggested that Copeland and Allerdale Councils Plans be considered to begin the process of aligning the vision for the new Council footprint.
- Could a timeline for projects be included within the Plan?

The Policy and Communications Manager informed the Panel that the Executive had asked for an overview map to be prepared which would show the area of investments and the outcomes. The Business and Transformation Scrutiny Panel had asked for a timeline of projects to be prepared alongside the map; this would be important during the Local Government Reorganisation to drive the projects.

The Deputy Chief Executive explained that the period the Plan covered had taken into account the Local Government Reorganisation, although the Plan was up to 2023 the projects contained within it would continue far past that year.

- A Member was concerned that the Plan’s only reference to the rural area was the development of the Rural Strategy.

The Policy and Communications Manager informed the Panel that the Business and Transformation Scrutiny Panel had raised the same issue. The Rural Strategy would be a separate detailed Strategy prepared by the Corporate Director of Economic Development.

RESOLVED – 1) That the Panel had considered and commented on the draft Carlisle Plan (PC.25/21)

2) That the consultation responses summary be circulated to the Panel at the relevant time.

3) The Panel asked the Executive to reconsider the comments of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel and the Business and Transformation Scrutiny Panel and re word the line 'prosperity being the most important determinant of health and wellbeing' to 'prosperity is an important determined of health and wellbeing.

HWSP.50/21 SUSTAINABLE FOOD PLACES – FOOD CARLISLE FROM BRONZE TO SILVER

The Carlisle Sustainable Food City Co-ordinator provided an update on the progress of Food Carlisle, a Sustainable Food Places (SFP) Partnership, who were working towards achieving silver SFP status. Carlisle City Council were one of the partners of Food Carlisle (CS.29/21).

The Carlisle Sustainable Food City Co-ordinator gave a very detailed overview of Sustainable Food Places Partnership programme which brought together pioneering food partnerships across the UK. The Partnership drove innovation and best practice on all aspects of healthy and sustainable food by providing funding opportunities, support, guidance and national campaigns. Food Carlisle was part of the Partnership and strived to be a beacon of good practice to inspire others.

The Carlisle Sustainable Food City Co-ordinator set out how the bronze SFP award had been achieved and the benefits of the silver award to local communities. She detailed some key points summarising the achievements made including the establishment of a community 'no dig' allotment; support to the Affordable Food Hubs in Carlisle; support to community allotments; and funding for the Plant, Food and Wellbeing Fair which centred around caring for ourselves and the planet.

The Carlisle Sustainable Food City Co-ordinator outlined Food Carlisle's future programme of work which would be based around the criteria to achieve the silver status.

In considering the update the Panel raised the following comments and questions:

- The Panel thanked the Carlisle Sustainable Food City Co-ordinator for her detailed and informative presentation.
- Were there plans to expand the Community Growing projects and how would they help address food poverty?

The Carlisle Sustainable Food City Co-ordinator confirmed that there were plans to have more allotments next year with the hope that surplus produce would go to those in need at the affordable food hubs and the food bank, work would also be undertaken with community centres to carry out food growing projects.

- A Member congratulated Food Carlisle on the Plant, Food and Wellbeing Fair and made some suggestions to encourage even more people to attend future events.

The Chair of Food Carlisle explained that the Plant, Food and Wellbeing Fair had been delayed due to the pandemic and was the first public event after lockdown. The event was kept relatively small as it was unknown how confident people would be in attending an event and to minimise the impact of any further cancellations. The attendance had been better than expected and would be expanded in the future.

- The Carlisle Plan included a vision to improve health and wellbeing against the rising challenges of climate change. It was suggested that Food Carlisle raise awareness of a vegan diet and the impact it had in reducing personal carbon footprints.

The Chair of Food Carlisle highlighted the processed nature of some vegan foods and the impact that had on health. She commented on the local fruit and vegetable schemes that were being used and agreed that they should be publicised better.

The Carlisle Sustainable Food City Co-ordinator added that work was being undertaken to reinstate the Healthy Option Award for local restaurants and cafes, this will include how local produce was being used to reduce the carbon footprint. Work was also underway to introduce affordable vegan options through the affordable food hubs.

- How would local and micro producers be encouraged and supported to grow and benefit the health of the local community?

The Chair of Food Carlisle responded that Food Carlisle were looking at the resilience for local businesses. During the pandemic many suppliers delivered to homes, however, due to the geography of Cumbria this could be a large delivery area. Food Carlisle was trying to identify ways to keep the delivery of local produce going in a different way. One example of this would be to mirror a successful format of producers bringing local produce to the affordable food hubs where everyone could shop, there the community could purchase the food and any larger donations would then subsidise those who could not normally afford such products.

The Deputy Chief Executive explained that procurement processes with large investors were difficult for local businesses and there needed to be a policy level lead to support investment in the local economy and the health and wellbeing of local people. Schemes such as everyone buying at affordable food hubs could result in long term changes to access to food and the skills to prepare the food as well as elevate the local economy.

The Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder asked what research had been carried out to determine the percentage of produce consumed in Cumbria compared to the amount of produce grown.

The Chair of Food Carlisle confirmed that the work had been carried out in 2016, a recent study had shown that if every farm had one acre growing vegetables there would be enough to feed everyone. Food Carlisle had been working with local farmers to encourage them to give up an acre but there needed to be a shift in the way people ate for this to work on a large scale.

- How was the Council involved in the delivery of the projects outlined within the report and aspirations of Food Carlisle?

The Deputy Chief Executive responded that the City Council was a partner in Food Carlisle and provided resources through the Carlisle Sustainable Food City Co-ordinator and would lead through an all policies approach, as well as providing support and advice on matters such as procurement.

- The Panel supported the drive to achieve the silver award and asked what would be required to achieve it?

The Chair of Food Carlisle stated that the bronze award had been achieved by monitoring and reporting on the work already being undertaken in the area. The silver award moved towards Food Carlisle instigating projects. She felt it would be difficult to achieve but there were many projects that were being supported by Food Carlisle.

RESOLVED – That the Panel supported Food Carlisle in working towards the Silver Sustainable Food Places award (CS.29/21).

HWSP.51/21 OVERVIEW REPORT

The Policy and Performance Officer presented report OS.19/21 providing an overview of matters relating to the work of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel.

The Panel requested that the following matters be included in their work programme:

- Turkish Baths feasibility study in September with a visit to the Turkish Baths before it was scrutinised.
- Old Fire Station Update

The Panel discussed the Local Government Reorganisation Announcement. They understood that the Scrutiny Chairs Group would be meeting to discuss the announcement and asked them to consider the following:

- That the Future Scrutiny Arrangements Task and Finish Group should not progress. That no changes be made to the scrutiny arrangements for the final year as the City Council;
- That it was critical that staff were supported and any anxiety they had be minimised where possible;
- That the local communities and organisations that relied on the City Council, such as Tullie House, Community Centres and Parish Councils be reassured that the Council would continue to provide support and services;
- That dialogue be started with scrutiny panels at the other three authorities to build a relationship and shared goals for the future.

RESOLVED – 1) That report OS.19/21 be received.

2) That the following matters be added to the Panel's Work Programme:

- Turkish Baths feasibility study in September with a visit to the Turkish Baths before it was scrutinised.
- Old Fire Station Update

3) That the comments of the Panel, as detailed above, be passed to the Scrutiny Chairs Group for their next meeting.

[The meeting ended at 11.43am]