

# **ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY**

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

### **Report of the Chairman**

#### **COUNCILLOR CAROLE RUTHERFORD**

In March the Panel were invited to the Richard Rose Academy at Morton to receive a presentation on the work of their Career Academy. There was also an opportunity to meet employers and students who were taking part in the mentoring scheme and the visit concluded with a tour of the school. Whilst the building and facilities are impressive, what impressed the panel members even more was the innovative and enthusiastic work going on inside the building. The opportunity to speak with employers and students was also welcome and I think I can speak for all the members present when I ask that this Council as an employer become involved with the mentoring scheme at the Academy. We would also urge that the Council use its position on The Economic Partnership to see that the recommendations of the Panel are followed up.

Last year the panel received a report on “improving the economy of Carlisle”. At that time because of changes in funding, in particular to tourism in Cumbria, it was hoped that the new City Centre initiative (BID) would embrace tourism. Many of the interests and concerns of both sectors are the same. We were somewhat disappointed that the BID does not at this stage include the tourism side of economic activity in the city centre. This is something that the Council should carefully monitor and see if in the future there are any opportunities whereby the aspirations of the retail and tourism providers can be brought together to the benefit of all.

Dog fouling was again on the April agenda with ways of naming and shaming persistent offenders being discussed. Whilst additional training in enforcement, new specialised cleaning equipment, education and financial resources should see a cleaner environment throughout Carlisle in the coming months, a cause for concern was the increase in the number of strays that were now being picked up. Whether this is because of the economic climate or some other cause is not certain.

Finally the Enterprise review came back to the panel. Initially there was some confusion over discrepancies in some of the details but questioning resolved the issues. However, in this item as with others on the agenda, it was felt that the initial reports presented to the panel could have had more information at the outset. Whilst questioning obtained fuller information, scrutiny would have been more effective and quicker, if we had had sight of this earlier.

**Chairman Councillor Carole Rutherford**

**April 19<sup>th</sup> 2012**