

AGENDA

Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Thursday, 28 March 2013 AT 10:00
In the Victory Hall, Dalston, CA5 7QB

****Briefing meeting for Members will be at 9.15 am in
the Victory Hall, Dalston****

Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence and notification of substitutions.

Declarations of Interest (including declarations of “The Party Whip”)

Members are invited to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests, other registrable interests, and any interests, relating to any item on the agenda at this stage.

Public and Press

To agree that the items of business within Part A of the agenda should be dealt with in public and that the items of business within Part B of the agenda should be dealt with in private.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

5 - 16

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2013 [Copy Minutes in Minute Book Vol 39(5)]

To note the minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2013 (Copy Minutes herewith)

PART A

To be considered when the Public and Press are present

A.2 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Riverside Carlisle

Pursuant to Procedure Rule 10, the Director of Governance to report the receipt of the following questions to the Chairman which have been submitted on notice by Mr Barker, Secretary of the Carlisle and Rural Tenants' Federation.

"1. The serious social housing shortage in the rural areas of Carlisle was highlighted at the Panel meeting on February 14 2013 when Riverside representatives were asked how the shortage of affordable accommodation is being tackled bearing in mind that one in three city residents are from the rural area. Members of the Panel were informed that there are no current or planned rural developments by Riverside. How will Members of the Panel ensure that this shortage of affordable social housing is given due consideration by Riverside Carlisle when they are developing their capital schemes?

2. Members of the Panel were informed how Riverside Carlisle are supporting their tenants during the Welfare Reform changes. Are Members of the Panel assured that that all Riverside tenants will receive equal support and assistance regardless of their locality or membership of tenants association and how do the Panel intend to further scrutinise this issue?"

A.3	<u>LOCALITY WORKING</u>	17 - 24
	(Communities and Housing) The Chairman of Carlisle Parish Councils Association to submit a report on Locality Working and the progress made in the Carlisle district. (Copy Report herewith)	
A.4	<u>PARISH CHARTER</u>	25 - 62
	(Communities and Housing) The Director of Community Engagement to submit a report concerning the Parish Charter and its Formal Agreements, which set out the arrangements for how Parishes and the City Council will work together. The matter was considered by the Executive on 11 March 2013. (Copy Report CD.21/13 and Minute Excerpt herewith)	
A.5(a)	<u>OVERVIEW REPORT AND WORK PROGRAMME</u>	63 - 82
	To consider a report providing an overview of matters related to the work of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel, together with the latest version of the Work Programme and details of the Key Decisions items relevant to this Panel as set out in the Notice of Executive Key Decisions. (Copy Report OS.07/13 herewith)	
A.5(b)	<u>UPDATE - SUPPORT TO COMMUNITY CENTRES</u>	83 - 88
	(Communities and Housing) The Director of Community Engagement to submit an update on the actions from the Community Centre Task and Finish Group. (Copy Report CD.27/13 herewith)	
A.6	<u>CDRP PARTNERSHIP PLAN</u>	89 - 92
	(Communities and Housing) The Director of Community Engagement to submit an update of the activities of the Carlisle and Eden CDRP, including details of the drafting of the Partnership Plan. (Copy Report CD.20/13 herewith)	

PART B

To be considered when the Public and Press are excluded from the meeting

B.1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TRANSFORMATION PROPOSALS

- Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information);

Enquiries, requests for reports, background papers, etc to Committee

Clerk: Rachel Rooney – 817039

Notes to Members: Briefing meeting will be held at 9.15am at Victory Hall, Dalston

Minutes of Previous Meeting

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

THURSDAY 14 FEBRUARY 2013 AT 10.00 AM

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Luckley (Chairman) Councillors Bowditch (as substitute for Councillor Mrs Bradley) Earp, Mrs Prest, Miss Sherriff, Mrs Stevenson and Mrs Vasey.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Riddle – Communities and Housing Portfolio Holder
Mr P Taylor - Head of Operations, Riverside Carlisle
Ms R Kenvyn – Development Project Manager, Riverside Carlisle
Mr D Robinson – Development Officer, Riverside Carlisle

OFFICERS: Director of Community Engagement
Communities, Housing and Health Manager
DFG Coordinator – Cumbria
Communities Housing and Health Manager
Policy and Communications Manager
Scrutiny Officer

COSP.09/13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mrs Bradley and McDevitt.

COSP.10/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mrs Luckley declared a registrable interest in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct in respect of agenda item A.3 – Joint Working with Riverside Carlisle. The interest related to the fact that she was the City Council's representative on the Riverside Carlisle Board.

COSP.11/13 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meetings held on 10 January 2013 be noted.

COSP.12/13 CALL-IN OF DECISIONS

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

COSP.13/13 AGENDA

RESOLVED – That Agenda items A.3, Riverside Carlisle Joint Working be considered before Agenda item A2 the Overview Report to avoid any unnecessary delay to external organisations attending the Panel.

COSP.14/13 JOINT WORKING WITH RIVERSIDE CARLISLE

The Chairman welcomed Mr Paul Taylor, Ms Kenvyn and Mr Robinson, Riverside Carlisle to the meeting.

The Director of Community Engagement submitted an update on joint working between Riverside Carlisle and Carlisle City Council (Report CD.14/13).

The report updated the Panel on a number of areas of joint working including the Affordable Homes Programme, Disabled Facility Grants and Homelessness. Work being undertaken regarding the impact of the Welfare Reform on Riverside Tenants was reported in detail.

The Panel scrutinised each of the areas of joint working in turn and raised the following comments and questions:

Affordable Housing

- If the development of the former Morton Primary School site had progressed would the developments at Arnside Court, Borland Avenue and Thomlinson Avenue happened?

The Development Project Manager, Riverside Carlisle responded that the developments at the three sites would not have progressed if the Morton site had been developed. She confirmed that the site would not be developed as an agreement on the land had not been reached.

- Could some of the one bedroom properties have been renovated in preparation for the Welfare Reform changes?

The Head of Operations, Riverside Carlisle acknowledged that the Welfare Reform would have an impact on the development strategy in the future. Riverside Carlisle had to be careful of making changes to the development strategy during the period of change but recognised that a large proportion of tenants would be impacted by the changes.

- There was a serious shortage of affordable accommodation in the rural areas and there were no current rural developments, was there a programme to increase affordable accommodation in rural areas?

The Development Project Manager was aware of the demand in rural areas. There were no planned developments in rural areas, however, Riverside Carlisle always looked for new opportunities for developments. The Head of Operations added that the reduction in funding available to social housing providers impacted on the amount of developments that could be planned.

- Did Riverside Carlisle use all of the funding available to them for developments?

The Development Project Manager confirmed that Riverside carried out a full development programme and investigated all resourcing opportunities. The Head of Operations added that Riverside were putting all available resources into the development programme and Riverside Carlisle had been making links with Head Office so that their own resources could be included. He reiterated that the development programme relied heavily on funding and loans and there had been a significant reduction nationally. Due to the reductions the development programme for future years was uncertain.

The Communities Housing and Health Manager informed the Panel the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) had awarded Carlisle a £2.4m grant for new affordable homes.

The City Council was working closely with partners to bring forward a supply of affordable housing and had agreed on a mix of accommodation. Social housing providers had to borrow significant amounts of money because of the reduction in grants and in Carlisle property developments were 80% affordable rents. There was additional pressure on social housing providers as the margin between private rent and social housing rent was very narrow.

- The opportunity for funding to bring empty properties back into use had increased and this should be utilised alongside new developments.

The Communities Housing and Health Manager agreed and explained that Carlisle was the most successful authority in Cumbria for bringing empty properties back into use.

- Could Arnside Court have been redeveloped instead of being demolished?

The Development Project Manager explained that Arnside Court had been sheltered accommodation and could not be redeveloped because Riverside Carlisle could not secure funding to redevelop it due to the age, fabric and structure of the building. It would have been a challenge to create fit for purpose accommodation, the new development offered more sustainable accommodation.

- If Riverside had been aware of the Welfare Reform and the need for one bedroom accommodation would it still have taken the decision to demolish the 14 bedsits?

The Head of Operations stated that Riverside was obliged to consider redevelopment but the bedsits had not met the legal requirement for social landlords. He was aware of the impact the Welfare Reform would have on social housing and it would impact on the development strategy in the future. He added that it was often cheaper to demolish properties and rebuild them to sustainable standards than to redevelop them.

Disabled Facility Grants

- How did Riverside judge when a Disabled Facility Grant (DFG) request was unviable or impracticable?

The Head of Operations responded that there had been a real policy change in the way that Riverside worked, they considered the property and the needs of the individual and what properties were available. Riverside had to ensure that there was a balance to ensure that as many people as possible could be helped and relocating tenants instead of providing DFGs had meant that more DFGs could be provided, last year 82 major adaptations and 269 minor adaptations been carried out. He added that the register of adapted properties had been completed.

The Panel thanked Riverside for their contribution to DFGs.

Homelessness

- Had Riverside Carlisle refused to provide accommodation for any of the referrals from the City Council?

The Communities Housing and Health Manager agreed to provide Members with a written answer.

- The Panel highlighted the last paragraph in the report regarding Choice Based Letting and asked for clarification.

The Director of Community Engagement reminded the Panel that the Choice Based Letting Policy had been amended and one of the amendments had been to ensure that tenants who fell into debt as a result of the changes brought in by the Welfare Reform would not fall in priority in the Choice Based Letting Scheme.

- The report stated that 69 people had been nominated by the City Council as being owed a homelessness duty and only 49 had been housed by Riverside, what happened to the other 20 people?

The Communities Housing and Health Manager reported that all 69 people had been housed as follows:

Riverside – 49 households

Two Castles Housing Association – 5 households

Impact Housing Association – 3 households

Eden Housing Association – 2 Households

Hanover, Anchor & South Lakes – 1 Household each

Private rented accommodation through choice – 7 households

- Were the problems regarding the statutory responsibility of homeless 16-18 year olds continuing?

The Director of Community Engagement reminded the Panel of a Case which happened in 2010. The Case led to a review of the processes and joint working arrangements between the County Council and the City Council. The County Council had a statutory responsibility to 16-18 year old children in need. The County Council sought legal advice on Case Law and had recently Children's Act and the appointed a Liaison Officer to work with the Districts.

The Panel were pleased to hear that improvements had been made and suggested that the new Liaison Officer role be invited to a future Panel meeting.

Welfare Reform

- The report stated that 570 tenants who under-occupied their homes had engaged with Riverside Carlisle, how would the other tenants be kept informed of the changes?

The Head of Operations explained that the exact figures changed quickly due to tenants changes in circumstances. The approximate number of tenants who under-occupied their home was in the 1000 region. 70% of those tenants had made contact with Riverside and the remaining tenants had not responded to written communications or to officers visiting

their homes. Riverside had chosen to interpret those who had not responded as deciding to stay in the property and pay the extra rent as there was a cost implication to Riverside to continue to visit the properties.

Riverside had been collating data on those tenants who were vulnerable to enable extra support and advice to be provided. The data was collected through officer knowledge and external agencies. Riverside had support officers and funding in place to support tenants who wished to downsize and a number of tenants had already taken this offer.

The Head of Operations outlined the Big Changes Campaign which Riverside was running to inform all tenants of the Welfare Reform and to specifically target tenants who under-occupied. Part of the Campaign was to ensure that those tenants of retirement age understood that the under-occupancy changes did not affect them. He added that Carlisle was fortunate compared to many areas as smaller accommodation was available for tenants to downsize to. There were a number of questions and issues that still had not been answered and the full impact would not be known for some months.

The Head of Operations added that Riverside Carlisle had two members of staff dedicated to giving benefit advice and one member of staff focused on visiting people to give advice.

The Director of Community Engagement outlined the work the City Council had undertaken in preparation for the changes including closer working with partners. A multi agency Welfare Reform Board had been established to share and disperse information to avoid duplicity of work. The Revenues and Benefits Service had sent out a statutory letter to residents and there had been a limited response to the letter. All responses would be logged and mapped so areas of low response or high concern could be identified and targeted with information/awareness raising activity.

- Was there enough capacity to move all of the tenants who requested a down size?

The Head of Operations responded that Riverside had less empty properties then it had ever had and although there were adequate properties they were all occupied. He stated it that it would be a slow process to rehouse everyone and it would cause arrears for some tenants.

- If a tenant was unable to downsize due to the lack of accommodation would they still have to pay the extra rent?

The Head of Operations informed the Panel that tenants would have to pay the rent and Riverside had set procedures in place to recover the debt.

- Did Riverside have any discretion when considering rent arrears and were they reviewing their Rent Arrears Policy in light of the Reform?

The Head of Operations confirmed that Riverside was reviewing their national Rent Arrears Policy. Riverside had made it clear to tenants that the changes were Government policy and that tenants were responsible for paying the rent. Riverside Carlisle had no discretion regarding rent arrears as the Policy covered the whole of Riverside not just Carlisle.

- It had been suggested that tenants who under-occupied could take in lodgers, would this affect the tenancy agreements?

The Head of Operations agreed that a lodger was an option for tenants but it would be their choice although they would be required to gain written consent from Riverside. There were pros and cons to this idea and ultimately the tenant would be responsible for the behaviour of the lodger as far as their tenancy agreement was concerned. There was an option for shared tenancies but ultimately it was up to the individual and their circumstances.

RESOLVED –1) That the Riverside Carlisle representatives be thanked for their input in the meeting and welcomed the update on the partnership;

2) That Riverside Carlisle be thanked for their contribution towards Disabled Facilities Grants

3) That the Communities Housing and Health Manager provide Members with a written response to the following question:

“Had Riverside Carlisle refused to provide accommodation for any of the referrals from the City Council?”

4) That an update on the development with regard to the changes in partnership working with Children’s Services and their Liaison Officer be provided to the Panel at their July meeting.

5) That the Panels concerns regarding rent arrears be passed to Riverside to consider during their review of the Rent Arrears Policy.

COSP.15/13 OVERVIEW REPORT AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Officer presented report OS.04/13 which provided an overview of matters relating to the work of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel and included the latest version of the work programme and Key Decisions of the Executive which related to the Panel.

The Scrutiny Officer reported that:

- The Notice of Executive Key Decisions had been published on 11 January 2013. The following issues fell within the remit of this Panel:

KD.037/12 – Carlisle Plan to be considered at this meeting

KD.041/12 - Regulatory Reform Order had been removed from the January Notice but had been included in the February Notice to be considered by the Executive on 11 March 2013.

KD.045/12 – Parish Charter – Would be considered by the Panel on 28 March 2013.

KD.046/12 – Home Improvement Agency would be considered at this meeting.

Members did not raise any questions or comments on the items contained within the Notice of Key Decisions.

- There were no references from the Executive.

- The Scrutiny Officer provided an update on information that the Panel had requested at their meeting on 10 January 2013, details of which had been included in the Overview Report. Updates on the Homeless and Hostel Services and the Carlisle and Eden District Delivery Group had also been circulated to Members.
- All Scrutiny Members had been asked if there were any particular issues they wished to see discussed in the Scrutiny Annual report. A draft of the report would be submitted to the Panel's final meeting of the civic year on Thursday 28 March 2013.
- The Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel had organised a special meeting to take place on 5 March 2013 at 2.00pm to consider the Carlisle Leisure Limited contract. All Members of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel had been invited to attend.

The Panel asked for updates to be made available on the CCTV provision and the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership.

RESOLVED – 1) That, subject to the issues raised above, the Overview Report incorporating the Work Programme and Key decisions relevant to this Panel be noted;

2) That Key Decisions:

KD.041/12 - Regulatory Reform Order had been removed from the January Notice but had been included in the February Notice to be considered by the Executive on 11 March 2013.

KD.045/12 – Parish Charter – Would be considered by the Panel on 28 March 2013.

3) That the Panel receive regular updates on the CCTV provision in Carlisle in 2013/14.

4) That an update on the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership be submitted to the next meeting of the Panel.

COSP.16/13 DRAFT CARLISLE PLAN 2013/16

The Policy and Communications Manager submitted report PC.02/13 presenting the draft Carlisle Plan 2013 – 2016. He informed Members that the Plan replaced the previous Corporate Plan 2010 - 2013 and formed part of the Council's Policy Framework.

The Plan set out the Council's vision for Carlisle and the six priorities for action over the medium term (2013 - 2016), with the text under each priority providing the background and further detail on how the priority would be achieved.

The draft Action Plan for delivering the priorities was set out at Appendix 2, including medium term actions aimed to be delivered over the life of the Plan and actions to be delivered within the financial year. That aligned the Plan with the budget year. Future actions which developed could fit into the budget planning process.

The Executive had on 11 February 2013 (EX.10/13) considered the report and decided:

“That the Executive:

1. Had considered the presentation and content of the draft Carlisle Plan with a view to seeking continuous improvement in the way the Council delivered services to its local communities.
2. Referred the draft Carlisle Plan to the Overview and Scrutiny Panels for consultation.
3. Referred the Action Plan to partners, including community and voluntary groups for consultation.”

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

- The Plan contained a lot of work for officers and the number of priorities had increased, was there the capacity to deliver and monitor the priorities.

The Policy and Communications Manager highlighted the action plan for delivering each of the priorities which was attached to the report. Each item in the action plan was linked to a lead Director and would not have been included in the action plan if there was not the resource available to deliver it.

- A previous priority had been Health and Wellbeing and it was no longer included in the priorities.

The Communities and Housing Portfolio Holder explained that health had been integrated into each one of the priorities and each Directorate because of its importance.

The Panel accepted that health had been included in the priorities but felt that it should have been written down to enable it to be monitored.

- The comments underneath the housing needs priority should include lifetime home standards.
- Was the selection of the suitable site for the Arts Centre progressing according to the timescale set out in the report?

The Director of Community Engagement confirmed that it would be likely that a suitable site or property would be identified by April 2013 and gave a brief update on the progress to date.

- An action in the plan had been to deliver the cycle way link to complete the Carlisle Cycle Scheme; Members questioned how this could be completed.

The Policy and Communications Manager explained that the action had been discussed at the Corporate Programme Board and it was likely that it would be removed from the Plan.

RESOLVED – 1) That the Panel recommended that the Health and Wellbeing agenda objectives are identified and reported separately within the Carlisle Plan.

2) That a monitoring report on the actions set out in report PC.02/13 be submitted to the September meeting of the Panel.

COSP.17/13 PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Policy and Communications Manager presented report PC.05/13 updating the Panel on the latest position regarding the Service Standards which helped measure the City Council's performance and customer satisfaction.

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

- Were the public's reaction to the service standards or to the display screen in the reception monitored?

The Policy and Communications Manager responded that information was being captured and he intended to carry out a survey in the customer contact centre to ask customers if they knew about the standards.

- 75% of new benefit claims were being processed in less than 28 days, Members were concerned that the other 25% were waiting too long to have a claim processed and having to deal with unnecessary stress during the processing period.

The Policy and Communications Manager replied that he had investigated the figures in detail and the 25% who were not being processed within the 28 days was due mostly to the requirement for further information. Often the additional information had to come from outside agencies and could take some time. He added that the most complex cases could have delays of over 100 days and agreed to investigate further the delay time after 28 days.

- Would the processing time for new claims increase as a result of the Welfare Reform?

The Director of Community Engagement acknowledged that there were capacity challenges, some of which sat with IT. There was a lot of pressure on the Performance Team within Revenue and Benefits in February and March due to the annual billing process and that team in particular would feel most of the pressure from the benefits changes. He added that the staff dealing with new claims would not necessarily deal with the changes in legislation. Some of the changes from Welfare Reform would take place over a number of years and would see some staff redundancies in the benefits team as the function would be provided by the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP).

He informed the Panel that the target for processing new claims would be reduced to 24 days in March.

- How did the processing time compare to other Councils within Cumbria?

The Policy and Communications Manager agreed to gather other Districts information where possible.

RESOLVED: That the Performance Update report PC.05/13 be noted.

COSP.18/13 PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED – That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Public and Press were excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt

information as defined in the paragraph number (as indicated in brackets against each minute) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Local Government Act.

COSP.19/13 HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCY

(Public and Press excluded by virtue of Paragraph 3)

The Director of Community Engagement submitted private report CD.12/13 regarding the development of a Home Improvement Agency (HIA).

The DFG Coordinator – Cumbria outlined the background and current position, emphasising that enabling people to remain living independently at home was a key part of Government Policy. He further set out the reasoning behind the recommendation that the HIA adopt a brand name whilst, at the same time, retaining its identity as a service of Carlisle City Council.

The Executive had on 11 February 2013 (EX.21/13) considered the report and decided:

“That the Executive noted the content of private Report CD.11/13 and approved the branding of Carlisle City Council’s Home Improvement Agency as ‘homelife carlisle’.”

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

- Had any of the proposed work begun?

The DFG Coordinator – Cumbria outlined a number of the schemes that had started including the Keep Warm, Keep Safe, Keep Well Scheme. He hoped that the HIA could build up a database of people who they worked successfully with to ensure they have a good track record of delivery that could lead to additional funding. The HIA had to be viable and the aim was to become cost neutral to the Council. Customers of the services would have to pay for the service and it was essential to have a good Business Plan.

- Could the Housing Case Worker be funded for more than one year?

The DFG Coordinator – Cumbria explained that it was hoped that the HIA could work towards making the post sustainable by demonstrating the savings the post had made to health care and attracting additional funding.

- Would the HIA help address issues that elderly parents had who cared for severely disabled children?

The DFG Coordinator – Cumbria agreed that families struggled as carers got older and needed additional support. A strategy was being formulated to help in those situations. He added that the changes to home care had resulted in a shortfall of home carers in Carlisle.

- Would there be any benefit to sharing the service with neighbouring districts?

The DFG Coordinator – Cumbria confirmed that Cumbria wide services were being investigated where possible. Due to the geographical size of Cumbria it was not always viable to share services.

- How long had HIAs been operating?

The DFG Coordinator – Cumbria stated that HIAs had been in operation for some time and 85% of the Country was covered by HIAs. Carlisle was accredited by Foundations, the National Body for HIAs. The Department of Health and Department for Communities and Local Government saw HIAs as a way of delivering services to vulnerable people.

The Communities and Housing Portfolio Holder reminded the Panel of a successful HIA that had been set up by Age Concern and felt that the HIA would work well.

RESOLVED – That Report CD.12/13 be welcomed.

COSP.20/13 TRANSFORMATION

(Public and Press excluded by virtue of Paragraph 3)

The Director of Community Engagement gave a verbal update on the Transformation savings within the Community Engagement Directorate.

The Director explained the process behind the Transformation and the reason for the changes to the proposals within his Directorate. He informed the Panel that staff would be given the consultation document on 1 March and the consultation period would run until April. The Panel would receive a copy of the consultation document at their meeting on 28 March 2013.

RESOLVED – That the Director of Community Engagement's update be welcomed and that the Panel looked forward to a further update in March.

(The meeting ended at 12.35pm)

LOCALITY WORKING

Report by the Rural Support Group February 2013

Introduction

This paper aims to summarise Locality Working and the progress which has been made in the Carlisle District. In addition details of Locality Working programmes which have been undertaken in other parts of Cumbria are given for information.

In Carlisle District we have a number of large and strong parishes. These sit alongside some very small and quite isolated parishes. While the large parishes can, and do, look after themselves, it is the small ones that may find that they miss out or fail to get the benefit of their relationship with Carlisle City Council.

These proposals are specifically not designed to introduce a further tier of local government. Other districts, such as Copeland, have found that Locality Working involving parish grouping or clustering, has enhanced the individual parishes and provided considerable benefit to parishioners. Copeland, Eden and South Lakeland have all developed groups of parishes to foster and develop community projects, some of them strongly tourism related. Each has a different relationship with its local District, Borough and County Council. It could be that the most successful projects are being run in areas where the parishes themselves have taken the initiative.

We hope that, by bringing forward this report now, we can take the opportunity to look at what is being done elsewhere in Cumbria and beyond, and maybe try and identify some project possibilities for Carlisle District.

What is Locality Working?

Locality Working is about people and government working together to make life better. It involves more people influencing decisions about their communities, and more people taking responsibility for tackling local problems, rather than expecting others to do so on their behalf.

How can Parish Councils get involved in Locality Working?

Parish Councils are the first tier of Local Government and therefore are the closest level of Government to the people they serve. This means that Parish Councils are in the strong position of being both democratically elected and locally accountable to be able to tackle local issues and concerns. However many Parish Councils are small in nature and lack the critical mass to tackle larger issues. This is where Locality Working can be of benefit in terms of parishes working together to improve effectiveness and tackle common issues or exert greater influence.

What are the benefits of Locality Working and what might be the concerns?

In order for parishes to engage fully with Locality Working they need to see that there are real benefits to be gained. The key reasons to take a locality based approach are:

- **Capacity** – Increasing economies of scale (e.g. clerk and office sharing)
- **Louder voice on common issues** – geographic community or community of interests can lobby for change or influence.
- **Addressing area-wide issues** – e.g. lobbying on public transport. May even be across District boundaries.
- **Better representation and influence** – stronger together.
- **Gaining services** – a cluster might be able to bid for a service from the principal authority.

- **Funding leverage**- more chance of gaining funding for a joint project than for separate ones.
- **Networking and exchanging ideas** – communication between parishes, often via the clerk, helps to reduce a parish's isolation.
- **Training** – keeping abreast of developments through a training programme, such as the one provided by the Cumbria Association of Local Councils (CALC) might be made easier by joining forces with other parishes in a group.
- **Neighbourhood Planning** – this model of locality working lends itself to the building of a neighbourhood plan for a group of parishes with similar interests and geography.
- **Community Based Projects** – in Copeland there are a number of projects, all designed to enhance the communities and provide facilities which might not otherwise be forthcoming from the Borough and County Council. See examples below.

However, not everyone sees Locality Working as useful or of benefit and there are a number of concerns:

- **Loss of identity** – small parishes fear being swallowed-up by larger parishes.
- **Conflicts of interest**
- **Pressure on councillor and clerk time**
- **Apportioning costs and contributions**
- **Geography and capacity** – distance and scale often mitigate against working together.
- **Representation on clusters by wider stakeholders**

What has happened so far on Locality Working in Carlisle District?

The Carlisle Parish Councils Association (CPCA) has for a number of years felt that there was merit in exploring Locality Working. Through consultation and involvement which was open to all Parish Councils, two clear messages became apparent. These were that the process should be led from the bottom up and not imposed from the Principal Authorities (an approach which was shared by the City Council) and that the process should be issue based rather than on geographical clusters.

This approach has led to significant benefits of parishes working together on single issue projects. Good examples include training and wind farm considerations. An issue based approach is useful as this will often foster the conditions that convince local people that making a difference is both possible and worthwhile. People will not take on responsibilities or become involved unless they really want to or can see the benefit.

However the long term benefits of this approach have to be questioned. The benefits which accrue are valuable but are not particularly sustainable.

The CPCA therefore took the decision in summer 2012 to re-look at the benefits and options around geographically based Locality Working. The first stage of this process was a workshop organised through the Rural Support Group (RSG) on 26th September 2012 at Cumwhinton Village Hall to which speakers from Copeland and South Lakeland districts were invited to share their experiences of Locality Working and to gather information on the benefits and pitfalls. This workshop was very well attended by Parish Councils from the Carlisle District. A summary of the experiences from other districts in Cumbria can be found in Appendix 1.

The other important development in Carlisle District has been the review of the operation of the Neighbourhood Forums undertaken by the County Council. This review has led to a different approach in terms of community engagement through the County Council and the formation of grant panels to consider community grant applications. At the same time the geographical areas covered

by Neighbourhood Forums have been reviewed to reflect changes in County Council electoral divisions. This has led to the formation of 3 geographical areas in Carlisle district for the purposes of community grants.

Examples of possible projects which could arise from Locality Working

Shared Clerk - This could involve several Parish Councils sharing a clerk. Each parish could contribute a proportion of their precept to fund a shared clerk who could provide clerk duties for a number of parishes. The advantage of this approach is that the shared clerk can gain economies of time and expertise in terms of sharing good practice between parishes and cut down on the amount of time each clerk has to spend on responding to consultations and new legislation. The other advantage is that Parish Councils may be better informed but still retain their independence.

Oil Buying Groups – Many rural communities do not have a mains gas supply and therefore are reliant on other sources, such as oil, for their main fuel supply. A number of different communities have got together to form oil buying syndicates. This helps communities achieve economies of scale and buying power to access reduced rates for oil supplies. Several communities in the Eden Valley have started an initiative (including Langwathby, Culgaith and Ousby parishes) and also parts of the Northern Fells group. Further details of the Northern Fells Group schemes can be found attached to this report)

Village Hall Co-ordination – Again economies of scale and sharing of best practice can be achieved through village halls working together. This approach has already been instigated in the Carlisle district in Wetheral parish where a Village Hall Development Officer was employed through use of external funding to work with each of the village halls in the parish. Successes were achieved in terms of negotiating savings for essential running costs, setting up a website to increase awareness and bookings and sharing information about funding sources. Further details about the project are attached to this report.

Some Project Examples From Copeland – there are a number of community inspired locality projects within mid and south Copeland. Here are some examples:

Blengdale Crossing, Gosforth – Developing better recreational access in partnership with Gosforth Parish Council, the National Park and Forestry Commission. New Bridges, improved paths, new picnic areas and interpretation will feature within the forest.

R727 The Viking Way – For over 20 years the communities of Seascale and Gosforth have demonstrated a need for this transport connection. The scheme is project managed by Cumbria County Council Highways Department with Copeland Borough Council involvement and has huge support from residents and partner organisations. This multiuser route will be suitable for cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians and will be accessible to all.

Bootle Renew, including Wellbank – A former 12.5 acre MoD base to be transformed into a mixed use development with 46 homes, a hotel with spa facilities and business incubation zone. The scheme is currently awaiting planning permission. The scheme includes a new Public Right of Way between Bootle and Wellbank and the relocation of the community swimming pool to the school playing field at Captain Shaw's Primary.

Wasdale Head Visitor Point Project – Incorporating new car parking provision, landscaping and the redevelopment of the Old Wasdale Head School

Silecroft Beach Café and Whincham Ways – Replacing existing toilets with a new build café, facilities and small retail opportunity down to the beach front. The development will also incorporate improved parking and landscaping, picnic areas and interpretation. A complimentary cluster of projects, led by residents, involves reviewing the existing, and planning new, Public Rights of Way to connect the communities, services and facilities of Silecroft, Kirksanton and Haverigg.

Broadband Schemes – with the impending roll-out of broadband schemes across the District and the need for community involvement, a locality working model might be helpful to local parish groupings.

Next steps - the way forward for Carlisle

In order to move forward with the Locality Working discussion a number of actions are required. It is therefore proposed that:

- Initial Locality Working discussions are focused around the three geographical areas proposed as part of the Neighbourhood Forums review (copy of map and a list of parishes included in each area is attached)
- A copy of this discussion paper to be circulated to Parish Councils for a period of consultation.
- Consultation results considered by CPCA and RSG
- RSG produce report to Carlisle Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). This report will also be circulated to parishes.
- If it is felt that further work should be done then there could be initial trialling of Locality Working in a chosen area based on consultation results

It should be emphasised that these proposals will not be forced on any parish or group of parishes. The success of this model of locality working in Copeland is worth following-up and it is hoped that a group of interested parish council members might make a visit to Copeland in the coming weeks to see first hand how it works to the benefit of parishes in that district.

Allerdale is currently looking at a similar model for Locality Working.

Appendix 1

Experiences of Locality Working in other Districts in Cumbria

A number of districts have already taken Locality Working forward using different approaches. Some have adopted a top down process with the structures imposed on parishes from above. Others have allowed Locality Working to grow more organically, encouraging parishes to develop synergies and form geographically, based on shared interests.

Eden District

Eden was chosen as a vanguard area for the Government's Big Society agenda. Eden's main approach to assisting the communities, particularly in the rural areas, is through supporting community led-planning. The initial focus has been on areas where community plans have been developed. These areas include the Lyvennet Valley, Alston Moor, the Upper Eden and the Heart of Eden.

The key to success of the initiative is working with the communities to help enable them to deliver their aspirations in the community plans.

Eden's approach is that knowledge and good practice is shared across the district and with other similar communities in the Country. As part of this commitment, they intend to develop a strand of work to assist individual communities to address issues in their localities and make the information on how it has been done widely available.

South Lakeland

South Lakeland District has taken locality working forward by forming 8 Local Area Partnerships (LAPs). LAPs are made up of elected representatives from the three tiers of local government: Local Councils including Town and Parish Councils and Parish Meetings, South Lakeland District Council and Cumbria County Council.

They are based on groups or clusters of parishes who agreed to work together on common interests. Amongst other things, LAPs influence decision making about the way services are delivered in their area.

Within the district there are a variety of facilities and services, and many areas have specific locally based initiatives. Alongside this activity there is a range of formal and informal networks that bring communities together and represent their views and interests. Local Area Partnerships (LAPs) are intended to complement and build on this activity and contribute to the objectives of locality working, using the diversity of local communities and existing structures to reflect local circumstances, bring people together and connect the range of activity within the district.

Copeland

Copeland District is divided into five localities, funded through the Working Neighbourhoods Fund, using the term Local Partnerships. They are piloting their approach in three of the localities, aiming to learn what works best and then roll out the process across all five localities within the year. The remit is wide and covers all aspects of public service. Copeland took from the beginning a more bottom up approach. The localities link into the Copeland LSP.

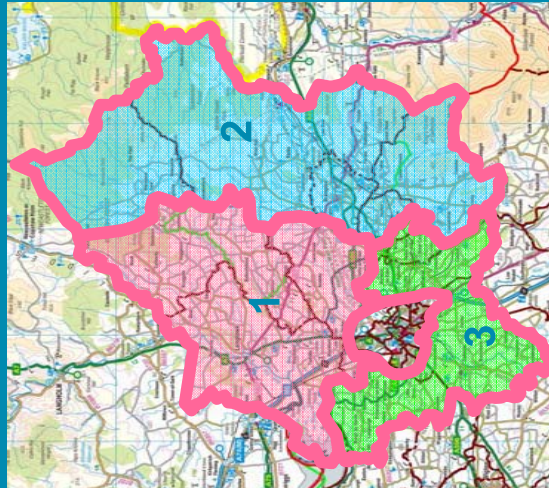
Local Partnerships have been formed through the bringing together of parishes with a common sense of place, often clustered around a Key Service Centre. Parishes in localities often share the same concerns about public service delivery and socio-economic conditions and will be able to find local partnership approaches to addressing these. Partnership groups will be reflective of particular areas, but generally comprise elected (or co-opted) members of Parish, District and County Councils and encourage involvement from the private and third sectors. Each Partnership is tasked to produce a Partnership Plan.

The Partnership Plan is the document that enables the Local Partnership of parishes with their borough and county members to set priorities for their locality based on evidenced need and strategic fit. Having established and agreed priorities, a clear set of objectives and a specific action plan can be agreed. The Partnership Plan will be refreshed regularly and the action plan section will be updated by appropriate partners, with each task being clearly owned. The Plan provides a framework and an assessment of local needs to help agencies make better use of community assets.

Ronnie Auld

Chair: Carlisle Rural Support Group and Carlisle Parish Councils Association

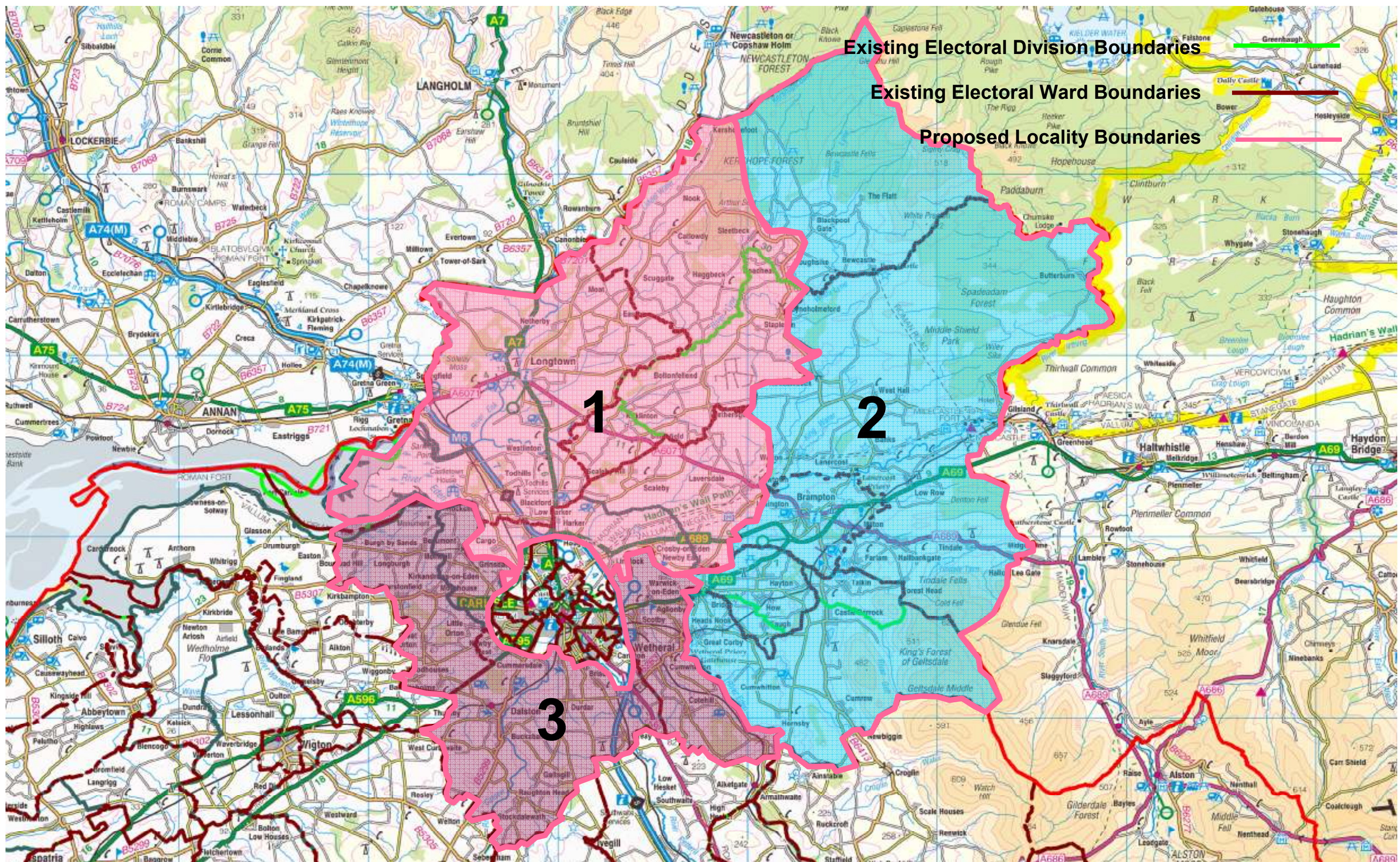
Populations - Rural



Rural Localities - Populations Based on 2001 Census

Parish Council Areas		Area 1			Area 2		Area 3	
		Longtown Locality 2	Brampton Locality 3	Wetheral and Dalston Locality				
Arthuret	2434	x						
Askerton	162		x					
Beaumont	447			x				
Bewcastle	411		x					
Brampton	4361		x					
Burgh By Sands	1143			x				
Burtholme	184		x					
Castle Carrock	303		x					
Cummersdale	486			x				
Cumrew	85		x					
Cumwhitton	293		x					
Dalston	2643			x				
Farlam	590		x					
Hayton								
Hayton (Corby Hill)	1300			x				
Hayton (Excluding Corby Hill)	880	x						
Hethersgill	382	x						
Irthington	712	x						
Kingmoor	407	x						
Kingwater	164		x					
Kirkandrews	447	x						
Kirklington Middle	369	x						
Midgeholme	67		x					
Nether Denton	318		x					
Nicholforest	386	x						
Orton	383			x				
Rockcliffe	733	x						
Scaleby	349	x						
Solport	168	x						
St Cuthberts Without	2043			x				
Stanwix Rural	3043	x						
Stapleton	221	x						
Upper Denton	92		x					
Walton	278		x					
Waterhead	124		x					
Westlinton	359	x						
Wetheral	5203			x				
	31970	10010	8312	13648				10657

Proposed Rural Localities



COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

A.4

Panel Report

Public

Date of Meeting: Thursday 28th March 2013

Title: PARISH CHARTER

Report of: The Director of Community Engagement

Report reference: CD 21/13

Summary:

The Parish Charter and its Formal Agreements set out the arrangements for how Parishes and the City Council will work together. The Formal Agreements support the Charter and each cover an area of work. They contain written commitments on what is expected by both the Parishes and the City Council and named officers who are responsible for seeing that the agreements are carried forward.

The Parish Charter and the Agreements have been consulted on with the Parishes. The formal response from the City Council is contained as an Appendix to the report. On 10th March, the Executive approved the Charter and its Working Agreements and also to formally sign off the Charter with the Parishes on 8th April.

Questions for / input required from Scrutiny:

Does the Panel believe the proposed charter content, structure and consultation process to be appropriate?

Recommendations:

That Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel note the decision of the Executive to approve the Parish Charter and its Formal Working Agreements; and the decision to formally sign off the Charter on 8th April.

Contact Officer: Keith Gerrard

Ext: 7350

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: None

REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

PORTFOLIO AREA: COMMUNITIES & HOUSING

Date of Meeting: 11th March 2013

Public

Key Decision: Yes

Recorded in Forward Plan:

Yes

Inside Policy Framework

Title: PARISH CHARTER

Report of: The Director of Community Engagement

Report reference: CD 17/13

Summary:

The Parish Charter and its Formal Agreements set out the arrangements for how Parishes and the City Council will work together. The Formal Agreements support the Charter and each cover an area of work. They contain written commitments on what is expected by both the Parishes and the City Council and named officers who are responsible for seeing that the agreements are carried forward. They are working documents which are subject to review as, for example, they need to reflect changes to legislation and the introduction of new policies and procedures.

The Parish Charter and the Agreements have been consulted on with the Parishes. The formal response from the City Council is contained as an Appendix to this report.

Recommendations: That the Executive note and approve the Parish Charter and its Formal Agreements for sign off jointly with the Parish Councils on 8th April 2013. That Executive note and approve the City Council response to Parishes, following the consultation period which finished on 20th February.

Contact Officer: Keith Gerrard

Ext: 7350

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 1.1 In 2012, the City Council and the Parishes agreed a draft Charter, which was consulted on. However this document could not be formally agreed and was consequently revised to reflect both the comments from the Parishes and the need for further changes reflecting reorganisation within the City Council.
- 1.2 The revised Charter and its Formal Agreements were agreed at the Joint City Council and Parish meeting on 5th December. They were then sent out for formal consultation which finished on 20th February.
- 1.3 Parishes responded positively and there have been no revisions made to the original agreed draft.
- 1.4 The Planning Agreement, it was agreed, will remain its current form, but will be subject to an ongoing review process, due to the large number of significant changes as a result of both legislation and locally such as the agreement of a Local Plan, which will shortly be going out for consultation.
- 1.6 The final agreed Parish Charter and its Formal Agreements are attached at Appendix 1.
- 1.5 A formal response to the comments made by the Parishes during the consultation from the City Council has been drafted and is attached at Appendix 2. The Parishes were supportive of the Charter and the response reflects this

2. CONSULTATION

- 2.1 Consultation to Date.

Consultation carried out from 5th December 2012 to 20th February 2013.

- 2.2 Consultation proposed.

None

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the Executive note and approve the Parish Charter for sign off jointly with the Parish Councils on 8th April 2013. That Executive note and approve the City Council's response to Parishes, following the consultation period which finished on 20th February.

4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The Parish Charter and its Formal Agreements provide the basis for future joint working. Without these arrangements in place, there would be no agreed framework for taking work forward. The delay in agreeing the first draft of the Charter has meant that some key areas of work were unable to be progressed.
- 4.2 By agreeing the Charter, the City Council will be able to progress issues such as Planning, for example, which is also of significant importance to Parishes, within an agreed formal working arrangement.

5. IMPLICATIONS

- Staffing/Resources – The Charter has been agreed by those officers responsible for each of the areas of work covered by the Formal Agreements in terms of staffing and resources.
- Financial – The Parish Charter has no direct financial implications for the Council. Where any subsequent collaborative working, external/grant funding arrangements occur as a result of the charter the Council will be required to comply with the Council Constitution, Contracts Procedure Rules, Financial Procedure Rules and related Grant Funding and Partnership Policies.
- Legal – Whilst the Charter is not a legally binding contract, the Local Government Act 2000 (Section 2) provides that the Council has the power to do anything which it considers likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of its area. The section gives the Council the power to enter into agreements but, in exercising the power, the Council must have regard to its Community Strategy.
- Corporate – The Charter will improve the Council's communication and consultation of Parishes on changes to corporate policy.

- Risk Management – The Formal Agreements have been agreed by the designated officers responsible for each area of work as not providing undue risk to the Council in terms of both resources and capacity.
- Environmental – The Parish Charter conforms to the Council's policies on environmental protection and sustainability.
- Crime and Disorder – The Charter has no direct effect on Crime and Disorder .
- Impact on Customers – Improved Joint working between Parishes and the City Council will impact on the effectiveness of services to smaller communities.
- Equality and Diversity – The Charter conforms to the Council's Comprehensive Equality Scheme.

Impact assessments

Does the change have an impact on the following?

Equality Impact Screening	Impact Yes/No?	Is the impact positive or negative?
Does the policy/service impact on the following?		
Age	Yes	Positive
Disability	Yes	Positive
Race	Yes	Positive
Gender/ Transgender	Yes	Positive
Sexual Orientation	Yes	Positive
Religion or belief	Yes	Positive
Human Rights	Yes	Positive
Health inequalities	Yes	Positive
Rurality	Yes	Positive

If you consider there is either no impact or no negative impact, please give reasons:

The Parish Charter and its Formal Agreements will improve the communication and coordination of policies with regard to their impact on rural areas and smaller communities.

If an equality Impact is necessary, please contact the P&P team.

PARISH CHARTER and Its Formal Agreements**The Carlisle District Parish Charter**

This Charter supports and informs partnership working between Carlisle City Council (“The District Council”) and Parish Councils and Meetings (“The Parish Councils”). It is recognised in this Charter that both tiers of Local Government are equal partners.

Successful partnership working can only be achieved if both Partners understand and respect each other’s roles and work to compliment each other. It is recognised in this Charter that both the District and Parish Councils are important partners in representing the communities and groups that they serve.

This Charter sets out shared principles and expected behaviours in general terms but these constitute only the broadest of expectations. The Charter is supported by a series of “Formal Agreements” which define specific commitments on services, mutual support and interaction.

Shared principles

- We will commit ourselves to working in partnership, bringing together the strengths that each of us have for the good of communities throughout Carlisle District.
- We will respect and promote the role of both the District and Parish Councils.
- We will maintain appropriate and effective channels of communication and consultation between our Councils on new initiatives and in the provision of local services.
- We will recognise the importance of issues and ideas raised at all levels of local government and from within communities themselves.

Shared purpose

We recognise that the District and Parish Councils share objectives to further the interests of the people of the Carlisle District. This charter and its supporting Formal Agreements aim to provide a clear and mutual understanding of roles and responsibilities. They will build on the good working relationships between us and promote co-operation and partnership within and beyond the statutory frameworks.

Co-operation

Both the District and Parish Councils recognise that each may have views on proposed changes in service provision, and will make reasonable efforts to consult each other on such proposals.

Both the District and Parish Councils will explore mutually acceptable ways of devolving responsibility for some services or of entering into agency agreements for the delivery of these. Both the District and Parish Councils will have regard to the effect of such arrangements on service delivery locally and elsewhere, and also on the need to provide the best value for money for all the residents of Carlisle District.

Agreed Expectations

Parish Councils can expect the following from the District Council:

- Comprehensive and relevant information on issues about which they are asked to form views.
- Realistic time periods for consultation.
- Real and meaningful processes for Parish Council views to be represented and taken into account when decisions which may affect them are to be taken.
- Prompt notification of decisions taken, together with written explanations of decisions at variance from their views, where this is requested.
- The availability of appropriate officers or members to assist them in discussions on significant issues.
- A shared commitment to hosting and attending biannual joint meetings between the District Council's Executive and the Parish Councils.
- A willingness to seek mutually satisfactory solutions in areas of difficulty.
- A willingness to engage Parish Councillors in training and development opportunities provided by the District Council and to explore joint training needs and opportunities.

The District Council can expect the following from Parish Councils:

- An appropriate response to the matter being considered, taking into account relevant statutory and policy considerations.
- A considered and timely response during the consultation period.
- Sharing of information on issues of common interest.
- Opportunities for local District Councillors to attend their meetings and to receive minutes, agendas and any other relevant information.
- A shared commitment to hosting and attending biannual joint meetings between the District Council's Executive and the Parish Councils.
- A willingness to seek a mutually satisfactory solution in areas of difficulty.
- A willingness to participate in training and development opportunities provided by the District Council and to explore joint training needs and opportunities.

Managing the Charter

This Charter (and any amendments to it) will be approved at the respective Executives of both the District Council and the Carlisle Parish Council Association.

Its effectiveness will be reviewed annually as a standing agenda item at one of the joint meetings of the District Council's Executive and the Parish Councils.

While working to the headings and principles agreed in this document, the Charter will be supported by the adoption of jointly developed Formal Agreements.

These Formal Agreements will make specific commitments from both sides with regard to service delivery, support and interaction. They will be developed in partnership and agreed at one of the joint meetings of the District Council's Executive and the Parish Councils. They will be reviewed at least annually at one of these joint meetings and any subsequent revisions will also be approved at this forum.

Parish Councils may at any time raise any issue in connection with the operation of the Charter with their local District Councillor or with the relevant Director at the District Council.

The District Council may at any time raise any issue in connection with the operation of the Charter with the Chair of Carlisle Parish Council Association; or if the matter relates to an individual Parish Council with the clerk or Chairman of the parish.

Undertaking

We the undersigned declare our commitment to the Carlisle District Parish Council Charter and in so doing, embrace the spirit of the agreement and assent to its principles.

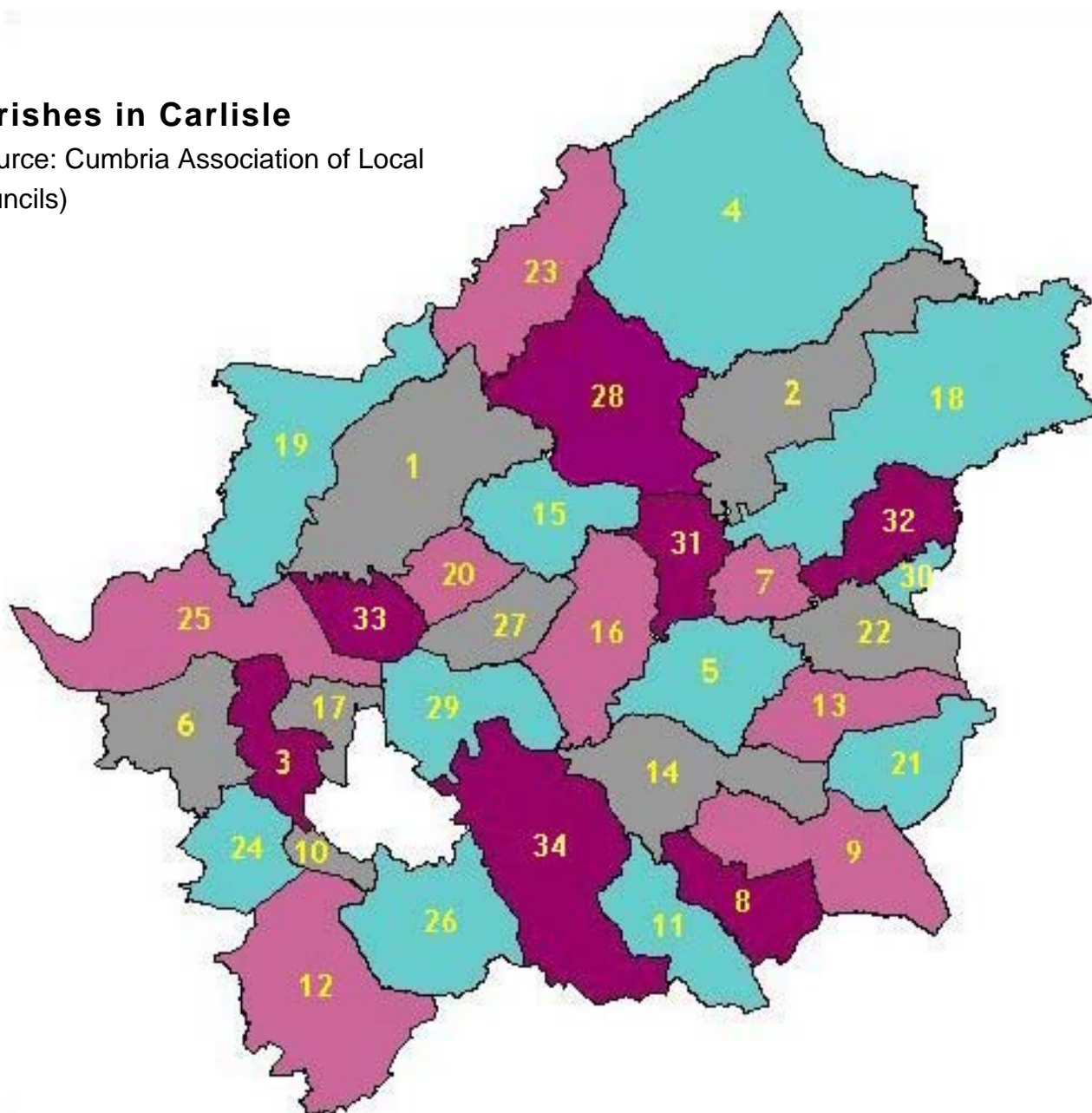
Leader, Carlisle City Council

Chairman, Carlisle Parish Councils Association (Note: signing on behalf of CPCA member Parish Councils and Parish Meetings)

Chairman, Parish Council/ Parish Meeting (Note: those non CALC member Parish Councils/ Parish Meetings who want to sign up to the Charter)

Parishes in Carlisle

(Source: Cumbria Association of Local Councils)



01 Arthuret
02 Askerton
03 Beaumont
04 Bewcastle
05 Brampton
06 Burgh-by-Sands
07 Burtholme
08 Carlanton & Cumrew
09 Castle Carrock & Geltsdale
10 Cummersdale
11 Cumwhitton
12 Dalston
13 Farlam
14 Hayton
15 Hethersnill

18 Kingwater
19 Kirkandrews-on-Esk
20 Kirklington Middle
21 Midgeholme
22 Nether Denton
23 Nicholforest
24 Orton
25 Rockcliffe
26 St. Cuthbert Without
27 Scaleby
28 Solport and Stapleton
29 Stanwix Rural
30 Upper Denton
31 Walton
32 Waterhead

Carlisle District Ward Map

Carlisle Urban Wards

- 1 Belah
- 2 Belle Vue
- 3 Botcherby
- 4 Castle
- 5 Currock
- 6 Denton Holme
- 7 Harraby
- 8 Morton
- 9 St Aidans
- 10 Stanwix Urban
- 11 Upperby
- 12 Yewdale



Not to scale. Produced by Carlisle City Council, Policy and Communications, 2011.

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Formal Working Agreements

Title: Monitoring the effectiveness of the Parish Charter and related Working Agreements

Purpose: This document details how the Parish Charter and related Formal Agreements will be monitored in order to ensure that they remain relevant and are adhered to by all parties.

Developed by: Emma Dixon (Local Partnership Manager, Carlisle City Council) and Claire Rankin (Parish Liaison Officer, CALC)

Date: 12/11/2012

Review Date: 12/11/2013

Commitment(s):

- 1) **Commitment:** The Charter itself will be considered as a standing Agenda item at the Carlisle City Council hosted bi-annual Joint Meeting of the City and Parish Councils. All parties will have the opportunity to raise issues around compliance and / or suggest revisions to the charter.

Frequency: Annually

District Responsibilities: Prepare and table report on the Charter; raise issues/suggest revisions.

Parish Responsibilities: Raise issues/suggest revisions.

... ..

2) **Commitment:** A list of the current Formal Agreements which support the Parish Charter will be tabled (alongside the Charter) at the Carlisle City Council hosted bi-annual Joint Meeting of the City and Parish Councils. All parties will have the opportunity to raise issues around compliance and / or suggest revisions to existing Formal Agreements (inline with the process in commitment 3 below). They will also have the opportunity to suggest the development of new Formal Agreements.

Frequency: Annually.

District Responsibilities: Prepare and table report for the meeting listing current formal agreements;
Raise issues/suggest revisions or new formal agreements.

Parish Responsibilities: Raise issues/suggest revisions or new formal agreements by Parish Clerks writing to Local Partnership Manager.

.....

3) **Commitment:** A summary report outlining how effectively/completely the individual commitments within Formal Agreements will be tabled at one of the bi-annual Joint Meetings of Carlisle City Council and the Parish Councils.

Frequency: Annually.

Responsibility: Local Partnership Manager (Carlisle City Council).

.....

4) **Commitment:** The Formal Agreements which support the Charter

will be developed and drafted by representatives of both Carlisle City Council and CALC or the CPCA. They will be formally ratified at the one of the bi-annual Joint Meetings of Carlisle City Council and the Parish Councils.

Frequency: Annually or as necessary.

District Responsibility: The relevant City Council Director will nominate a development lead from Carlisle City Council.

Parish Responsibility: The CPCA Chair will nominate a development lead from the Parish Councils.

Shared Responsibilities: The nominated leads will develop, monitor and review the Formal Agreements. They will actively encourage the development of the Charter to keep it relevant and current. These agreements will be ratified at Joint Meetings of Carlisle City Council and the Parish Councils.

.....

5) **Commitment:** All Formal Agreements will be reviewed annually by the development leads at a specified review date. A summary of how effectively commitments have been met will be produced at this review. These will be collated into a single report tabled at one of the bi-annual Joint Meetings of Carlisle City Council and the Parish Councils (as stated in Commitment 3 – above)

Frequency: Annually

Responsibility: Relevant Formal Arrangement Development Leads

Title: Planning

Purpose: This document details the core agreements and mechanisms used to ensure active partnership working by the Planning Authorities and Parish Councils to ensure community interests are properly served. Outlining the opportunities to become involved in the town and country planning system are of keen interest to most Parish Councils. Planning policies and decisions can have a substantial impact on the future of local communities.

Developed by: Christopher Hardman (Planning Manager)

Date: 12/11/12

Review Date: 12/11/13

Commitment(s):

6) **Commitment:** Assist Parish Councils' participation in the statutory planning system.

Frequency: As necessary.

District Responsibilities: All statutory consultations are sent to Parish Councils. Officers are available to discuss issues with Parish Council's. To ensure that information is available and clear timescales set for consultation responses.

Parish Responsibilities: Respond to consultations in the relevant timescales. Where several planning applications are regularly

received in a particular parish, to consider a sub-group of parish councillors to deal with planning matters.

.....

- 7) **Commitment:** Ensure that Parish Councils are given full opportunities to participate in the preparation of the Local Plan (statutory Development Plan)

Frequency: As necessary

District Responsibilities: All consultation stages of planning policies are sent to Parish Councils. Officers are available to discuss issues with Parish Councils.

Parish Responsibilities: To respond to consultations during the statutory consultation periods

.....

- 8) **Commitment:** To enable Parish Councils to undertake Neighbourhood Development Planning in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 No. 637.

Frequency: As necessary

District Responsibility: Support and give guidance in the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans (beyond statutory minimum requirements, where possible). Give guidance on alternative planning tools to assist Parish Council's where appropriate e.g. Neighbourhood Development Orders or supplementary Village Design Statements

Parish Responsibility: Consider the necessity of producing a Neighbourhood Plan for their parish and where it is deemed of use commit to producing a plan.

.....

.....

Title: Communication

Purpose: This document details the core agreements and mechanisms used to ensure effective communication between the District and Parish Councils.

Developed by: Steven O’Keeffe (Policy and Communication Manager, Carlisle City Council); Claire Rankin (Parish Liaison Officer, CALC)

Date: 12/11/2012

Review Date: 12/11/2013

Commitment(s):

1) Commitment: The District and Parish Councils will commit to two joint meetings per year to discuss corporate aims and other matters of mutual concern. Each party will host and administer one of these meetings including the preparation and distribution of agendas and papers. The host will proactively seek agenda input from the other party and where necessary arrange an agenda planning meeting involving the City Council Leader / Portfolio Holder and Chief Executive and the CPCA Chair.

Frequency: Bi - Annually

District Responsibilities: Host one joint meeting per year including the preparation and distribution of agendas and papers; Ensure appropriate representation and attendance at both Joint Meetings.

Parish Responsibilities: Host one joint meeting per year including the preparation and distribution of agendas and papers;

Ensure appropriate representation and attendance at both Joint Meetings.

.....

2) Commitment: All parties will seek to provide written responses to written communication (including emails) from the other within 10 working days or provide a holding reply saying when a full reply will be available.

As neither side has full formal means of monitoring such arrangements, both sides will have the opportunity to log failures (where necessary) with the appropriate Director from Carlisle City Council, or with the CPCA Chair, who will ensure action is taken. These logs will then form the basis of monitoring reports to the Joint Meeting.

Frequency: As necessary.

District Responsibilities: All Officers and Elected Members.
/ Lead(s)

Parish Responsibilities: Parish Clerks / Chairs.
/ Lead(s)

.....

3) Commitment: All parties will seek to encourage participation of District Councillors in Parish Council Meetings.

Frequency: As necessary

District Responsibility: Parish Council Meeting Dates will be published and promoted through the City Council’s electronic Civic Calendar.

Parish Responsibility: Parish Clerks will ensure the District Councillors within their Parish receive invitations, agendas and minutes for Parish Meetings and receive copies of Parish Newsletters where these are produced.

.....

4) **Commitment:** All parties will encourage and support articles from Parish Councils and those with a specific rural interest in the Carlisle Focus publication.

Frequency: Biannual

District Responsibility: Carlisle City Council's Communication Team will contact all Parish Clerks in advance of the publication of the Focus Magazine to invite contributions and provide copy / production deadlines etc.

Parish Responsibility: Parishes will give appropriate consideration to articles and respond in a timely fashion and inline with proposed deadlines.

.....

.....

5) **Commitment:** All parties will support the Rural Section of Carlisle City Council's website recognising the increased importance of the internet for rural communities.

Frequency: Ongoing

District Responsibility: The Council will manage and maintain the rural web-pages.

Parish Responsibility: The CPCA Chair (and other representatives) and the CALC Parish Liaison Officer will work with the Council to provide appropriate content and information for inclusion on the web-pages.

.....

6) **Commitment:** All parties will commit to mutual consultation on issues which will directly affect or are of clear interest or relevance to the other. All parties will respond promptly and fully to such consultations.

Frequency: As necessary.

District Responsibility: The District Council will consult on all policies and service developments which will have a clear impact on the Parishes and rural communities. The District Council will conduct all such consultations inline with their corporate consultation policy or with statutory guidance on consultation where such guidance exists. The District Council will also work with the CPCA to try and identify and implement consultation mechanisms which will be most effective for Parishes and rural communities.

Parish Responsibility: The Parishes will respond inline with given schedules to all formal consultations – even where it is a nil response. The Parishes and the CPCA will work the District Council to identify and implement consultation mechanisms which will be most effective for Parishes and rural communities – and will help support and administer such mechanisms where appropriate.

Title: Partnerships and Representation

Purpose: This document details the commitment both sides make to supporting and attending key meetings, the provision and attendance of dedicated groups, and the representation and presence both sides will hold on partnership bodies.

Developed by: Emma Dixon (Local Partnerships Manager, Carlisle City Council); Claire Rankin (Parish Liaison Officer, CALC)

Date: 12/11/2012

Review Date: 12/11/2013

Commitment(s):

1) **Commitment:** As outlined in the communication Working Agreement the District and Parish Councils will commit to two joint meetings per year.

Frequency: Bi - Annually

District Responsibilities: Host one joint meeting per year and ensure appropriate attendance at both Joint Meetings.

Parish Responsibilities: Host one joint meeting per year and ensure appropriate attendance at both Joint Meetings.

... ..

2) **Commitment:** A Rural Support Group will be convened on a regular

basis, bringing together agencies providing rural focussed support and services to discuss key issues. The group will also fulfil a consultative ‘rural proofing’ role – providing feedback on the work of the Carlisle Partnership’s working groups and key City Council policies and service developments. At least twice a year the meeting will take place out in a rural community, and the invitation will be extended to clerks and councillors from surrounding parishes, offering a further direct mechanism for dialogue with the District Council and other key service providers.

Frequency: Bi-monthly

District Responsibilities: The District Council will provide secretariat and administrative support to the group (including convening meetings, and the distribution of agendas and papers) through the Local Partnership team. The Local Partnership Manager will liaise with colleagues to ensure attendance from District Council Officers appropriate to agenda items.

/ Lead(s)

Parish Responsibilities: The CPCA will nominate and provide a Chair for the group. The Chair will work with the Local Partnership Manager to determine the agenda for meetings. The CPCA will liaise with Parishes to determine and book the venues for meetings that occur in rural communities, and will work to encourage attendance from Parish Clerks and Councillors at these meetings.

/ Lead(s)

... ..

- 3) **Commitment:** To promote the importance of better working between the District and Parishes, the Carlisle Partnership’s Executive body will include representation from the District Council and a seat for the CPCA Chair

(or Chair of the Rural Support Group where they are different.

Frequency: Bi-Monthly

District Responsibility: Parish Council Meeting Dates will be published and promoted through the City Council's electronic Civic Calendar.

Parish Responsibility: Parish Clerks will ensure the District Councillors within their Parish receive invitations, agendas and minutes for Parish Meetings and receive copies of Parish Newsletters where these are produced.

... ..

4) **Commitment:** All parties will recognise and support the value of the Carlisle Parish Council's Association Executive meetings. The CPCA will welcome input and attendance from the District Council. The District Council will ensure attendance from an appropriate representative.

Frequency: Quarterly

District Responsibility: Carlisle City Council's Executive will nominate a lead officer for attendance at CPCA executives. Where they can't attend a substitute will be sent, or apologies will be issued in advance of the meeting.

Parish Responsibility: The CPCA will ensure that invitations, agendas and papers are sent to the relevant District Council representative and will provide this representative with the opportunity to submit agenda items for consideration.

... ..

5) Commitment: The District Council will seek to proactively and constructively involve Parish representatives in the democratic vehicles of the City Council where appropriate. This will include seeking Parish involvement in Community Overview and Scrutiny Panels and Task and Finish Groups where rural issues / policies are being considered; and Parish Representation on the Standards Committee in accordance with statutory requirements.

Frequency: As necessary.

District Responsibility: Through the Community Overview and Scrutiny Chair and supporting officers, Carlisle City Council will seek representation at COSP meetings where rural issues are central via the CPCA Chair. Through the Democratic Services Team the City Council will ensure Parish representation on the Standards Board is sought. The City Council will ensure that such representatives receive all invitations, agendas and papers in a timely manner.

Parish Responsibility: The CPCA Chair will ensure that appropriate representation at such meetings is identified and achieved, and that representatives are able to offer constructive and appropriate input.

... ..

Title: Financial Arrangements and Support for Parish Councils and Village Halls

Purpose: This document details the financial arrangements and relationships between the District Council and Parishes – specifically around support to CALC for the Parish Liaison Officer Post; the provision and administration of parish and village hall grants; and the collection and payment of parish precepts.

Developed by: Emma Dixon (Local Partnerships Manager, Carlisle City Council); Claire Rankin (Parish Liaison Officer, CALC)

Date: 12/12/2012

Review Date: 12/11/2013

Commitment(s):

1) **Commitment:** All parties will work together to ensure that Parishes receive their respective precepts as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Frequency: Annually

District Responsibilities: Collect and pay over by the end of April in the relevant financial year any precept levy requested by Parish Councils.

Parish Responsibilities: Make any precept requests according to the timescales requested by the District Council.

... ..

- 2) **Commitment:** Meet the election expenses of Parish Councils where the timing of these coincide with Carlisle City Council elections.
- Frequency:** As required
- Responsibilities:** The District Council will incorporate Parish elections into other elections administered by them whenever timings facilitate this.

... ..

- 3) **Commitment:** To jointly operate a Parish Council and Village Hall Capital Grant Scheme which offers annual capital support to projects within parishes. Funding will be made available from the District Council.
- Frequency:** Annually
- District Responsibility:** The District Council will make grant funding available, this will be reviewed annually as part of the budget review. A nominated City Council Officer will administer the scheme in accordance with agreed grant guidelines.
- Parish Responsibility:** Parishes will submit and administer applications for the parish and on behalf of the Village Halls. The CPCA will nominate representatives to attend the grant recommendations panel for approval at a CPCA meeting for all parishes. A formal report on this will be tabled annually at one of the joint meetings of Carlisle City Council and the Parish Councils.

... ..

- 4) **Commitment:** To support the funding and operation of a Parish Liaison Officer for Carlisle through CALC.

Frequency: Annually / ongoing

District Responsibility: The District Council will make a specific grant allocation to CALC to help support the funding of the Parish Liaison Officer – for 2012-13 this will amount to £3k. The District Council will provide desk space and facilities for the Parish Liaison Officer to work within the Civic Centre. District Council Officers and Members will work directly with the Parish Liaison Officer to support and develop the role and improve relations between the District Council and Parishes.

Parish Responsibility: CALC will provide all additional funding to support the Parish Liaison Officer's Role. Parishes both directly and through the CPCA will support the Parish Liaison Officer, being responsive to the needs of the post-holder, and using them as a conduit to the District Council.

.....

Title: Issue Based Locality Working

Purpose: This document details the arrangements for developing issue based locality working between the District Council and Parishes and measures to ensure agreed prioritisation and mechanics to deliver a consistent approach.

Developed by: Emma Dixon (Local Partnerships Manager, Carlisle City Council); Claire Rankin (Parish Liaison Officer, CALC)

Date: 12/11/2012

Review Date: 12/11/2013

Commitment(s):

- 1) **Commitment:** A list of shared 'key issues' will be developed and maintained by Parishes. All parishes will have the opportunity to feed into this process.

Frequency: Annually

District Responsibilities: The District Council will also contribute issues as appropriate. They will do so by feeding their issues in via the CPCA Executive.

Parish Responsibilities: The CPCA will co-ordinate and manage the process of establishing this shared 'key issues' list with the Parishes. They will produce a list of issues in a democratic and inclusive way. Parishes will all take part, putting forward their individual areas of concern.

... ..

2) **Commitment:** Issues will be prioritised jointly.

Frequency: Quarterly

District Responsibilities: The District Council will facilitate a meeting between a CPCA Executive representative and the City Council's Director of Community Engagement. At this meeting the issues on the list will be prioritised – with a view to identifying one issue and proactively addressing it over the following three months.

Parish Responsibilities: The CPCA will nominate a representative(s) to attend these quarterly meetings and prioritise issues. This representative will seek the views of Parishes before the meeting and be in an informed position to prioritise one issue at a time.

... ..

3) **Commitment:** A jointly managed response will be developed.

Frequency: Quarterly

District Responsibility: The District Council will facilitate working groups to develop solutions / approaches to the unique issues. The District Council will take the lead in convening the meetings and inviting such representatives, from any agency, as may have a positive contribution to identifying appropriate solutions / approaches. The District Council will ensure appropriate attendance and input at such working groups from its own officers.

Parish Responsibility: Parishes will take part positively and actively in working groups aimed at finding solutions / approaches to issues raised. They will accept that in some cases, attendance and their preferred action may be beyond the direct control of the District Council. Equally, they will understand that any agreed responses will be informed

by the resources available to the District Council and will wherever possible take a proactive role in delivering identified solutions.

.....

Title: Development and Training

Purpose: This document details the arrangements for identifying and delivering joint training opportunities; and for supporting parishes to access the District Councils Member Development programme.

Developed by: Emma Titley (Organisational Development Manager, Carlisle City Council); Claire Rankin (Parish Liaison Officer, CALC)

Date: 12/11/2012

Review Date: 12/11/2013

Commitment(s):

- 1) **Commitment:** The District Council and Parishes will work together to ensure that Parish Councillors understand and are informed around the District Council's statutory functions.

Frequency: As required.

District Responsibilities: Provide training events and or briefings, working in partnerships, for Parish Councils on topics that relate to the Principal Authority's statutory functions, particularly where legislation around such topics changes.

Parish Responsibilities: To support and attend such training as and when it is provided. To proactively request such education / events through the City Council's Director of Community Engagement – but understanding that such events may

need to be arranged inline with available time and resources.

.....

2) Commitment: To ensure that Parish Councillors and Clerks have the opportunity to take part in and benefit from the City Council's internal training and member development programmes.

Frequency: Ongoing

District Responsibilities: The District Council's Organisational Development Manager will ensure that Parish Clerks receive the City Council's training directory and schedule when it is produced – and ensure that Clerks and Councillors have the opportunity to take part in such training.

Parish Responsibilities: The CPCA will promote take-up of this opportunity and all parishes support and attend such training as far as possible. If places are booked on any event and cannot be fulfilled delegates will formally cancel their attendance giving the District Council's Organisational Development Manager as much notice as possible.

.....

**FORMAL RESPONSE to the PARISHES
following the end of the Consultation Period**

Dear

As you may be aware, the Parish Charter and its Formal Agreements were agreed in draft at the Joint City Council and Parish meeting on 5th December. They were then sent out to the Parishes for a formal consultation period which finished on 20th February.

I would like to thank those who provided us with comments and those in the Parishes, who have contributed to the process of the drafting of the Charter. The responses to the consultation were broadly positive and the draft Charter will now be taken forward for formal signing off by both the City Council and the Parish Councils on 8th April.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr. Joe Hendry, Leader, Carlisle City Council.

Keith Gerrard, Director of Community Engagement, Carlisle City Council

EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE HELD ON 11 MARCH 2013

EX.23/13 PARISH CHARTER
(Key Decision – KD.045/12)

Portfolio Communities and Housing

Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel Community

Subject Matter

The Communities and Housing Portfolio Holder submitted report CD.17/13 presenting the Parish Charter for Carlisle and District, and its Formal Agreements, copies of which were attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

She outlined the background to the matter reminding Members that the City Council and the Parishes had, in 2012, agreed a draft Charter which was consulted on. However, that document could not be formally agreed and was consequently revised to reflect both the comments from the Parishes and the need for further changes reflecting reorganisation within the City Council.

The revised Charter and its Formal Agreements had been agreed at the joint meeting between the City Council and representatives of the Parish Councils on 5 December 2012. They were then sent out for formal consultation which concluded on 20 February 2013.

The Communities and Housing Portfolio Holder informed the meeting that the Parishes had responded positively and no revisions had been made to the original agreed draft.

It had further been agreed that the Planning Agreement would remain in its current form, but would be subject to an ongoing review process due to the large number of significant changes in legislation and also locally (such as the agreement of a Local Plan), which would shortly be going out to consultation.

She added that a formal response to the comments made by the Parishes during the consultation period had been drafted and was attached at Appendix 2 to the report.

In conclusion, the Communities and Housing Portfolio Holder moved the recommendations detailed within report CD.17/13

Whilst seconding the recommendations, the Leader indicated that he was personally delighted by the good will and co-operation shown by the City Council and the Parish Councils in bringing the matter to a successful conclusion.

Summary of options rejected None

DECISION

That the Executive:

1. Noted and approved the Parish Charter and its Formal Agreements for sign off jointly with the Parish Councils on 8 April 2013.
2. Noted and approved the City Council response to Parishes, following the consultation period which ended on 20 February 2013.

Reasons for Decision

The Parish Charter and its Formal Agreements provided the basis for future joint working. Without those arrangements in place, there would be no agreed framework for taking work forward. The delay in agreeing the first draft of the Charter had meant that some key areas of work were unable to be progressed

By agreeing the Charter, the City Council would be able to progress issues such as Planning, for example, which was also of significant importance to Parishes, within an agreed formal working arrangement



COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Panel Report

Public

Date of Meeting: 28th March 2013

Title: Overview Report and Work Programme

Report of: Overview and Scrutiny Officer

Report reference: OS 07/13

Summary:

This report provides an overview of matters related to the Community O&S Panel's work. It also includes the latest version of the work programme.

Recommendations:

Members are asked to:

- Decide whether the items on the Notice of Key Executive Decisions should be included in the Panel's Work Programme for consideration.
- Comment on the content of the draft 2012/13 Scrutiny Annual Report
- Note and/or amend the Panel's work programme
-

Contact Officer: Nicola Edwards

Ext: 7122

1. Notice of Key Executive Decisions

The most recent Notice of Key Executive Decisions was published on 8 March 2013. The following issues fall into the remit of this Panel and full details are attached at **Appendix 1**:

KD.045/12 Parish Charter – *to be considered at this meeting of the Panel.*

KD.04/13 Food Law Enforcement Service Plan - *The Executive will be asked to decide the Environmental Health Section's inspection and educational priorities for improving food safety in Carlisle during 2013/14. This report will be available for the Panel to consider at their meeting on 30th May 2013.*

KD.041/12 Regulatory Reform Order - Empty Property Policy Amendments – *This will be considered at a future meeting of the Panel*

2. References from the Executive

There are no references from the Executive.

3. Scrutiny Annual Report

The Scrutiny Annual Report has been drafted and is attached at **Appendix 2**. Panel Members are asked to comment on the draft which is being considered by all three O&S Panels. The report will then be formally approved by the Scrutiny Chairs Group at their meeting on 18th April 2013.

4. A hand up or a hand out? Welfare reform and implications for local communities

Cllrs Luckley and Prest attended a session on the community implications of welfare reform which run by North West Employers on 26th February 2013 at St Helens.

5. Work Programme

The Panel's current work programme is attached at **Appendix 3** for comment/amendment. As this is the last meeting of the 2012/13 Civic Year Members are asked to give consideration to any issues or topics that they would like the Panel to consider in 2013/14.

Items relevant to the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel:

Notice of Key Decisions to be taken by the Executive

The following key decision is to be made on behalf of Carlisle City Council:

Key Decision Reference:	KD.04/13
Decision Title:	Food Law Enforcement Service Plan
Decision to be taken:	The Executive will be asked to decide the Environmental Health Section's inspection and educational priorities for improving food safety in Carlisle during 2013/14
Date Decision to be considered:	7 May 2013 consultation period to include Overview and Scrutiny as appropriate
Date Decision to be taken:	1 July 2013
Is the Decision Public or Private?:	The decision will be taken in public
Documents submitted for consideration in relation to the Decision:	The report of the Director of Local Environment will be available five working days before the meeting
Contact Officer for this Decision:	Director of Local Environment, Carlisle City Council, Civic Centre, Carlisle, CA3 8QG
Relevant Portfolio Area:	Environment and Transport (Councillor Mrs Martlew)
Relevant or Lead Overview and Scrutiny Panel:	Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

All public reports can be viewed in the Customer Contact centre of the Civic Centre, Carlisle, the Public Library and on the Council's website www.carlisle.gov.uk.

Other documents relevant to the matter may be submitted to the decision maker. These, if available, may be obtained by contacting the named contact officer.

Items relevant to the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel:

Notice of Key Decisions to be taken by the Executive

The following key decision is to be made on behalf of Carlisle City Council:

Key Decision Reference:	KD.037/12
Decision Title:	Carlisle Plan 2013-16
Decision to be taken:	The Executive is requested to: 1. Consider and comment upon the presentation and content of the Plan with a view to seeking continuous improvement in the way the Council delivers services to its local communities. 2. Consider the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels on the draft Plan. 3. Refer the Plan to full Council for approval.
Date Decision to be considered:	11 February 2013 consultation period to include Overview and Scrutiny as appropriate (EX.10/13)
Date Decision to be taken:	8 April 2013
Is the Decision Public or Private?:	The decision will be taken in public.
Documents submitted for consideration in relation to the Decision:	Report PC.01/13 - Draft Carlisle Plan 2013-2016 on 11 February 2013
Contact Officer for this Decision:	Town Clerk and Chief Executive, Carlisle City Council, Civic Centre, Carlisle, CA3 8QG
Relevant Portfolio Area:	Finance, Governance and Resources (Councillor Dr Tickner)
Relevant or Lead Overview and Scrutiny Panel:	Cross cutting

All public reports can be viewed in the Customer Contact centre of the Civic Centre, Carlisle, the Public Library and on the Council's website www.carlisle.gov.uk.

Other documents relevant to the matter may be submitted to the decision maker. These, if available, may be obtained by contacting the named contact officer.

Items relevant to the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel:

Notice of Key Decisions to be taken by the Executive

The following key decision is to be made on behalf of Carlisle City Council:

Key Decision Reference:	KD.041/12
Decision Title:	Regulatory Reform Order - Empty Property Policy Amendments
Decision to be taken:	The Executive will be asked to amend the Regulatory Reform Order in place to enable the Council to provide grants to the owners of empty property to enable them to be brought back in use under the Empty Property project.
Date Decision to be considered:	11 March 2013 consultation period to include Overview and Scrutiny as appropriate
Date Decision to be taken:	8 April 2013
Is the Decision Public or Private?:	The decision will be taken in public
Documents submitted for consideration in relation to the Decision:	The report of the Director of Community Engagement will be available five working days before the meeting
Contact Officer for this Decision:	Director of Community Engagement, Carlisle City Council, Civic Centre, Carlisle, CA3 8QG
Relevant Portfolio Area:	Communities and Housing (Councillor Mrs Riddle)
Relevant or Lead Overview and Scrutiny Panel:	Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

All public reports can be viewed in the Customer Contact centre of the Civic Centre, Carlisle, the Public Library and on the Council's website www.carlisle.gov.uk.

Other documents relevant to the matter may be submitted to the decision maker. These, if available, may be obtained by contacting the named contact officer.

Items relevant to the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel:

Notice of Key Decisions to be taken by the Executive

The following key decision is to be made on behalf of Carlisle City Council:

Key Decision Reference:	KD.045/12
Decision Title:	Parish Charter
Decision to be taken:	The Executive will be asked to discuss and approve the sign off of the Parish Charter and the underlying agreements concerning the partnership working of the City Council and the Parishes.
Date Decision to be considered:	11 March 2013 consultation period to include Overview and Scrutiny as appropriate
Date Decision to be taken:	8 April 2013
Is the Decision Public or Private?:	The decision will be taken in public
Documents submitted for consideration in relation to the Decision:	The report of the Director of Community Engagement will be available five working days before the meeting
Contact Officer for this Decision:	Director of Community Engagement, Carlisle City Council, Civic Centre, Carlisle, CA3 8QG
Relevant Portfolio Area:	Communities and Housing (Councillor Mrs Riddle)
Relevant or Lead Overview and Scrutiny Panel:	Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

All public reports can be viewed in the Customer Contact centre of the Civic Centre, Carlisle, the Public Library and on the Council's website www.carlisle.gov.uk.

Other documents relevant to the matter may be submitted to the decision maker. These, if available, may be obtained by contacting the named contact officer.

Introduction

Scrutiny is considered to be the main balance to the power of the Executive and involves many of the Councillors who are not on the Executive. Individual councillors are selected by their political parties to sit on the scrutiny panels.

The key roles of scrutiny are:

- ensuring that the Council and the Executive is accountable. This means questioning members of the Executive and senior officers about decisions that have been made or are about to be made. It also involves looking at how well the Council is doing against its policy objectives and targets for achievement.
- reviewing and developing policies. In this role, scrutiny can help the Council to develop its policy and budgetary framework. This might involve research and consultation with the community and other agencies on policy issues, good practice and looking at alternative ways of doing things.
- ensuring the continuous improvement of Council services. Scrutiny can make suggestions to the Executive for service reviews. Members of scrutiny panels are often involved in individual reviews where a particular service or function of the Council is thoroughly examined

In Carlisle, scrutiny operates through three panels - Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel, Resources Overview and Scrutiny and Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny. The Scrutiny Chairs Group (Chairs and Vice Chairs of the three Scrutiny Panels) meets on an ad hoc basis to deal with any overarching scrutiny issues.

There are eight non-Executive members on each panel and each panel is politically balanced (ie the proportions of each political party on the panel are the same as on the Council as a whole).

This annual report provides an overview of the work of the scrutiny function during the 2012/13 civic year. The first part of the report provides brief details of the work of the individual panels and gives details of examples of Task Group work. The second part of the report considers current scrutiny practices and issues this year and looks to the future, considering areas where further development could be considered.

Does Cllr Whalen want to add anything here as lead Member of Scrutiny Chairs Group?

Contribution by Leader of the Council

When the new administration took over the running of the City Council after the May 2012 elections, the new Executive took a very specific decision that policy items placed before the new Executive would, prior to any final decision by the Executive be referred to the appropriate O&S Panels of the Council. To research, gather evidence, scrutinise effectively and make positive recommendations back to the Executive. I have to say that this process has worked very well, and in my judgement makes for better local government.

I have consistently asked for all partners in the Council to work together for the good of the city and its future prosperity. I see the O&S function as a very helpful vehicle in taking this forward.

Professor Councillor J D Hendry - Leader of the Council

Part 1: Work of the Individual Panels

The sections below give a personal commentary from the Chairs of the Panels on their view of their particular Panel's work over the last year.

Community Panel

Personal View from Cllr Olwyn Luckley, Chair of Community O&S Panel

There was some concern expressed at last year's Scrutiny Chairs Meeting about the growing length of agendas. Several Panel meetings had run from 10am well into the afternoon, making for difficulties in regard to attendance for Officers and Portfolio Holders.

This year this has been addressed by the Community Panel. Firstly, by improving the focus given to items by members of the Panel. By readjustments of agendas in which some reports were deemed for information only and decisions made on whether scrutiny would add value to certain reports or presentations. This has led to more efficient use of members and officers time and sharper scrutiny of the Panel's core remit.

Sharp and productive scrutiny is often provided by the Task and Finish Groups and enable members to gain a greater knowledge of the Council's services and to take part in improving those services with the resultant recommendations. In 2011/12 the Community Panel's Task and Finish Groups on the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) Scheme and on the Homelessness Service concluded with a number of recommendations which the Council's Executive accepted.

In January 2013, the Panel received reports outlining the many positive actions that had taken place in regards to the DFG Scheme and the Homelessness Service as a result of the Panel's recommendations. This can only be a satisfactory conclusion to the work carried out by the Task and Finish Groups.

This municipal year, it was decided to carry out a Task and Finish Group scrutiny on how the Council supports the Community Centre's. This has been an issue that has been raised by Members (not just Panel Members) on a number of occasions. The Group brought forward a number of recommendations, which have been accepted by the Council's Executive. The Group plans to visit the Centre's in April to evaluate the results of their recommendations.

A second Task and Finish Group which comprise Members from the Panel and the Environment and Economy Panel examined proposals for the future management of the Council's Allotments. It was recommended that the Allotment Associations should be given the opportunity to self manage their sites and some have done so already.

The development of Shaddongate Resource Centre has been a subject of importance for the community and the Council. From its opening earlier last year, to its development of service and accommodation provision, the Panel has scrutinised its activities. Vulnerable citizens, the old and the young, have been the primary focus of the services provided. The Panel area pleased to see that its provision has been utilized not just by the Council, but by many other agencies dealing with the health and wellbeing of the community in Carlisle. Future updates on this work, managed on behalf of the Council by the YMCA, I expect will be required of the Panel.

Housing and subjects allied to it, it an important part of the Panel's core work. The half yearly examination of the Council's partnership agreement with Riverside Carlisle Housing Association, the Localisation Support of Council Tax and the Council's Tenants Strategy document all gave the opportunity for questions relating to the new under occupancy rules which are coming in in April this year, the resources in-house to prevent homelessness and the Councils plan for LSCT to be examined.

The role of the new Home Improvement Agency for which the City Council is the Authority responsible was examined and will return to the Panel for further scrutiny as will a report on the processing of Benefit Claims, about which the Panel have concerns in regard to the time taken to process the claims. That time is improving but with the changes that will be happening in the months to come, the Panel are anxious that processing time will be adequate.

The Panel recognizes that with all the challenging changes which will face housing supply needs in our area in the coming year, together with Welfare Reform and Universal Credit, a joint meeting or workshop with all three Panels on these subjects should be considered at the appropriate time in the next municipal year.

The Chair of the Tullie House Trust and the Director of Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery presented the 2013/14 – 2014/15 Business Plan to the Panel in November. The first 18 months of the new Trust had clearly been very challenging but in many ways there were satisfying outcomes - with new successful exhibitions, a Business Award for Tourism and Hospitality, funding for three years from the Arts Council which would focus on young people and other successful funding bids.

The Performance Monitoring Reports continue to be presented to the Panel on a quarterly basis and still produces questioning due to difficulty in not always being immediately clear to members what is being reported. However, the Policy and Performance Offices are always very helpful.

The draft Carlisle Plan was presented to the Panel. Of concern to members was the lack of specific mention of Health as a subject of responsibility for the Council and the recommendation for this to be included will go forward to the Executive.

Our final meeting of this year will take place in Dalston. Subjects for the agenda already decided are the new Parish Charter

I'd like to thank members of the Panel for their work, the Portfolio Holders, the Director of Community Engagement and all other officers who have attended the Panel's meetings or been involved in supporting the various Task and Finish Groups. The Panel has been ably assisted by the Scrutiny Officer and I thank her for her contribution.

Support to Community Centres Task and Finish Group – box to be inserted with details of Task Group

Cllr Anne Quilter, Portfolio Holder for Culture, Health, Leisure and Young People

I believe the role of the Scrutiny Panels and the Task and Finish groups are important to the decision making process of the Executive and will continue to listen to the comments forwarded to me regarding my Portfolio. I think that we can make informed decisions together by working in partnership to benefit our communities.

Environment and Economy Panel

Personal View from Cllr Stephen Layden, Chair of Environment & Economy O&S Panel

Submission to follow

Carlisle Tourist Information Centre Task and Finish Group –box to be inserted with details of Task Group

Talkin Tarn Task and Finish Group - box to be inserted with details of Task Group

Small Scale Members projects – information to be inserted

Cllr Elsie Martlew, Portfolio Holder for Environment & Transport

My previous local government experience with Carlisle City Council was during the time when a committee structure was in operation; this time around, with the Executive and Overview and Scrutiny concept, I initially felt it to be a somewhat alien concept!

However, that feeling was short-lived. I quickly realised the advantages and potential of the Scrutiny panels and, as an Executive member, I have tried to ensure that issues are fully discussed at O&S prior to any recommendation being formulated by the Executive.

The robust questioning of Executive members and senior officers by members of O&S can lead to improved policies, which must be beneficial to the democratic process.

I also appreciate the detailed work undertaken by Task and Finish groups. They are able to investigate, in great detail, issues of concern.

There are, however, drawbacks to the current system as the O&S panels do not accurately reflect the responsibility of Portfolio Holders which can lead to duplication or omission and perhaps needs to be reviewed in the future.

Resources Panel

Personal View from Cllr Reg Watson, Chair of Resources O&S Panel

Scrutiny is an important part of our local government system that aids the democratic structure of the Council and for the past year the Resources Panel has taken a close look at a number of areas. Routine monitoring and overview of the Council's Budget, Risk Register, Partnerships and Performance gives Members of the Panel an opportunity to identify areas of concern which require further scrutiny.

This good practice can be demonstrated in the scrutiny of sickness absence and the Panel's tenacity in receiving necessary information from Carlisle Leisure Ltd in order to support their responsibility to scrutinise the monitoring of significant partnerships. This is an issue that Members intend to continue to monitor closely over the year ahead.

The Panel also set up a Task and Finish Group to look at paper reduction and the use of new technology for Councillors and Officers using the small computers now available. As a result we are now planning a trial to be completed by the end of this Civic year.

In the next two years the pressure on the Council's budget will be the biggest this Council has ever faced and scrutiny must continue to challenge Members of the Executive. The Resources O&S Panel will continue to look for assurance that our staff are being supported through difficult times through continuing scrutiny of sickness absence, organisational development and employee surveys.

A big thank you to the Chief Officers, members of the Executive and all who added to our deliberations. Our questions were not all daft!

Thank you to our Scrutiny Support Officer for the clear advice and support and thank you to members of the Panel who never failed to get to the heart of the matter before us.

We hope we have added value to the Councils deliberations.

Saving Paper Task and Finish Group – box to be inserted giving details of work

Part 2: Development of Scrutiny & Summary of Progress

Relationship with the Executive

The Council's Administration changed in May 2012 and the relationship thus far between Scrutiny and the Executive has been positive. There has been little requirement for formal Tripartite meetings which were planned to be held on a quarterly basis as dialogue between the two has been open and continuous throughout the year.

It is hoped that this relationship continues to develop positively throughout the next Civic Year.

Notice of Key Decisions, Pre-Decision Scrutiny and Call-in

On 10 September 2012 new regulations came into force (The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012). The new regulations removed the requirement for the publication of a Forward Plan covering a three month period. The regulations replaced the Plan with a requirement for the Council to publish a Notice 28 days in advance of any key decisions being made.

As the notice only requires 28 days notice it has been inevitable that the Scrutiny Panels have not always been able to undertake pre-decision scrutiny. Scrutiny does not have to look at every decision made by the Executive and some Members still continue to have concerns that the Executive are making decisions which have not been subject to scrutiny. It should be acknowledged that there are times where the Executive should be left to make their decision, this is their responsibility. Should there be concern about the decision made then Scrutiny should request a Call-in. A Call-in should not be seen as an adversarial, political tool but an opportunity to ensure that the Council adheres to the principles of good decision-making.

There have been excellent examples throughout the current year where Executive Members have requested pre-decision Scrutiny, for example on Claimed Rights, which have given checks and balance to options and recommendations. These meetings have been particularly successful due to the openness and willingness of both parties to look for the best solution for the Authority and the people of the District.

Agendas and Chairing of meetings - training

The length of agendas for a number of panel meetings was identified as a concern last year and several meetings run well into the afternoon. This has greatly improved in 2012/13 with only 2 meetings running over 1:00pm (from a 10am start). Indeed both of these meetings concluded at 1:10pm.

A training session for Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs was arranged on Purposeful Meetings early in the Civic Year. In order to recoup some of the cost and also to widen the discussion, 6 places were offered to other Councils within Cumbria. The feedback on the training was particularly positive and Chairs should be applauded for actively taking on board the suggested changes which were identified at the session which has, for the majority of the time made for more focused discussions. However it is still true to say that at times Chairs of Panels have found it difficult to focus some Members to the topic at hand and this can cause some frustration to other participants. **Chairs should try to develop their skills further in 2013/14 so that they are confident to curtail unproductive discussion or long-winded speeches and bring the focus back to positive scrutiny.**

Although on the whole meetings have concluded well before 1:00pm it has been helpful this year that the timings of Joint Management Team and Executive Briefings have been changed so they are no longer held earlier in the afternoon following on from Scrutiny meetings. Both Executive Members and Senior Managers have not been rushed from one meeting to another and are not having to make a decision as to which is more important to attend.

Attendance at Meetings

Concern regarding attendance at Scrutiny Panels was raised in the last Annual Report. Group Leaders were requested to consider the availability of Members to attend scrutiny when allocating Membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

Attendance has improved in the current year with attendance at 94.6% for Community, 89% for Economy & Environment and 98% for Resources O&S Panels, compared with 93%, 87% and 84% respectively in 2011/12, however **Group Leaders are again requested to bear this in mind when allocating Members in 2013/14.**

Concern was raised part way through the year by the Scrutiny Chairs Group that some Members were leaving the meeting very early which at times left a small number of Scrutiny Members to consider later agenda items. Members were reminded that they are expected to stay to consider all of the agenda in order to ensure proper scrutiny of all items placed before them. This has improved towards the end of the year but **Scrutiny Chairs should continue to monitor attendance in 2013/14.**

Do Scrutiny Members agree that this is an accurate reflection of the work undertaken this year and address concerns raised appropriately?

Are there any other issues which Members would like included within the report?

Are there any particular topics that Members would like to be considered for review in 2013/14?

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2012/13

Date last revised: 18 March 2013

Appendix 3

Issue	Type of Scrutiny						Comments/status	Meeting Dates							
	Performance Management	Key Decisions Item/Referred from Executive	Policy Review/Development	Scrutiny of Partnership/ External Agency	Monitoring	Budget		07 Jun 12	19 Jul 12	06 Sep 12	11 Oct 12	22 Nov 12	10 Jan 13	14 Feb 13	28 Mar 13
CURRENT MEETING - 28 th March 2013															
Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership	✓		✓				To receive update on activities of CDRP	✓	✓						✓
Regulatory Reform Order – Empty Property Policy Amendments		✓					Consideration of Executive Report								✓
Scrutiny Annual Report			✓		✓		Draft report for comment before Chairs Group								✓
Locality Working							Report from Ronnie Auld								✓
Parish Charter		✓					Scrutiny of Parish Charter prior to Executive signing it off								✓
TASK AND FINISH GROUPS															
Community Centres				✓			To monitor actions in March/April 2013			✓	✓	✓			✓

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2012/13

Date last revised: 18 March 2013

Issue	Type of Scrutiny						Comments/status	Meeting Dates							
	Performance Management	Key Decisions Item/Referred from Executive	Policy Review/Development Scrutiny of Partnership/ External Agency	Monitoring	Budget	07 Jun 12		19 Jul 12	06 Sep 12	11 Oct 12	22 Nov 12	10 Jan 13	14 Feb 13	28 Mar 13	
Disabled Facilities Grants			✓		✓		To monitor action plan		✓				✓		
Homelessness			✓				Monitor implementation of recommendations	✓					✓		
FUTURE MEETINGS															
COMPLETED ITEMS															
Sports provision in the District							Panel to be involved in study and to consider final report			✓			✗		June 13
Transformation					✓	✓	Update of savings proposals and Directorate Restructure						✓	✓	
Carlisle Plan		✓					To consider draft Plan							✓	
Performance Monitoring Reports	✓						Reporting of performance relevant to remit of Panel	✗	✓	✓		✓		✓	

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2012/13

Date last revised: 18 March 2013

Issue	Type of Scrutiny						Comments/status	Meeting Dates							
	Performance Management	Key Decisions Item/Referred from Executive	Policy Review/Development	Scrutiny of Partnership/ External Agency	Monitoring	Budget		07 Jun 12	19 Jul 12	06 Sep 12	11 Oct 12	22 Nov 12	10 Jan 13	14 Feb 13	28 Mar 13
Riverside Carlisle				✓			Monitoring progress and developments of joint working		✓					✓	
Home Improvement Agency		✓					Executive report 11/2/13 to approve the establishment of a Home Improvement Agency and its work programme.							✓	
Working with Young People			✓		✓		To receive report on the services to young people including those NEET and the LSP C&YP Group						✓		
CCTV		✓				✓	To consider proposals to reduce CCTV provision						✓		

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2012/13

Date last revised: 18 March 2013

Issue	Type of Scrutiny						Comments/status	Meeting Dates							
	Performance Management	Key Decisions Item/Referred from Executive	Policy Review/Development	Scrutiny of Partnership/ External Agency	Monitoring	Budget		07 Jun 12	19 Jul 12	06 Sep 12	11 Oct 12	22 Nov 12	10 Jan 13	14 Feb 13	28 Mar 13
Localisation of Council Tax		✓					Draft scheme how Council will administer Council Tax Benefit discount from 1 /4/12				✓				
Executives Saving Proposals						✓	Proposals for 2013/14 for areas within the remit of the Panel				✓				
Tenants Strategy		✓	✓				To comment on draft strategy				✓				
Proposals of Implementation of Council Tax Technical Reforms		✓					Consideration of Executive Report					✓			
Annual Equality Report	✓						Monitoring role								
Tullie House Trust							Business Plan 2012/13 – 2015/16					✓			

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2012/13

Date last revised: 18 March 2013

Issue	Type of Scrutiny						Comments/status	Meeting Dates							
	Performance Management	Key Decisions Item/Referred from Executive	Policy Review/Development	Scrutiny of Partnership/ External Agency	Monitoring	Budget		07 Jun 12	19 Jul 12	06 Sep 12	11 Oct 12	22 Nov 12	10 Jan 13	14 Feb 13	28 Mar 13
Budget 13/14 - 17/18		✓	✓				Consideration of service implications					✓			
Choice Based Lettings		✓					To scrutinise review of CBL					✓			
Shaddongate Resource Centre					✓		Update on provision, services and financial plan				✓				
Neighbourhood Working			✓				Monitor implementation of recommendations	✓							
INFORMATION ONLY ITEMS															
Details								Date Circulated							
Food Law Enforcement Service Plan								24 th May 2012							

Report to Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Agenda
Item:

A.5(b)

Meeting Date: 28th March 2013
Portfolio: Communities and Housing
Key Decision:
Within Policy and
Budget Framework
Public / Private Public

Title: UPDATE - SUPPORT TO COMMUNITY CENTRES
Report of: Director of Community Engagement
Report Number: CD 27/13

Purpose / Summary:

In July 2012 the Panel instructed a Task Group to undertake a one day scrutiny of Community Centres and to make initial investigations into the support provided to them. The Task Group made a number of recommendations. This report updates the Panel of actions taken in relation to the recommendations.

Recommendations:

The Panel is asked to note the actions taken

Tracking

Executive:	
Overview and Scrutiny:	
Council:	

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 A one day scrutiny of Community Centres was undertaken on 25th September 2012.

1.2 A report was drawn up that included 5 recommendations

1. That clarification of the ownership of each community centre building is sought as soon as possible
2. That Community Centres are provided with details on the criteria which will be required to access funding in 2013/14 as soon as possible
3. That consideration is given to an officer from the City Council to attend part of the bi-monthly Community Centre Managers meeting to discuss ongoing issues and support. Consideration should also be given to an Officer from the Council visiting each centre Manager individually in order to facilitate a better relationship with the Centres.
4. That a Toolkit is developed for Community Centre Managers (or indeed all Community Groups) providing information on 'how to' do things and offer practical guide on funding, staff issues and contact numbers for advice and support.
5. That the Community Support Worker (Children and Young People) look at innovative ways of recruiting young people onto management committees

2. ACTIONS TAKEN

2.1 Recommendation 1 - Ownership

2.1.1 The Council owns all Centres except Longtown and Brampton

Longtown Community Centre

The Community Centre is subject to an unusual arrangement whereby the City Council holds title in trust for the Longtown Memorial Hall Community Centre charity which arose from a Charity Commissioners Scheme established in 2003. There is no lease or contract between the City Council and the Centre. The City Council undertakes the repairs.

Brampton Community Centre

The City Council surrendered their leasehold interest of the property known as the Irthing Centre, which included Brampton Business Centre units and the wooden hut and buildings occupied by Brampton Community Association, on 30th April 2009, to

Cumbria County Council. The County Council leased the building to Brampton and Beyond Community Trust

In addition

Downagate Community Centre

The City owns the land and buildings. Lease dated 22/3/2002 to the Downagate Association. The tenants are responsible for all internal and external repairs apart from the retaining wall to the A69. The Association have leased a small area of land to the Northern Gas Networks Ltd dated 14/12/2005 for a term of 30 years.

2.2 Recommendation 2 – Funding Criteria

2.2.1 The November meeting of Centre Managers was facilitated by Mark Costello of the CVS. Also in attendance was the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Housing and the Community Development Officer for Enterprise. The outcome of the session was for Managers to have a greater understanding of:

- Service Level Agreement arrangements, their use and scope
- The current social and economic value of Community Centres
- Summary and next steps for Community Centres and Carlisle City Council and Partner Support.

2.2.2 This meeting formed part of the process to establish Service Level Agreements with all the Centres. A draft Service Level Agreement (SLA) was drawn up and all Centres were individually visited by the Communities, Housing and Health Manager or the Wellbeing Manager to consult on the Agreement. The agreements included all the criteria that Centres will have to meet in order to access funding in 2013/14. With support from the Wellbeing Team, Centres will begin to identify needs within their communities. Appropriate activity can then be delivered by the Centres to match those identified needs.

2.3 Recommendation 3 – Community Centre Managers Meetings

2.3.1 All Centres were contacted to ask permission for the Wellbeing Manager and the Community Development Officer for Social Enterprise to attend part of their Managers Meeting. Managers were also reminded that if they had any issues, to not wait for bi-monthly meetings, but contact either the Wellbeing Manager or the Community Development Officer for Social Enterprise and they would both identify

what help and support they could offer. Contact details were given and dates of meetings after November was requested.

2.3.2 The Manager stated that the Centre Managers would be in touch after their November meeting. Centre Managers have not responded.

2.3.3 A further request was made to the centre managers to ask if Officers be allowed to attend the January Managers meeting to explain their roles and identify the best way to ensure regular dialogue is maintained. A request was also made for Centre Managers to forward a list of their issues.

2.3.4 All Centre Managers and Chairs of their Management Committees were individually visited in January 2013 to discuss the draft Service Level Agreements. They were asked to identify any issues they might have. Issues raised have been responded to. These related mainly to lease requirements, incorporation and grant provision.

2.4 Recommendation 5 – Toolkit

2.4.1 Ten of the Centres through the Federation are members of Your Community Matters. This is an organisation that offers up to date advice regarding a number of issues relevant to community centres. They also have an impressive website which offers a range of information that Centres can download, in effect a 'toolkit'. They can be contacted by telephone and a member of staff will offer comprehensive advice. Community Matters champions voluntary and community action at a neighbourhood level, as a means of local people taking control of issues in their area and fostering community spirit.

2.4.2 Your Community Matters also offers free legal clinics delivered by LawWorks in partnership with Dechert LLP. Centres can access expert advice on the following areas of law:

- employment
- incorporation (as a company)
- contracts
- property
- intellectual property

This is a service that runs every month and is accessible over the phone or face-to-face.

2.4.3 The two Centres who are not members have been given joining instructions and dependent on their income it could be free to join or the maximum amount would be £74.00.

2.5 Recommendation 5 – Young People

- 2.5.1** As each Centre is different, all Centres were asked to send the Young Persons Champion a brief paragraph explaining what a young persons potential role would be if they joined a management committee. It was felt that Centres would be best placed to identify this and it would form part of initial discussions with young people. This information could have been taken to the different youth groups that the Officer works with and would enable her to start identifying innovative ways to involve young people. It was suggested that this might be something the Chair of their committees would like to put together.
- 2.5.2** Unfortunately no responses have been received. When recent visits were carried out by the Wellbeing Manager, Centres raised issues about a lack of new members of all ages to their committees. It was suggested that a publicity drive by all Centres be undertaken to raise awareness of the Centres and their role in the community. This would be of great assistance to would be volunteers who perhaps have little understanding of their local Community Centre.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1.** There has been a significant amount of attention given to Community Centres following the Task Groups recommendations. The centres have been informed on numerous occasions that both the Wellbeing Manager and the Community Development Officer for Social Enterprise are both available if they have any concerns. Centres are also advised they can access the Corporate training programme, the take up for this offer is extremely poor.
- 3.3.2** It is hoped that new Service Level Agreements will maximise the outreach benefits of the community centres, linking council services with local communities. This will ensure every community centre knows what its purpose is, how it can meet its objectives and what it requires in terms of staffing and resources to deliver its business plan. Business planning will be a key component in how community centres plan their future activity both in the short, medium & long term. In addition a marketing strategy to raise the profile of the centres will aid sustainability.

Contact Officer: Keith Gerrard

Ext: 7325

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COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Panel Report

Public

Date of Meeting: 28th March 2013

Title: CDRP PARTNERSHIP PLAN

Report of: The Director of Community Engagement

Report reference: CD 20/13

Summary:

The Carlisle and Eden Community Safety Partnership (CSP) have developed their draft Partnership Plan for 2013/14 (attached as appendix 1 of this report). This plan forms part of the City Councils Policy Framework and refreshes the existing plan. It has been developed by the CSP's Leadership Group with input from the City Council's Lead Officer (Director of Community Engagement) and Portfolio Holder for Communities and Housing.

The purpose of this report is essentially to present the CSP's work programme for the coming year in the form of their Partnership Plan. While this is presented as a developed document it represents a 'live' work programme - which develops throughout the year and can be influenced and shaped through the City Council's representation on the CSP's Leadership Group.

Questions for / input required from Scrutiny:

1. Does the panel believe this Partnership Plan is appropriate to Crime and Disorder in the Carlisle District?

Recommendations:

1. It is recommended that panel consider and note the report with comments as appropriate.

Contact Officer: Keith Gerrard

Ext: 7350

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: None

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Crime & Disorder Act 1998 placed statutory obligations on local authorities and the police to act in co-operation with the probation service, health authorities and other relevant agencies, and to work together to develop and implement a partnership plan for tackling crime and disorder in their area.

The legislation requires local Community Safety Partnerships to produce a plan setting out how it intends to tackle crime and disorder and allowing the development of strategies to tackle short, medium and long-term priorities. This also allows alignment to other planning cycles, most notably partners' individual corporate planning and Carlisle's Community Plan.

The attached plan outlines these priorities for 2013-14 and is supported by a series of actions plans being developed and delivered by the task groups of the CSP.

Impact assessments

Does the change have an impact on the following?

Equality Impact Screening	Impact Yes/No?	Is the impact positive or negative?
Does the policy/service impact on the following?		+
Age		+
Disability		+
Race		+
Gender/ Transgender		+
Sexual Orientation		+
Religion or belief		+
Human Rights		+
Health inequalities		+
Rurality		+

If you consider there is either no impact or no negative impact, please give reasons:

.....

.....

.....

If an equality Impact is necessary, please contact the P&P team.



Key Priorities 2013

A strategic assessment has been completed and highlighted the following priorities

- **Anti-social behaviour**
- **Violent Crime**
- **Reduce harm caused by drugs**
- **Impact of Alcohol Misuse**
- **Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence**
- **Reduce Re-offending**

Vision

By working in partnership, North Cumbria communities will remain safe and reassured

Tackling the Priorities

Anti-Social Behaviour

- Maintain low levels of anti-social behaviour
- Improving the partnership approach to co-ordinating activities for young people
- Joining up the partnership approach for environmental aspects

Violent Crime

- Work with partners to reduce violent crime and assaults

Reduce harm caused by drugs

- Reducing harm to young people
- To support the Countywide Drug Strategy

Impact of alcohol misuse

- Continue to deliver Cumbria Alcohol Strategy through dedicated task & finish groups

Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence

- Further develop & expand the Domestic Violence champions network
- Maintain monthly Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC)
- Improve the management of repeat missing vulnerable young people to reduce exploitation
- Development of preventative work with young people, targeting potential perpetrators and victims

Reduce Re-offending

- Continue the Integrated Offender Management programme using a wide range of partners to manage problem individuals effectively in communities
- Monitor effectiveness of North Cumbria IOM scheme using revised performance indicators
- Encourage the use of restorative justice through provision of training to a range of public, private and voluntary sector agencies

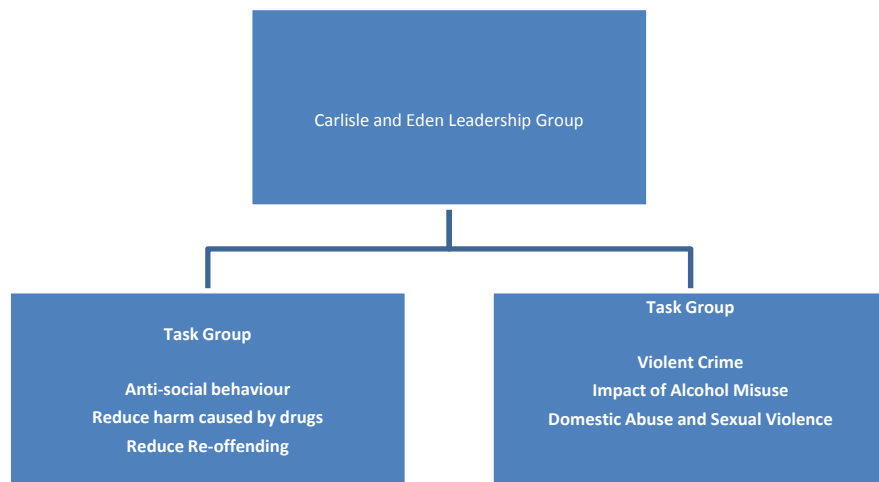
Carlisle and Eden CSP Partnership Plan 2013- 2014 Refresh



Statistics 2012/ 2013

1100	Fewer victims of crime
21%	Reduction in ASB
4%	Reduction in Crime
9%	Reduction in Criminal Damage
25%	Reduction in Deliberate Fires

Our Partnership Approach



Successes

ASB and Criminal Damage

Operation Roman Candle

Comparisons of ASB fires throughout the operation period show a continually reduction in nuisance fires over the last 5 years. From 90 reports in 2007 to 8 in 2012.

Summer Splash

Over 1400 people attended the 6 events. ASB reduced in West Carlisle by 112 incidents (55% reduction) and only 10 reports of criminal damage (down by 77%).

Appleby Fair

The co-ordinated approach by partners to Appleby Fair has made it a far safer and more community oriented event. The Carlisle and Eden CSP has recently supported the introduction of a new website to improve communication across the event.

Successes

Violent Crime

Best Bar None Scheme

The scheme has been instrumental in raising standards in bars, pubs and clubs in North Cumbria and has contributed to significant reductions in violent crime.

Taxi Rank Marshals

Deployment of marshals at public ranks helps prevent escalation of serious disorder by early intervention which is reassuring to taxi operators and the public.

Domestic Violence Champions

The network has been developed to support victims and raise awareness/ knowledge of domestic and sexual violence with partner agencies.

Carlisle and Eden Community Safety Partnership has and continues to be a successful partnership of multi agencies working together to address crime and disorder in North Cumbria. Since its inception, we have worked effectively to contribute to significant and sustained falls in crime and disorder. This plan sets out how, in partnership, we will address the priorities identified to ensure North Cumbria remains a safe place to live, work and study.

The partnership continues to have strong strategic leadership and dedicated and knowledgeable people in our task groups who are committed, prepared and focussed on the priorities for the year ahead. The Police and Crime Commissioner, who came into post in November 2012, is keen the existing partnership continues the good work already been delivered and has advised funding will continue for the coming year 2013/14.