

AGENDA

Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Thursday, 18 February 2016 AT 10:00
In the Flensburg Room, Civic Centre, Carlisle, CA3 8QG

Please note: Members should allocate at least 2 hours for Scrutiny Meetings

****Briefing meeting for Members will be at 9.30 am in the Flensburg Room****

Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence and notification of substitutions

Declarations of Interest

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 previous meetings

5 - 16

To note the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2016.
(Copy Minutes herewith).

PART A

To be considered when the Public and Press are present

A.1 CALL-IN OF DECISIONS

To consider any matter which has been the subject of call-in.

A.2 OVERVIEW REPORT AND WORK PROGRAMME

17 - 22

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.04/16 herewith)

A.3 RESPONSE TO WELFARE REFORM

23 - 36

(Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio)

The Deputy Chief Executive to submit a report and deliver a presentation to provide members with an overview of the partnership work that has been developed in response to the Governments welfare reform agenda, Welfare Reform Act 2012 and the Welfare Reform and Work Bill 2015/16.

(Copy report SD.02/16 herewith)

A.4 EQUALITY POLICY AND EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

37 - 74

(Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio)

The Policy and Performance Officer to submit the draft Equality Policy, including the draft equality objectives 2016-2019 and the draft Equality Action Plan 2016/17 for consultation.

(Copy Report PC.02/16 herewith).

A.5 PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

75 - 84

(Cross Cutting)

The Policy and Communications Manager to submit performance monitoring reports relevant to the remit of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel, including a summary of the Carlisle Plan actions 2013-16. The End of Year report will include the new priorities / activities outlined in the new Carlisle Plan 2015-18. (Copy Report PC.04/16 herewith)

PART B

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

-NIL-

Members of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Conservative – Ellis, Mrs McKerrell (Vice Chairman), Mrs Vasey, Bainbridge (sub), Bloxham (sub), Mrs Mallinson (sub)

Labour – Burns (Chairman), Ms Franklin, Osgood, Mrs Warwick, Ms Williams, Mrs Atkinson (sub), Caig (sub), Harid (sub)

**Enquiries, requests for reports, background papers,
etc to Committee Clerk: Jacqui Issatt - 817557**

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

THURSDAY 14 JANUARY 2016 AT 10.00AM

PRESENT: Councillor Burns (Chairman), Councillors Bainbridge (as substitute for Councillor Mrs Vasey) Ellis, Ms Franklin, Mrs McKerrell, Osgood (until 10.50am), Mrs Warwick and Ms Williams.

ALSO

PRESENT: Councillor Glover – Leader (until 10.50am)
Councillor Ms Quilter – Culture, Leisure and Young People Portfolio Holder (until 10.50am)
Councillor Mrs Tickner – Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder (until 10.50am)
Councillor Mrs Bradley – Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder
Mr Butterworth – Riverside Housing Association
Ms Monk – Impact Housing Association
Mr Armstrong – Two Castle Housing Association

OFFICERS: Deputy Chief Executive
Contracts and Community Services Manager
Communities, Housing and Health Manager
Housing Development Officer
Overview and Scrutiny Officer

COSP.01/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Mrs Vasey.

COSP.02/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Osgood declared a disclosable pecuniary Interest in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct in respect of Item A.3 – Housing Association Update – He was purchasing a property from Riverside Housing Association.

Councillors Bainbridge and Mrs Franklin declared an Interest in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct in respect of Item A3 – Housing Association Update – They were members of the Riverside Board.

COSP.03/16 PUBLIC AND PRESS

It was agreed that the items of business in Part A be dealt with in public.

COSP.04/16 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meetings held on 15 October 2015 and 19 November 2015 be agreed as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

COSP.05/16 AGENDA

RESOLVED – That Agenda Item A.2 be considered following Agenda item A.3 Housing Association Update.

COSP.06/16 CALL-IN OF DECISIONS

CALL – IN: OFFICER DECISION OD.184/15 – APPOINTMENT OF LEISURE CONTRACT RETENDER ADVISOR TAKEN BY THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Chairman reported that Officer Decision OD.184/15 (Appointment of Leisure Contract Retender Advisor) taken by the Deputy Chief Executive on 21 December 2015 had been called-in for scrutiny by Councillors Bainbridge, Ellis, and Mrs McKerrell.

The Decision recorded that following a period of market testing and consideration at Executive in October 2015 (EX.113/15) it had been agreed that Carlisle City Council to pursue an early retender of its leisure contract (prior to the natural expiration date of the current contract in November 2017).

The Leisure Contract was one of Carlisle City Council's most complex and significant contracts and specialist external support was needed to help ensure that the retender was delivered in a timely fashion and generated best value for Carlisle City Council.

At Executive in October 2015 authority to recruit such external support and to draw down and expend monies from the Leisure Reserve (up to £125,000) was delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive, Director of Resources and Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Young People, subject to an Officer Decision Notice.

The Deputy Chief Executive had made the decision to appoint V4 Services (via the National ESPO Procurement Framework 664) to provide specialist support and advice during the leisure contract retender exercise; and to release £125,000 from the Leisure Reserve to revenue budgets to fund the appointment and progression of the leisure contract retender.

The reason given by Panel members for the Call-in was:

“This Panel has concerns that £125,000, such a significant amount of resource is going to be used to employ outside consultants.”

The Chairman then outlined the Panel's options for dealing with the Call-in.

At the invitation of the Chairman, the Lead Call – in Member elaborated on the reasons for the Call-in. The Lead Call-in Member asserted that the information Members had received in relation to the decision was sparse, £125,000 was a large sum and it was a function of scrutiny to ensure that the monies were being spent effectively. The Lead Call-in Member requested that Members be provided with a breakdown of the services the consultants would deliver, and a timescale for the work to enable them to decide if the decision represented value for money for the authority.

The Deputy Chief Executive thanked the Lead Call-in Member for his additional detailing of the reasons for calling-in the decision, and stated he was happy to provide further information. The Deputy Chief Executive reminded Members that a report on Leisure Facilities Development had been considered by the Panel on 11 June 2015, that report had provided details of all costs and services related to the decision along with a timeline for the activity. He added that a further report on Leisure Facilities Contract had been considered by the Panel on 15 October 2015, and no detailed concerns relating to the use of consultants' services had been raised. The Deputy Chief Executive noted that the report submitted to the Panel in June had been a private report, and discussion of its contents in the public part of the meeting was therefore not appropriate, however, he was prepared to meet with any Member, privately, to discuss specific details relating to the contract.

The Executive had subsequently considered the matter at its meeting on 19 October 2015, and approval had been given for the procurement of specialist advice as required and expenditure of up to £125,000 from the Leisure Reserve (the use of which was delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive, the Director of Resources and the Portfolio Holder, and was subject to an Officer Decision Notice), this was recorded as Minute Excerpt EX.113/15. The Deputy Chief Executive stated that he had felt confident to take the decision, following the approval of the Executive.

The Deputy Chief Executive explained that some work had already been carried out in connection to the contract retender; a soft market testing exercise conducted in 2015 had indicated a positive degree of interest from the leisure sector in the Council's contract, at zero level subsidy. Future phases would define the scope of the services, process the receipt of tenders and make an assessment of tenders, each of which would require specialist advice and input which would be provided via the consultants.

The Deputy Chief Executive advised Members that as a result of recent flooding in the city, the Council had contacted interested parties relating to the appointment of a leisure contract and had informed them the work relating to the retender would be paused for an eight week period. This was to allow time for a full surveyors report of all the Council's sites to be delivered and enable Officers to have a full understanding of the impact of flooding. This decision had been taken in conjunction with the Leader and Culture Leisure and Young People Portfolio Holder.

The Deputy Chief Executive concluded by stating that the Leisure Contract was of significant value to the Council, and ensuring the re-tendering work was right from the start was important, as the contract would last for ten to fifteen years. Officers in the Council who were associated with this work, for example the Contracts and Communities Manager, Legal Services, Finance and Procurement all had other roles they were required to perform in the organisation, therefore they were not able to work on the Leisure Contract retender exercise, exclusively. Consequently, external support which incorporated these aspects was required.

A Call-in Member noted that the Council had previously managed transfers of its services, and asked if the appointment of a consultant indicated that the Council was fearful to undertake the work itself. The Culture, Leisure and Young People Portfolio Holder responded that the Council was required to make £3.457M in cuts in the coming three years, which meant that the decision to spend £125,000 on consultant services had not been an easy one to make, the specialist nature of the Leisure Services Contract meant it would be very unusual for a local authority to seek to tender such services without the use of expert advice.

The Culture, Leisure and Young People Portfolio Holder stated that there was also an economic argument for the engagement of consultants: although £125,000 was a significant sum to spend on consultant, she reminded Members that the Council was seeking to enter into a contract that was without subsidy to the provider. If that was to be realised the Council would save in excess of £700,000 per annum and potentially more than £10M over the life of the contract.

The Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder stated that in the preceding five years the Council's budget had reduced by £7M, and that staffing numbers had been reduced from approximately 800 to 500, therefore the necessary expertise to carry out the work required was no longer available in-house. Further funding cuts to the Council meant that services would be further reduced; consequently the use of consultants was necessary to deliver the work needed to retender the Leisure Contract. The Portfolio Holder agreed that the Executive's resolution to employ consultants had been a good business decision as it would

potentially save the Council £700,000 per annum; he reminded Members that consultants had been employed as part of the Renaissance project, and so this was not unusual activity for the Council. He felt that the Call-in Member's assertions that no information had been provided regarding the decision were insupportable, as reports had been scrutinised by the Panel on the topic in June and October 2015, and further information could have been requested from Officers, he felt the Call-in was politically motivated.

The Leader expressed surprise that the decision had been called-in at this point in the process as the Executive had made it clear that they wished to hear the Panel's views on the proposal in order that it would provide some steer to the decision making process. He noted that the Panel had received reports on the matter in June and October, and that the Executive had taken its decision in October, but that had not been called-in.

The Leader noted that it was common for local authorities to use specialist services for special pieces of work like a Leisure Contract retender, and that the Council had received some initial funding from the Local Government Association to set out the parameters of work V4 were to conduct. He stated that the Pools facilities were at the end of their life and a quick decision regarding the contract was required to ensure that city was able to maintain these services.

The Leader stated that specialist advice was required as making the wrong decision regarding the Leisure Services Contract would be very costly to the Council, he added that the two month delay to the process caused by the recent floods could effectively cost the Council £70,000 per month in leisure contract subsidy, and as the delay was for two months this alone, was more than the cost of the consultants. He reiterated the new contract would potentially save the Council £10M.

A Call-in Member noted that the level of agreed expenditure was up to £125,000, he asked how confident the Council was that the cost estimate would not be exceeded. The Deputy Chief Executive responded that the level of expenditure had been calculated based on careful estimates and an understanding of the current financial climate. The Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder added that the contractors had been selected from a framework at national agreed rates, any increase in costs above the authorised expenditure would have to be considered by the Executive and would be subject to scrutiny.

A Member asked if the Council had sufficient qualified staff to conduct the work required, would it have been necessary to engage consultants to carry out the work?

The Deputy Chief Executive replied that work of the nature required in the retender exercise was required once every ten to fifteen years, therefore it was more cost effective that the Council utilised industry experts through the engagement of consultants to carry out specific work, than to employ staff who would only be needed on a cyclical basis.

A Member asked about the level of Sport England's involvement. The Deputy Chief Executive responded that Sport England had assisted with the development of a facilities plan, and had given advice regarding damage sustained to facilities during the recent floods.

A Member stated he had been involved in leisure services in Carlisle for many years, and he felt that the Council provided excellent leisure services and he had faith that the Council and Executive would come to the right decisions regarding their future.

The Chairman asked the Lead Call-in Member to sum up.

The Lead Call-in Member felt that the Leader and Portfolio Holder were critical of the Call-in process being used, which suggested that the Council was not open for scrutiny; he added that no breakdown of the contract services had been provided to Members, and asked for further information regarding the differing day rates payable to the consultant. The Deputy Chief Executive advised that there were variable day rates drawn from the framework and related to the level of experience and expertise of different advisors.

The Lead Call-in Member asked for further information on the purchasing of individual days of consultant's time. The Contracts and Community Services Manager replied that a breakdown of costs for each stage of the retender exercise had been contained in the report to the Panel in June, these costings for the stages and the total cost to the Council remained accurate. However, the June report had not included a breakdown of the different rates for the various levels of consultants as the Council had not accessed the framework agreement or entered into any detailed contract negotiations with the consultants at that stage. The Contracts and Community Services Manager undertook to provide this information to members of the Panel.

The Lead Call-in Member stated that he did not feel consultants provided poor value for money, the Council had used consultant's services effectively in the past, for example, when transferring its housing stock and the legal advice provided by the consultants had been very valuable, he felt that scrutiny had an important role in ensuring that engaging their services remained a cost effective choice for the Council.

RESOLVED – That Officer Decision OD.184/15 (Appointment of Leisure Contract Retender Advisor) not be referred back to the decision making body.

COSP.07/16 HOUSING ASSOCIATION UPDATE

The Chairman welcomed Mr Butterworth, Riverside Housing Association, Ms Monk, Impact Housing Association and Mr Armstrong, Two Castle Housing Association to the meeting.

The Housing Development Officer explained that Overview and Scrutiny regularly received updates from Riverside Housing Association, and following a request from the Chairman Impact Housing and Two Castles Housing Association had also been invited to attend and provide the Panel with updates regarding recent changes in Government legislation affecting the Housing Association sector and the impact of the flood.

Mr Butterworth provided an update to the Panel on Riverside's work which included;

- The partnership response to the floods, which had been first class both during the event and the recovery phase;
- The housing market rent changes which equated to a 1% reduction in total rent payments over four years; the impact of extended Right to Buy, a voluntary scheme that had begun to trial in five areas of the country, including Riverside Liverpool;
- The Pay to Stay scheme in which people earning more than £30,000/annum and renting from a Registered Social Landlord were charged market value rent;
- The Welfare Reform and the Benefits Cap which had affected approximately 5% of the organisation's customers. Mr Butterworth explained that each of these areas was to be considered in Riverside's business re-profiling exercise which would help to formulate the organisation new Business Plan.

Ms Monk explained that Impact Housing had 3,000 properties in Cumbria, the majority of which were in the west of the County; many of the Association's properties in Carlisle were supported accommodation properties for homeless people, and tenants with physical or mental health issues. Ms Monk added that Impact Housing Association was also responsible

for the student accommodation at The Old Brewery, however, this site had been affected again during the recent floods, and the Association was to consider how best the site could be used in the future.

Ms Monk advised that twenty-one of the association's properties had been affected in the December floods, which included 3 supported accommodation properties. Surveyors' reports suggested that more work than had originally been anticipated was required to restore the properties and tenants were receiving weekly updates from the Association to keep them abreast of development in relation to their property.

Mr Armstrong explained that Two Castles Housing Association had approximately 3,000 properties in the north-west and north-east of England, and that its headquarters were in Carlisle. Mr Armstrong felt that the partnership work carried out in response to the flood had been exemplary, and that many lessons had been learnt since the previous flood event in 2005. Forty-six of the association's properties in the Warwick Road area had been flooded, all of whom were leaseholder and had been removed from their properties when the flood event occurred, of these leaseholders, sixteen had since returned to their properties.

Mr Armstrong explained that leasehold properties had buildings insurance cover as part of the association's cover, and that staff would continue to organise and support leaseholders in addressing this matter; those without home contents insurance were being provided with additional support and information on accessing grants.

The Chairman thanked Mr Butterworth, Ms Monk and Mr Armstrong for their presentations.

The Housing Development Officer explained that current government initiatives in housing were aimed at affordable home ownership, whilst help in that area may be welcome; it was not able to meet the needs of the whole market. The Housing Needs Survey (Strategic Housing Market Assessment) had indicated that the greatest need (70%) was for affordable rented housing; therefore recent changes such as Benefits Reform and extended Right to Buy had not been warmly welcomed by the sector. The Housing Development Officer noted that the government had indicated that properties purchased from Housing Associations via the extended Right to Buy scheme would be replaced on a one for one basis, however, this approach had not been successful in the past.

Mr Butterworth explained that an average cost of purchasing a property under the extended Right to Buy scheme was £60,000 (at Merseyside where the pilot took place) but the cost to replace the property was £125,000, he felt that this financial situation was likely to lead to a lower number of houses being built than those sold, and therefore, the scheme may impact on the number of social and affordable rental properties available.

In considering the presentations and supporting report Members raised the following questions and comments;

- *A Member noted that some housing developers sold properties for less than £100,000 and asked, did the quoted £125,000 cost of building a property include the land, build and property costs?*

Mr Butterworth responded that the £125,000 did include all land build and property costs, he noted that large property developers did not always meet the standards housing associations were required to meet when building homes, he added that housing associations needed to look at the elements included in their properties and identify ways to reduce costs.

Mr Armstrong reiterated the need for housing associations to look at reducing costs in their home building activities, and felt that the development process was an area where expenditure may be reduced. Working in partnership with property builders at the earliest stage was an area that Two Castles would be exploring in the future.

A Member commented that the Council had been proactive in utilising its land for housing schemes, particularly affordable rent schemes.

- *How did the new rent charge arrangements differ from the previous arrangements?*

Mr Butterworth explained that previous formula for calculating rents had been based on the Consumer Prices Index plus 1%, whereas the new formula set the charges based on the base rent minus 1%. The new formula removed the annual need to work out budgets for the coming year, as it was set until 2020, but it had required associations to submit new business plans to the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) based on the revised figures. Mr Butterworth explained that the HCA assessed the financial viability of the plans, he added that the recent changes in rent charges may lead to some associations merging in order to develop the economies of scale required to deliver their work.

- *Were housing association developments on local authority land still viable?*

Mr Butterworth replied that in recent years a number of schemes on local authority land had been delivered, however, due to the reduction in rent charges it was less likely that such schemes would be viable in the future on smaller sites and Riverside were looking for larger sites which allowed for economies of scale.

- *How did the associations engage with the Demonstration Project?*

The Housing Development Officer explained that discussions had been undertaken with Housing Associations some years ago regarding the project, when four sites had been identified. At the time the project was tendered, housing associations had recently been advised by government of their decision to reduce the rent charges the associations could levy. A retender exercise had been conducted allowing applicants to apply for individual sites or a smaller package of sites and was due to conclude at the end of January, due to the change to rent charges; the response to the retender had been limited.

Ms Monk agreed with the Officer's summary and added that due to the timing of the Demonstration Project tender and the announcement regarding rent changes, some associations had not been able to advise if they had been able to commit to the project.

- *Why did Impact Housing Association provide student accommodation?*

Ms Monk explained that when the Association purchased the Old Brewery the building was providing student accommodation and the organisation had simply continued with that provision. The property provided two hundred rooms for students, but currently only thirty were occupied, this coupled with the building being impacted again in the recent floods meant that the Association was considering the best use for the building in the future.

- *How were homes built on new estates defined as affordable?*

The Housing Development Officer advised that the Council's Local Plan defined two zones for affordable housing; Zone A which covered the most of the rural areas and some higher value areas of the North and West of the city, properties in this zone were of a higher value and a

30% affordable housing contribution was required; Zone B which covered the remainder of Carlisle as well as Longtown and part of the rural area to the West of Carlisle where the requirement was 20% affordable housing. The 30% discounts on the Council's discounted sale scheme were passed down in perpetuity to subsequent purchasers of the property; however the government was considering a scheme (Smarter Homes) where the discount was only to be passed on for a five year period.

Mr Butterworth explained that during the economic downturn house builders had needed housing associations to buy properties from them, which the associations would then sell on, as the economy had recovered this need had diminished. Mr Butterworth noted that the government's focus on homeownership meant that associations needed to consider how they could address this as part of their business planning process.

- *What work had Housing Associations conducted to ensure there was still choice to meet different housing needs?*

Ms Monk replied that in the future the purpose of housing associations may change, as developers increased their supply of the market, and as the needs of people changed, for example, the requirement for different types of housing at different stages of life. The changing needs needed to be responded to in terms of different styles of properties being available, and different types of tenancies also being offered. Currently, some associations offered tenants security of tenure, which meant that as long as the tenant complied with the tenancy agreement and paid their rent, they were entitled to stay in the property as long as they wished, and in some cases the tenancies could even be handed down to family members who then had the opportunity to continue the tenancy. This security of tenure was not as desirable as in the past, as people were more likely to move for employment opportunities or require various sized properties at different stages of life, such as starter homes and family homes.

Mr Butterworth stated that housing associations needed to define a unique selling point in the housing market; they had a large amount of stock a large proportion of which was old and in need of significant investment. If income to the associations were to reduce then the associations would need to consider how best to deal with the old stock. Events such as the recent floods also raised questions for the associations; if properties had been flooded more than once, should they be disposed of and what impact was that likely to have on the number of properties available for social rental?

Mr Butterworth noted that information regarding indices of deprivation indicated that the areas of greatest deprivation were usually areas with high levels of socially rented properties, if the provision of socially rented properties was to be reduced, consideration would need to be given as to how the needs of those tenants was to be met.

- *Was the growth of the private sector house building a threat to housing associations and what, if any, partnership work was conducted between the sectors?*

The Communities, Health and Housing Manager responded that the relationship between the sectors was dynamic, although there was not a marked difference between rent levels in each of the sectors in Carlisle the sectors offered different products for example, furnished or unfurnished properties, assured tenancies and short-hold tenancy. The government's clear policy shift towards homeownership, and changes to tax law regarding buy to let properties, meant that there was a danger of the private rental market contracting.

Mr Butterworth stated that Riverside were now in competition with the private sector and had been targeting areas in the city which were predominately private sector rental areas, he felt that housing associations offered services to its tenants that differed to those in the private sector and that the associations needed to understand how this met the needs of their customer base.

- *What role did the Council have in the rented housing market?*

The Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder advised that the Council had various roles related to the private sector rented market which included; Planning and the provision of affordable homes; an enforcement role regarding Houses of Multiple Occupation; advice provision for private sector landlords which included the delivery of advice sessions. She added that there were ranging standards of properties in the private sector market and that the Council had been active in helping to raise and enforce tenancy issues and had acted on behalf of tenants. The Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder stated that Registered providers of social housing were governed by stricter standards than those in the private sector and consequently their properties could be of a higher standard than some in the private sector.

- *What help was the Council able to provide?*

The Deputy Chief Executive explained that the Welfare Reform Board was a partnership of local organisations including local authorities, and the Department of Work Pensions; he felt that housing associations would benefit from involvement in the Board as it would allow them to be part of the discussion with local partners, and create linkages between the housing, employment and health sectors.

Mr Butterworth responded that it was useful to engage in such ways of working, he added that discussion of the devolution proposals would be of use to the housing associations as it would increase their understanding of the resources available and how best to lobby on behalf of the area.

- *Did any of the housing associations have plans to implement the extended Right to Buy or Pay to Stay scheme?*

Mr Butterworth advised that Riverside had recently written to tenants to advise them of the extended Right to Buy scheme, and inviting them to express an interest in the scheme, once responses had been received they would be assessed. The association expected that if necessary the number able to take part in the scheme was to be capped at one thousand.

Ms Monk responded that the Pay to Stay schemes would not apply to existing tenants, but Impact was to consider how different products may be offered in the future to cross subsidise the core business.

Mr Armstrong explained that Two Castles did not have plans to implement any of those schemes currently, but that the Association was considering how best to create a complete package of offers.

- *What measures had been in place to deal with association residents with special needs involved in the flood event?*

Mr Butterworth responded that the immediacy of the event had been the primary concern and the assurance of residents' safety. Assessments had been made as to which residents had

been affected, what their needs had been and if they had needed to be moved. Discussions had been held with the affected individual to identify if they had somewhere to go to or if the association had needed to find accommodation. Some of those discussions had been difficult as a number of residents had wished to remain in their property, but there had been health and safety and insurance issues, and in some cases there were questions about the fitness of the property to be inhabited.

Mr Butterworth advised that a number of residents would be in temporary accommodation for between six and twelve months, however, some residents would remain in the accommodation in which they had been placed following the floods as they preferred that to their previous accommodation.

Ms Monk explained that two specialist schemes had been flooded but all residents had been re-homed in appropriate specialist accommodation.

- *Was the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) able to offer any support to housing associations?*

Ms Monk advised that the LEP had a housing subgroup which considered strategic planning matters across the whole of Cumbria, however the group had not met for some time and she understood that the subgroup had requested further direction from the LEP Board.

The Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder advised that Cumbria Housing Group sat on the LEP and undertook housing needs assessment on their behalf, there was also a Technical Officers Group which comprised planning and housing specialists, and the Cumbria Planning Group also fed into the LEP. She felt that the LEP placed great emphasis on housing, not merely in terms of provision, but also services which was important in relation to the ageing population.

RESOLVED – (1) That Mr Butterworth, Ms Monk and Mr Armstrong be thanked for their presentations and added that the format of bringing the Associations together had been worthwhile and would be one which the Panel would repeat in future.

(2) That report ED.43/15 be noted.

The meeting adjourned at 12.10pm and reconvened at 12.25pm

COSP.08/16 OVERVIEW REPORT AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer presented report OS.02/16 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 Overview and Scrutiny Officer reported that the Notice of Key Executive Decisions, published on 23 November and 14 December 2015, included the following item which fell within the remit of this Panel.

KD.42/15 Updated Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy

On 13 January 2016 Executive was due to consider the policy, but the matter had been deferred.

The Panel's Work Programme had been attached to the report and Members were asked note and/or amend the Panel's Work Programmes and in particular consider the framework for the next meeting.

The following items had been scheduled for the next meeting on 18 February 2016:

- 3rd Quarter Performance Monitoring Reports
- Energy Efficient Project

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer advised that the Community Safety Partnership Plan had been scheduled for the 18 February 2016 meeting, but this had been delayed as necessary information was still being gathered.

A Member suggested including an item on Welfare Reform on the agenda for the 18 February meeting, with outside speakers being invited. It was agreed that the Overview and Scrutiny Officer would investigate this and liaise accordingly with the Chairman.

Another Member suggested inviting the Partnership Manager and Members of the Youth Council to the 31 March meeting. It was agreed that the Overview and Scrutiny Officer would investigate this and liaise accordingly with the Chairman.

The Panel agreed to remove the Young People Task and Finish Group from its Work Programme for the time being.

RESOLVED –That the Overview Report (OS.02/16) incorporating the Work Programme and Notice of Executive Decisions items relevant to this Panel be noted.

(Meeting ended at 12.33pm)

Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Agenda
Item:
A.2

Meeting Date: 18 February 2016
Portfolio: Cross Cutting
Key Decision: No
Within Policy and
Budget Framework
Public / Private Public

Title: OVERVIEW REPORT AND WORK PROGRAMME
Report of: Overview and Scrutiny Officer
Report Number: OS 04/16

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.
- Note and/or amend the Panel's work programme, in particular note the resolution of Scrutiny Chairs Group to include regular flood update items on issues falling within the remit of each Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

Contact Officer: Sarah Mason

Ext: 7053

Appendices attached
to report:

1. Community O&S Panel Work Programme 2015/16

1. Notice of Key Executive Decisions

The most recent Notice of Key Executive Decisions was published on 14 December 2015.

This was circulated to all Members. The following items fall into the remit of this Panel:

KD.01/16 Updated Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy

The Executive, on 7 March, will be asked to confirm the changes to the updated policy.

KD.02/16 Housing Repair Grant (repayable)

The Executive, on 7 March, will be asked to approve the use of the Capital pot in Homelife's budget for a repayable grant product (secured on the property) to older and vulnerable householders who need essential repairs to their home but have difficulty in accessing commercial or other loan products.

2. References from the Executive

There are no references from the Executive's meeting on 13 January. Any references from the Executive's meeting on 8 February will be circulated separately.

3. Work Programme

The Panel's current work programme is attached. Members are asked to note and/or amend the Panel's work programme and in particular consider the framework for the next meeting.

The following items are scheduled for the next meeting on 31 March 2016:

- Scrutiny Annual Report
- Customer Services
- Youth Council

Scrutiny Chairs Group, on 4 February, resolved that each Panel have a standing Flood Update report added to their agenda, to receive an update on issues within the remit of that Panel.

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

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

Issue Contact Officer	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		11 Jun 15	23 Jul 15	3 Sep 15	15 Oct 15	19 Nov 15	14 Jan 16	18 Feb 16	31 Mar 16
CURRENT MEETING 18 February 2016															
Performance Monitoring Reports Gary Oliver	✓						Reporting of performance relevant to remit of Panel	✓		✓		✓		✓	
Equality Policy Becky Tibbs			✓				Consultation on revised Equality Policy. Deferred to 18 Feb.							✓	
Response to Welfare Reform Darren Crossley				✓			Overview of partnership working in response to the Welfare Reform agenda.							✓	
TASK AND FINISH GROUPS															
Health Issues in Carlisle							Possible topic for Task and Finish group.								
FUTURE ITEMS															
Scrutiny Annual Report Sarah Mason			✓		✓		Draft report for comment before Chairs Group								✓
CSP Strategic Assessment Gavin Capstick				✓			Presentation of the Strategic Assessment that informs that Partnership Plan. This will be April 2016.						June 2016		

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

Issue Contact Officer	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		11 Jun 15	23 Jul 15	3 Sep 15	15 Oct 15	19 Nov 15	14 Jan 16	18 Feb 16	31 Mar 16
Community Safety Partnership Gavin Capstick		✓					Scrutiny of the Partnership Plan. This will be June 2016.		✓				June 2016		
Customer Services Jill Gillespie	✓						Performance of the new web-site / coping with the flood / future of CRM and customer services (smarter services)								✓
New Homes bonus and Empty properties / Housing Quality Margaret Miller												Date to be confirmed			
Youth Council				✓			Role and programme of the Youth Council – what works well, what frustrates etc.								✓
Completed Items															
Low Cost Home Ownership Policy		✓					Scrutiny of Executive Report	✓							
Leisure Facilities Development							Private report on options for future delivery	✓							

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

Issue Contact Officer	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		11 Jun 15	23 Jul 15	3 Sep 15	15 Oct 15	19 Nov 15	14 Jan 16	18 Feb 16	31 Mar 16
Carlisle Plan 2015-18		✓					Pre-decision consultation on the draft Carlisle Plan 2015-2018			✓					
Private Rented Sector			✓				Presentation on the Private Rented Sector in Carlisle / relationship with Private Landlords			✓					
Arts Centre Gavin Capstick	✓						Performance of the Arts Centre (in the first months after opening)				✓				
Sports and Leisure new contract Gavin Capstick							Results of market engagement for new contract				✓				
Budget setting 2016/17-2020/21 Steven Tickner		✓	✓				Consideration of service implications					✓			
Greenwich Leisure Ltd Gavin Capstick				✓			Annual Performance Report					✓			
Tullie House Business Plan Gavin Capstick				✓			Annual scrutiny of Tullie House Business Plan					✓			

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

Issue Contact Officer	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		11 Jun 15	23 Jul 15	3 Sep 15	15 Oct 15	19 Nov 15	14 Jan 16	18 Feb 16	31 Mar 16
Riverside Annual Report Jeremy Hewitson							Monitoring progress and developments of joint working. To include Impact and Two Castles Housing Associations.						✓		
INFORMATION ONLY ITEMS															
Details								Date Circulated							
Food Law Enforcement Service Plan								1 st June 2015							

Report to Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Agenda
Item:
A.3

Meeting Date: 18th February 2016
Portfolio: Communities, Health and Wellbeing
Key Decision: No
Within Policy and
Budget Framework NO
Public / Private Public

Title: RESPONSE TO WELFARE REFORM
Report of: The Deputy Chief Executive
Report Number: SD02/16

Purpose / Summary:

The purpose of this report and presentation is to provide members of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an overview of the partnership work that has been developed in response to the Governments welfare reform agenda, Welfare Reform Act 2012 and the Welfare Reform and Work Bill 2015/16.

Recommendations:

1. That members of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive this report and presentation, review the contents, note the progress made with partners and comment on the draft Welfare Reform Board Terms of Reference at Appendix A.

Tracking

Executive:	
Overview and Scrutiny:	18th February 2016
Council:	

1. BACKGROUND TO THE ACT AND WELFARE REFORM BOARD

- 1.1 In March 2012 Parliament agreed the Welfare Reform Act. This act covered a broad area of social justice, benefits, pensions, employment, housing and disability support.

During the following years a range of consultations, pilots, bills, programmes and guidelines have been delivered or rolled out across the country.

- 1.2 The key elements of the act are:

- Universal Credit – phased in to replace six of the main means tested benefits and tax credits
- Phasing out of the Disability Living Allowance, to be replaced with the Personal Independence Payment
- Reform of Housing Benefit (under-occupancy penalty)
- Reform of Employment and Support Allowance
- Changes to child support

The implementation of the act has (and continues to have) had a major impact on the work and practice of all those associated with directly delivering benefits (e.g. Department for Work and Pensions, Local Authorities, Job Centre); those who operate in the 'benefits chain' (e.g. housing associations, employers, private landlords); organisations supporting benefit claimants (e.g. CAB, Law Centre) and of course the claimants themselves.

- 1.3 In response to the implementation of the act many local authority areas decided to form partnerships to explore the impact of the changes and also assist each other as the new arrangements took shape.

At a County wide level the County Council formed a Welfare Reform Board and tasked the Cumbria Observatory with monitoring the impact by gathering and analysing data from our local areas.

At the District level a number of District Councils have also taken the decision to form Welfare Reform groups or boards. The Carlisle Welfare Reform Board took shape in late 2012 and has been in operation (on approximately a quarterly cycle) since this time.

- 1.4 The Carlisle Welfare Reform Board was originally convened to focus on the key immediate changes that would affect residents in our district.

The Board had and continues to have a focus on the following:

- Ensuring good communication between partners on the implemented welfare changes and the forthcoming revisions to benefits and support
- Sharing information, data and intelligence on the impact of these changes in the local population
- Sharing and coordinating the development of our local response to the welfare changes

- 1.5 The composition and governance of the board was intentionally fluid, this deliberate approach was considered appropriate given the breadth and depth of the reforms planned for the next 5 or more years.

The main attendees of the board during this period have been:

- City Council (Portfolio Holder, Deputy CE, Housing, Welfare, Policy, Customer Contact and Benefits)
- Housing Associations (Riverside, Impact and Two Castles)
- County Council (Ways to Welfare)
- Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
- Citizen's Advice Bureau
- Law Centre
- Food Bank / Churches Together
- Clinical Commissioning Group

The board has been chaired by Cllr Jessica Riddle, Portfolio Holder Communities, Health and Wellbeing.

- 1.6 The work of the board since 2012 has been consistent with the focus outlined above. The sharing of non-personalised information (e.g. under occupancy numbers, discretionary housing payments, work programme numbers, food bank demand) has proved to be highly valuable as partners have sought to respond positively to the challenges at hand.

The board has also proved valuable in identifying 'customer journeys' and pressure points in the assessment and payments system across partners. This has led to a more joined up and consistent process.

Further to this work the third sector agencies engaged in the board have also provided a highly valued commentary on the on-going challenges and effects of the reform agenda. The board has been able to monitor and assist in the evaluation of residents seeking assistance from the Law Centre, CAB and welfare advice services.

- 1.7 The board has continued to review its effectiveness and purpose during this whole period, conscious that the reform picture continues to expand and change as more of the agenda is delivered.
- 1.8 More recently the board have also been considering the potential impact of the Welfare Reform and Work Bill 2015-16. This builds upon and again expands the welfare reform agenda and is due its third reading in the House of Lords 9th February 2016.
- 1.9 This new set of reforms taken together with the previous expansive changes has led the board to reconsider its purpose, membership and terms of reference. A final draft of the terms of reference is contained within Appendix A of this report.

The board has developed these new terms following two review meetings in late 2015. The key changes to the work of the board are as follows:

- A move towards identifying key gaps in our local services that require joint work to ensure a better service delivery
- A targeted approach to delivering projects and actions that can assist residents to seek and obtain permanent work that is safe, fair and productive.
- Align the work of the board with other key Carlisle Partnership groups such as the Carlisle Economic Partnership and Healthy City Partnership

The board would welcome views from the Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the final draft Terms of Reference.

2. OVERVIEW OF THE DISTRICT DATA CONSIDERED BY THE BOARD

As outlined briefly above the Welfare Reform Board make use of a range of data to inform joint working and make sense of the impact of the changes at a local level.

The Cumbria Observatory produces a regular dataset of welfare reform related information. A copy of the latest version of this dataset can be found at Appendix B.

In addition to this, members of the board also supply information relating to the key aspects of welfare reform (Discretionary Housing Payments, Food bank presentations, homelessness applications, rent arrears). This dataset is maintained by the City Council Policy Team.

The verbal presentation accompanying this report will review this information and interpret the results for member's comments and questions.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO THE CARLISLE PLAN PRIORITIES

5.1 The work of this Welfare Reform Board contributes to a range of our priorities but particularly relates to the focus on improving resident's quality of life.

Contact Officer: Darren Crossley

Ext: 7004

**Appendices
attached to report:**

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**

APPENDIX 1

FINAL DRAFT Carlisle Welfare Reform Board Terms of Reference 2015

Purpose: To provide strategic direction and an effective coordinated partnership response to welfare reform across Carlisle and district

Governance: To report in to Carlisle Partnership Executive (LSP)

Objectives:

1. Identify gaps in local services; and drive actions required to close gaps
2. Monitor the cumulative impact of welfare reform and use this information to inform co-ordinated action planning
3. Ensure that a planned and co-ordinated welfare reform action plan is implemented reflecting local strategic priorities

Group members will commit to:

- a) Sign up to a local welfare reform commitment and achieving shared actions / priorities through the TOR
- b) Share individual organisations good practice strategic and operational approaches to support people affected by welfare reforms
- c) Work together to improve local service delivery to meet needs; professional practice and data sharing; sharing learning; training and shaping the future delivery of services
- d) Research best practice nationally and adopt good practice locally
- e) Improve data sharing through the provision of local stats / data; exploring and implementing mechanisms such as:
 - Shared platforms / collective source of software packages
 - Collective Information sharing protocol

Meetings:

- All meetings will be chaired by Cllr Jessica Riddle (Carlisle City Council)
- Decisions made by consensus
- Meeting agendas and minutes will be provided by Tammie Rhodes (Carlisle City Council), this includes:
 - Preparing agendas and supporting papers
 - Preparing meeting notes and information
 - Meetings will be held quarterly at the Civic Centre in Carlisle

APPENDIX 2: EXAMPLE REFERENCE DATA FOR THE WELFARE REFORM BOARD

Responding to Welfare Reform - Carlisle Summary

This summary provides data and headline analysis about the potential impact of welfare reform in Carlisle:

- There are 6,812 households in Carlisle with an annual income of less than £10,000; rates are above national levels
- 8,390 people of working age (16-64 years) in Carlisle are claiming some type of benefit and 78% of those are claiming an out-of-work benefit. 1 in 4 claimants are aged 45-54 years
- 700 people are claiming Jobseekers Allowance in; this number has fallen in the past year which can be attributed to both the fall in unemployment and the introduction of Universal Credit
- Youth unemployment rates are falling and are now below national levels (however, this may be attributed to the introduction of Universal Credit)
- Almost 1 in 4 of residents in Carlisle have a long-term health problem or disability, just above the national average
- 420 residents are claiming Universal Credit
- During the period October 2010 to March 2014, 2,720 claimants of employment & support allowance/incapacity benefit were re-assessed, of those 16% were deemed 'fit for work'
- 7,900 families are currently claiming child or working tax credits in Carlisle - a fall of 3,100 following the changes to tax credit thresholds in April 2012
- Levels of child poverty are high in some areas of Carlisle with a total of 3,280 children (aged 0-19 years) living in poverty
- Numbers of housing benefit claimants are falling; 7,351 are claiming housing benefit, while 929 claimants have received a reduction against the spare room subsidy

Demography			
	Carlisle	Cumbria	National
Males	52,800	245,300	26,773,200
Females	55,300	252,600	27,543,400
Total	108,000	497,900	54,316,600
0-15	18,700	81,700	10,303,600
16-64	67,600	303,000	34,475,400
65+	21,700	113,200	9,537,700
% Males	48.9%	49.3%	49.3%
% Females	51.2%	50.7%	50.7%
% 0-15	17.3%	16.4%	19.0%
% 16-64	62.6%	60.9%	63.5%
%65+	20.1%	22.7%	17.6%
Source: Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2014, Office for National Statistics (ONS)			
Incapacity Benefits Reassessments - Outcomes of Work Capability Assessments			
	Carlisle	Cumbria	National
Total caseload	2,720	12,270	1,162,090
Fit for work (number)	430	1,960	213,730
Fit for work (%)	16%	16%	20%
Source: DWP, October 2010 to March 2014			

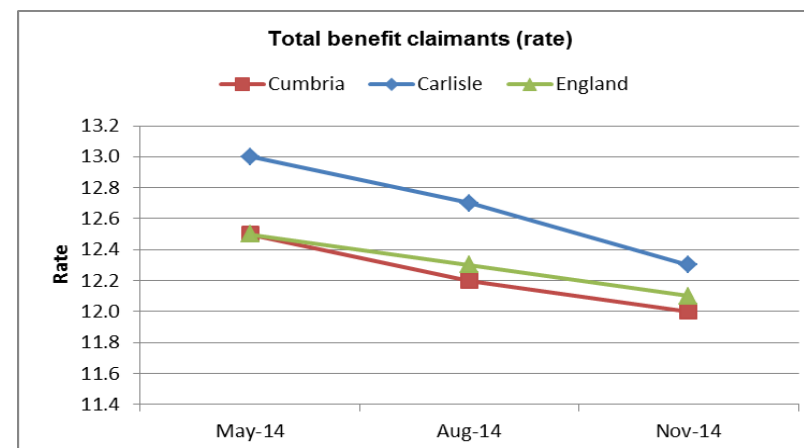
Universal Credit claimants			
	Carlisle	Cumbria	National
Total number of claimants (working age population 16-64years)	420	1,610	n/a
Number of claimants 'not in employment'	250	1,050	n/a
'Not in employment' claimant rate (% of working age population)	0.6	0.5	n/a
Source: DWP, May 2015			
Unemployment (Job Seekers Allowance claimants)			
	Carlisle	Cumbria	National
Number of claimants (working age population 16-64years)	700	3,720	761,962
Claimant Rate (% of working age population)	1.0	1.2	1.8
Youth Number of Claimants (aged 16-24 years)	115	745	160,285
Youth Claimant Rate (% of population aged 16-24 years)	0.9	1.5	2.2
Source: Office for National Statistics, May 2015			
Household Income			
	Carlisle	Cumbria	National
Mean Household Income	31,516	31,792	36,447
Median Household Income	25,238	25,332	28,696
Number of households with an annual median income of less than £10k	6,812	30,810	-
% of households with an annual median income of less than £10k	13.9	13.8	12.2
Source: Paycheck Data, CACI, 2015			
House Price			
	Carlisle	Cumbria	National
Mean House Price	143,639	167,071	250,473
Median House Price	122,183	139,877	175,143
Source: Streetvalue Data, CACI, 2015			
Benefit Claimants (working age client group (16-64years))			
	Carlisle	Cumbria	National
Total Number	8,390	36,780	4,155,37
Total Rate	12.3	12.0	12.1
Out of work benefits Number	6,460	27,590	3,214,730
Out of work benefits Rate	9.5	9.0	9.4
Source: Department for Work & Pensions, November 2014			
Benefit claimants - Disability Living Allowance			
	Carlisle	Cumbria	National
All entitled cases	5,940	27,800	2,631,920
16-64 years	3,700	15,690	1,523,760
65+ years	1,800	9,830	775,130
Source: Department for Work & Pensions, November 2014			

Benefit claimants – Personal Independence Payment			
	Carlisle	Cumbria	National
PIP claims in Payment (by month)	1,118	4,112	460,000
Source: Department for Work & Pensions, April 2015			
Benefit claimants – Employment Support Allowance/Incapacity Benefit			
	Carlisle	Cumbria	National
Total claimants Number	4,680	19,440	2,077,430
Total claimants Rate	6.9	6.4	6.0
Source: Department for Work & Pensions, November 2014			
Families receiving Child or Working Tax Credit			
	Carlisle	Cumbria	National
Families receiving Child or Working Tax Credit	7,900	32,600	3,791,800
Families receiving Child Tax Credit element only	1,700	6,900	688,000
Source: Department for Work & Pensions, April 2015			
Children, aged 0-15 years, in out-of-work benefit households			
	Carlisle	Cumbria	National
Number of children	3,030	12,250	1,838,970
Proportion %	16.4%	14.7%	-
Source: Department for Work & Pensions, May 2013			
Child Poverty (Children in low income families local measure)			
	Carlisle	Cumbria	National
% children in poverty – All Children (0-19 years)	15.3%	14.1%	18.6%
Number of children in poverty – All Children (0-19 years)	3,280	13,585	2,156,280
Source: HMRC, August 2012			
Housing Benefit			
	Carlisle	Cumbria	National
Number of housing benefit claimants	7,351	31,244	-
Number of claimants receiving a reduction in HB against the 'spare room subsidy' indicator	929	4,582	-
Source: Department for Work & Pensions, February 2015			
Benefit cap (cumulative total of households from 15 April 2013 to February 2015)			
	Carlisle	Cumbria	National
Number of households	28	126	-
Source: Department for Work & Pensions, February 2015			
Benefit sanctions – JSA (by month)			
	Carlisle	Cumbria	National
JSA sanctions – decision to apply a sanction	65	220	-
Number of individuals	58	199	-
Source: Department for Work & Pensions, December 2014			

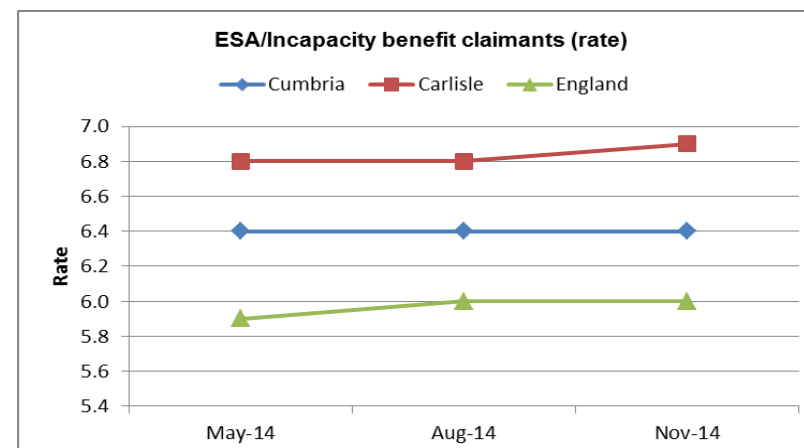
Benefit sanctions – ESA (by month)			
	Carlisle	Cumbria	National
ESA related sanction decisions	7	68	-
Number of individuals	6	24	-
Source: Department for Work & Pensions, December 2014			

Total benefit claimants (rate per working age population 16-64 years)

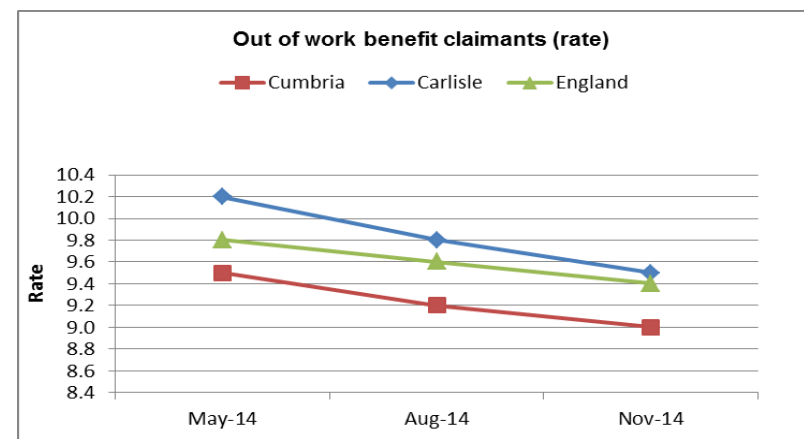
	May-14	Aug-14	Nov-14
Cumbria	12.5	12.2	12
Allerdale	13.4	13.2	12.9
Barrow	18.4	18.1	18
Carlisle	13.0	12.7	12.3
Copeland	15.0	14.7	14.4
Eden	7.6	7.4	7.4
South Lakeland	7.6	7.5	7.5
England	12.5	12.3	12.1

**ESA/Incapacity benefit claimants (rate per working age pop 16-64 years)**

	May-14	Aug-14	Nov-14
Cumbria	6.4	6.4	6.4
Allerdale	6.7	6.6	6.6
Barrow	9.1	9.1	9.0
Carlisle	6.8	6.8	6.9
Copeland	7.7	7.6	7.5
Eden	4.0	4.0	4.0
South Lakeland	4.0	4.1	4.1
England	5.9	6.0	6.0

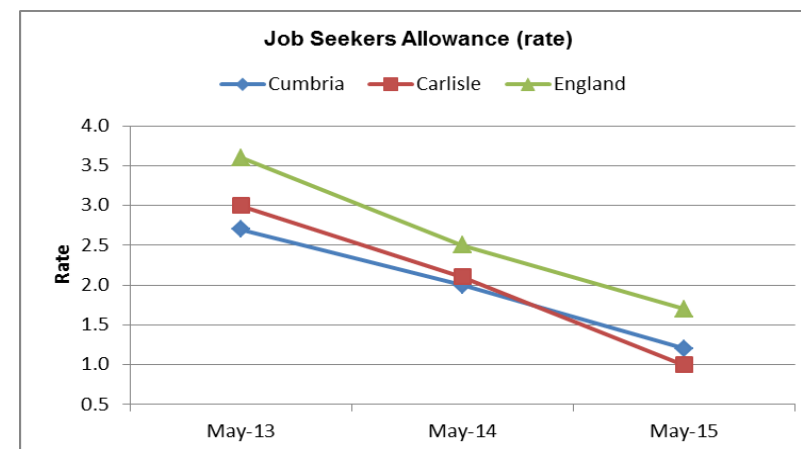
**Out of work benefit claimants (rate per working age pop 16-64 years)**

	May-14	Aug-14	Nov-14
Cumbria	9.5	9.2	9.0
Allerdale	10.2	10.0	9.7
Barrow	14.1	13.8	13.8
Carlisle	10.2	9.8	9.5
Copeland	11.5	11.2	10.9
Eden	5.4	5.3	5.2
South Lakeland	5.4	5.3	5.3
England	9.8	9.6	9.4

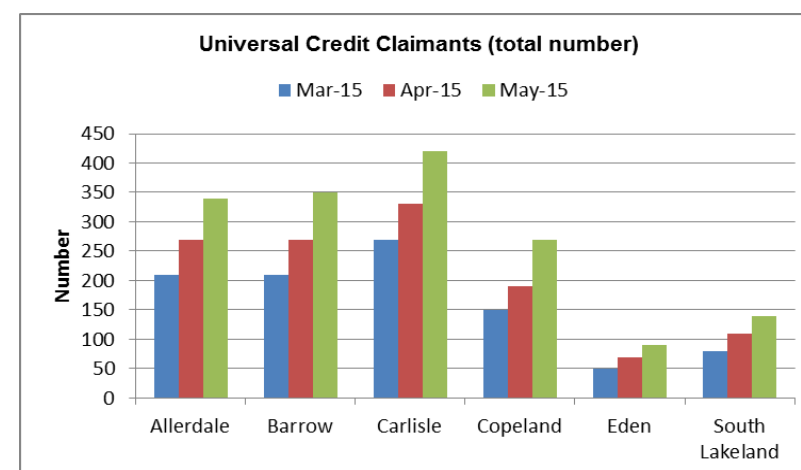


Job Seekers Allowance claimants (rate per working age pop 16-64 years)

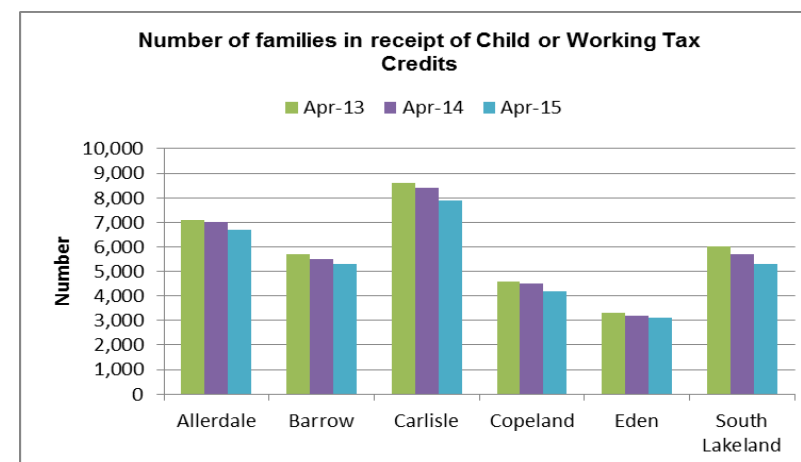
	May-13	May-14	May-15
Cumbria	2.7	2.0	1.2
Allerdale	3.3	2.4	1.5
Barrow	3.9	3.3	2.4
Carlisle	3.0	2.1	1.0
Copeland	3.3	2.5	1.6
Eden	1.2	0.9	0.4
South Lakeland	1.2	0.8	0.4
England	3.6	2.5	1.7

**Universal Credit Claimants (number)**

	Mar-15	Apr-15	May-15
Cumbria	970	1,240	1,610
Allerdale	210	270	340
Barrow	210	270	350
Carlisle	270	330	420
Copeland	150	190	270
Eden	50	70	90
South Lakeland	80	110	140
England	-	-	-

**Child and Working Tax Credits**

	Apr-13	Apr-14	Apr-15
Cumbria	35,500	34,300	32,600
Allerdale	7,100	7,000	6,700
Barrow	5,700	5,500	5,300
Carlisle	8,600	8,400	7,900
Copeland	4,600	4,500	4,200
Eden	3,300	3,200	3,100
South Lakeland	6,000	5,700	5,300
England	3,982,900	3,899,400	3,791,800



Report to Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Agenda
Item:
A.4

Meeting Date: 18 February 2016
Portfolio: Communities, Health and Wellbeing
Key Decision: No
Within Policy and Budget Framework YES
Public / Private Public

Title: EQUALITY POLICY AND EQUALITY OBJECTIVES
Report of: Policy and Communications Manager
Report Number: PC 02/16

Purpose / Summary:

This report presents the draft Equality Policy and equality objectives.

Recommendations:

Scrutiny is asked to:

1. Consider and comment on the presentation and content of the draft Equality Policy and objectives.

Tracking

Executive:	7 March 2016
Overview and Scrutiny:	18 February 2016
Council:	

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Equality Act (2010) replaced the previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. A key measure in the Act is the Public Sector Equality Duty which came into force in April 2011. This duty ensures that public bodies tackle discrimination and provide equality of opportunity for all.
- 1.2 The Council's Comprehensive Equality Scheme outlines how we meet the duties of the Equality Act. The scheme was adopted by the Council in September 2010 and updated in April 2011.
- 1.3 In 2012, the Council set its equality objectives for the 3 year period 2012-2015 as:
- Improve the quality and volume of our customer information.
 - Improve access and inclusion for all our services and across our partnerships.
 - Diffuse community tensions and promote understanding.
- 1.4. It is an appropriate time for the Council to review its approach to equality and ensure that it reflects current legislation and best practice. Information about the progress of equality work from 2012-2014 was provided to the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting on 11 September 2014¹.
- 1.5 The Annual Equality Report 2014/15 (Appendix 1) provides an overview of equality work, including details of equality impact assessments, workforce profile, customer satisfaction, complaints, and consultation and engagement.

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) provides guidance on how local authorities can best meet the requirements of the equality duty. In developing the new equality approach, the Council has integrated the EHRC best practice criteria into the proposals, reviewed existing information and looked at examples in other local authorities.
- 2.2 The Equality Policy (Appendix 2) sets out the revised approach to equality including new equality objectives for 2016-2019. The policy ensures that the Council continues to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty and identifies how it can build on its achievements and streamline its policies and practices.

¹ PC 09/14 Public Sector Equality Duty, Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel, 11 September 2014

- 2.3 The Equality Statement within the policy provides an overarching commitment by the Council to promote equality of opportunity in all of its functions. The equality objectives have been updated to develop the work of the previous objectives. Experience has shown that the most effective way to deliver these is to ensure that they are embedded in the day to day work of the authority.
- 2.4 The Equality Action Plan 2016/17 (Appendix 3) sets out actions on how the Council will continue to work towards achieving the equality objectives. The action plan aims to address the key issues identified in the annual equality report and will be reviewed and developed annually.
- 2.5 The Council must provide information about how equality is considered in decision making, policy development and engagement. This information will be published within the annual equality report and reported to the Senior Management Team, the Executive and Overview and Scrutiny.

3. CONSULTATION

- 3.1 Consultation on the policy and objectives is being undertaken with partners, public, staff and members.

4. CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 This report presents the draft Equality Policy and refreshed equality objectives, to enable the Council to continue to fulfil the Public Sector Equality Duty.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO THE CARLISLE PLAN PRIORITIES

- 5.1 The Equality Policy supports the Carlisle Plan's priorities by promoting equality of opportunity for all and seeking to improve the health and wellbeing of the people of Carlisle.

Contact Officer: Steven O'Keeffe **Ext:** 7258

Appendices attached to report: Appendix 1 - Annual Equality Report 2014/15
Appendix 2 - Equality Policy
Appendix 3 – Equality Action Plan 2016/17

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:

- PC 09/14 Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel, 11 September 2014

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS/RISKS:

Chief Executive's -

Deputy Chief Executive –

Economic Development –

Governance –

Local Environment –

Resources -

Carlisle City Council Annual Equality Report 2014/15

Introduction

Under the Equality Act (2010), the Council must provide information about how equality is considered in decision making, policy development and engagement. This report presents our key equality issues by analysing the following information from April 2014 to March 2015:

- equality objectives
- equality impact assessments
- customer satisfaction
- complaints
- consultation and engagement
- workforce profile

We use this information to identify equality issues and develop areas for action or improvement. We aim to publish information in an accessible format and ensure it follows the principles of our Data Quality Policy, giving confidence to the users of the information. We give details as to what we publish and why, explaining how the information is used. We also acknowledge gaps in our data and explain how we can improve this.

This document is reported to our Senior Management Team, the Executive, Overview and Scrutiny, and published on our website.

Equality objectives 2012-15

The Council's equality objectives for 2012-2015 are:

- Improve the quality and volume of our customer information.
- Improve access and inclusion for all our services and across our partnerships.
- Diffuse community tensions and promote understanding.

Progress of the equality objectives was provided to the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting on 11 September 2014¹. Work has continued on these objectives throughout 2014/15 has resulted in the development of revised equality objectives for 2016-2019. These will form part of the new Equality Policy and will build on the work of the previous objectives.

Equality impact assessments

We undertake impact assessments of our policies and services to help inform our decision making. An impact assessment is always proportionate to the proposed change and the potential impact on equality. For example, we provided an impact assessment regarding changes to the policy on a local knowledge test for taxi drivers on request from a local organisation.

The impact assessment of the new Local Plan (2015-30) was published as part of the consultation on the Council's website. Please see Core Document SD012 in the Examination Document Library:

<http://www.carlisle.gov.uk/planning-policy/Local-Plan-Examination/Examination-Document-Library>

¹ PC 09/14 Public Sector Equality Duty review

Customer satisfaction

We have developed a baseline measure of customer satisfaction with Council services through a combination of survey work undertaken through the website, Focus magazine and face to face interviews. We will continue to measure this to identify how satisfied our customers are in future.

Overall satisfaction with Council services in 2014/15 was 61.25% very or fairly satisfied².

Our online satisfaction surveys include optional equality monitoring questions. These provide information about the equality characteristics of people using our services in relation to their level of satisfaction. The number of respondents to the equality monitoring sections for 2014/15 was too small to provide a statistical sample. We will look at ways to boost the sample size for 2015/16 to provide a baseline figure if possible.

We are working on improved means of measuring customer satisfaction, recording activity through the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system and the website. There is an opportunity to apply a consistent approach to recording equality information across Council services by streamlining data processes and improving data quality. This will ensure that the Council is regularly reporting accurate data.

Complaints

The Council's Complaints and Feedback Policy contains details of how complaints are managed. Formal corporate complaints are received in writing and recorded through the Council's Customer Relationship Management system. The figures for September 2014 to March 2015 are provided in the table below. Figures for 2013 up to August 2014 are available on the Council's website.

At present, the equality monitoring does not identify if the complaint is linked to an equality issue or characteristic. The complaints form will be revised to include questions about if the complainant felt that the issue was related to equality.

² PC10/15 End of year Performance report 2014/15

Corporate Complaints		
September 2014 to March 2015 - 15 in period		
Gender	Count	%
Female	6	47
Male	7	40
Transgender	0	0
Undeclared	2	13
Age	Count	%
0-15	0	0
16-24	0	0
25-34	2	13.3
35-44	4	26.6
45-59	3	20
60-74	5	33.3
75+	0	0
Undeclared	1	6.6
Sexuality	Count	%
Heterosexual	12	80
Homosexual	1	6.6
Lesbian	0	0
Bi-Sexual	0	0
Undeclared	2	13.3
Religion	Count	%
Buddhist	0	0
Christian	6	40
Hindu	0	0
Jewish	0	0
Muslim	0	0
Sikh	0	0
Non Religious	5	33.3
Other: (Please State)	1	6.6
Undeclared	3	20
Disability	Count	%

None		10	67
Registered Disabled under DDA Definition		1	7
Disabled under DDA definition but not registered		0	0
Long term limiting condition that affects health		2	13
Long term limiting condition that does not affect health		0	0
Undeclared		2	13
Ethnicity		Count	%
White	British	12	80
	Irish	0	
	Gypsy Traveller / Roma	0	
	Irish Traveller	0	
	Polish	0	
	Lithunian	0	
	Other White background	2	13.3
Asian or Asian British	Indian	0	
	Pakistani	0	
	Bangladeshi	0	
	Other Asian background:	0	
Mixed	Caribbean	0	
	African	0	
	Asian	0	
	Other mixed background: (Please State)	0	
Black or Black British	Caribbean	0	
	African	0	
	Other Black background	0	
Chinese or other Ethnic Groups	Chinese	0	
	Philippine	0	
	Other	0	
Undeclared		1	6.67

Consultation and engagement

Discussions with service managers across the Council were held in Summer 2014 to gauge awareness of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), identify areas of good practice and give managers the chance to raise issues. A follow up workshop on the PSED was held for managers in October 2014. This workshop gave an overview of the Equality Act, PSED obligations and an understanding of the role of the manager in embedding this into services, policies and procurement activities.

Managers commented that general implications of policy changes would be considered as part of policy development. If there were specific proposals or changes to service provision that were likely to affect groups, an impact assessment would be undertaken on the proposals. Assessments should act as a critical challenge and help improve the service. Although awareness of the equality duty was good, managers commented on the impact of reduced resources on the ability to provide alternative service provision or make adjustments. The Council has to respond proportionately given the constraints placed upon its services.

Information about customers' needs was also mentioned by managers as a barrier to improving services. This could be due to lack of awareness of problems, difficulty in accessing different groups of people or the small numbers of people with specific needs. There is also a need to improve access to information the Council holds across the authority and services that are available to support staff. These concerns are being reviewed as part of the Council's project to improve customer data through the Management Information System (MIS). The Council also plans to review its communication, consultation and engagement policies.

The Council undertakes a wide range of consultation on various issues to inform decision making. A sample of consultations undertaken in 2014/15 are shown in the table below.

Title	Start date	End date	Internal/External Use
Recycling Survey 2015	17/02/2014	17/07/2015	External
Entertainment City Centre	26/02/2014	25/05/2015	Internal; External
Carlisle Arts Centre	07/04/2014	Ongoing	External
Talkin Tarn Visitors	21/05/2014	Ongoing	External
Carlisle Focus Communications Summer Autumn	01/06/2014	31/08/2014	External
Carlisle Visitors Survey	01/07/2014	30/09/2014	External
Food Charter	08/07/2014	Ongoing	External
Carers Survey	01/08/2014	18/03/2015	Internal
Neighbourhood Services	07/08/2014	Ongoing	External
Member Involvement Survey 2014	15/10/2014	18/11/2014	Internal
Carlisle Focus Recycling Winter Spring	01/11/2014	31/01/2015	External
Disability Survey	01/11/2014	31/01/2015	Internal
Christmas Lights Switch on Survey	01/11/2014	30/11/2014	External
Discover Carlisle Events Guide	01/11/2014	31/01/2015	External
Carlisle Food City	06/02/2015	Ongoing	External

Workforce profile

Bringing the information together for the equality report and workforce profile highlighted issues with data quality. These issues are being addressed through the development of the Council's Human Resources system, iTrent, to capture workforce data.

Our workforce has reduced by 15% from January 2012 to March 2015 due to local government budget cuts and the impact of transformation plans. Recruitment has also been limited over recent years as the Council implements efficiency savings, and makes it more difficult for the authority to target recruitment at specific groups. Workforce data showed some inaccuracies due to missing information or being undeclared, and systems duplicating data and not integrating effectively. Any inaccurate information, including recruitment and selection figures, has not been included in the equality profile. The Council is working to improve the data and will encourage employees to self-declare their information.

Staff health and wellbeing is promoted in the workplace and we undertake a range of actions and initiatives to support this, including an attractive and flexible benefits package to suit the life stages and lifestyles of employees. The findings of the employee opinion survey reflect this as 90.8% rated the Council as a good employer in 2014, compared with 89.4% in 2013. In 2014, 61.7% of staff said they felt valued at work, compared to 53% in 2013 and 46% in 2012. The survey will be undertaken again in summer 2016.

Workforce Profile as of 31 March 2015	
No of staff	531
<i>Age Range</i>	<i>Proportion of Workforce %</i>
16-24	2.8
25-35	18.1
36-45	24.3
46-59	46.3
60-65	7.5
65+	0.9
<i>Marital Status</i>	<i>Proportion of Workforce %</i>
Civil Partner	0.4
Divorced	5.6

Married	50.8
Separated	1.5
Single	32.6
Undeclared	8.7
Widowed	0.4
<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>Proportion of Workforce %</i>
Asian or Asian British	0.2
Black or Black British	0.2
Chinese	0.2
Prefer not to say	0.2
Undeclared	11.7
White British	86.4
White Irish	0.4
White Other	0.6
White - Other European	0.2
<i>Gender</i>	<i>Proportion of Workforce %</i>
Female	55.9
Male	44.1
<i>Disability (self declared)</i>	<i>Proportion of Workforce %</i>
No	77.4
Yes	2.6
Not Known	20
<i>Sexuality</i>	<i>Proportion of Workforce %</i>
Heterosexual	11.9
Lesbian or Homosexual	0.2
Prefer not to say	0.4
Undeclared	87.6
<i>Religion</i>	<i>Proportion of Workforce %</i>
Christian	6.6
No Religion	5.6
Prefer not to say	0.8
Undeclared	87.0

Pregnancy and Maternity

The number of employees who commenced their maternity leave in 2014/15 was 21.

3 employees were granted a reduction in working hours and 1 was pending a decision as of June 2015.

Grievances

3 formal grievances were received from April 2014 to March 2015.

Gender	Count	%
Male	2	66.7
Female	1	33.3
Marital status		
Married	2	66.7
Single	1	33.3
Disability		
No	2	66.7
Yes	1	33.3
Ethnicity		
White British	3	100.0
Age		
25-35	1	33.3
36-45	1	33.3
46-64	1	33.3

1 grievance was upheld and 2 were not upheld. A number of informal grievances have been received and dealt with on a regular basis. Managers have undergone significant management development activities in the previous three years and this may have had an impact on the number of formal grievances received by the Council.

Carlisle and Cumbria profiles

Carlisle and Cumbria profiles are included for reference. This information is taken from the Census 2011 and the profile will have changed since then, however, it acts as a general guide to the population in the local area.

See the Cumbria Intelligence Observatory for further details on local profiles: <http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/eLibrary/Content/Internet/536/642/1750/4130310250.pdf>

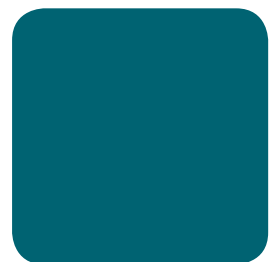
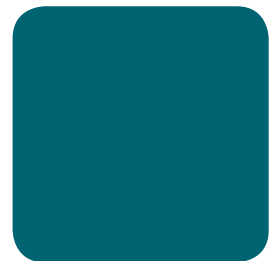
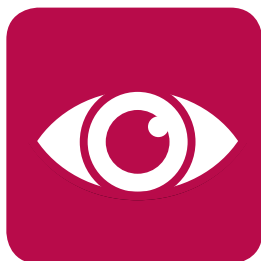
Carlisle		Cumbria	
<i>Age Range (years)</i>	<i>% Persons</i>	<i>Age Range (years)</i>	<i>% Persons</i>
0-15	17.2	0-15	16.7
16-64	64.3	16-64	62.7
65+	18.5	65+	20.6
<i>Marital Status</i>	<i>% Persons</i>	<i>Marital Status</i>	<i>% Persons</i>
Married	47.3	Married	50.8
Single	32.2	Single	29.1
Divorced	9.7	Divorced	9.5
Unknown		Unknown	
Separated	2.5	Separated	2.0
Widowed	8.2	Widowed	8.4
Civil Partner	0.2	Civil Partner	0.2
<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>% Persons</i>	<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>% Persons</i>
White British	95.0	White British	96.5
White Other	3.1	White Other	2.0
Asian or Asian British	1.2	Asian or Asian British	0.8
Black or Black British	0.1	Black or Black British	0.1
Chinese		Chinese	
Mixed	0.5	Mixed	0.5
White - Other European		White - Other European	
White Irish		White Irish	
Prefer not to say		Prefer not to say	
Not Declared		Not Declared	

Other Ethnic Group	0.1	Other Ethnic Group	0.1
<i>Gender</i>	<i>% Persons</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>% Persons</i>
Female	51.2	Female	50.8
Male	48.8	Male	49.2
<i>Disability and health – day to day activities limited?</i>	<i>% Persons</i>	<i>Disability and health - day to day activities limited?</i>	<i>% Persons</i>
No	80.8	No	79.7
Yes a lot	9.2	Yes a lot	9.7
Yes a little	10.0	Yes a little	10.6
<i>Religion</i>	<i>% Persons</i>	<i>Religion</i>	<i>% Persons</i>
Christian	69.1	Christian	71.9
Buddhist	0.26	Buddhist	0.27
No religion	22.9	No religion	20.3
Other	0.95	Other	0.7
Undeclared	6.8	Undeclared	6.9



Equality Policy

Carlisle City Council



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Why we need an Equality Policy

Under the Equalities Act (2010), Carlisle City Council must adhere to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The PSED covers the relevant protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The duty to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination also covers marriage and civil partnerships.

We must also:

- Publish information to demonstrate our compliance with the equality duty, at least annually.
- Set equality objectives, at least every four years.

We must publish information about the protected characteristics of our employees and people affected by our policies and practices. We should also provide information about how equality is considered in decision making, policy development, consultation and procurement.

This policy sets out how we will adhere to our duties and requirements of the Equality Act. Our aim is to improve the information we collect to help us identify areas for development. We will continue to embed equality in our services and show we are committed to promoting diversity. We welcome our responsibilities as an employer, as a provider of services and as a community leader, and value the legislation that supports our commitment to equality and fairness.

Our responsibilities

Our Equality Policy applies to:

- Service users
- Councillors
- Employees
- Volunteers
- Contractors, sub-contractors and partners

The Executive makes decisions in line with Carlisle City Council’s policy and budgetary framework. These decisions must always be informed with an assessment of equality impacts.

The Chief Executive is responsible for making sure our Equality Policy is applied consistently throughout the organisation.

Senior management are responsible for making sure that departmental procedures and service plans reflect the Equality Policy and deliver the required outcomes.

We expect all staff and councillors to show commitment to ensuring that this policy is implemented, and to abide by the Code of Conduct and our Dignity and Respect Policy in the performance of their duties.

Similarly, our employees, councillors and any other people providing services to the public are entitled to be treated fairly and with respect. Where they face discrimination or harassment from service users, we will take action to stop this happening again. In some circumstances this may include the withdrawal or refusal of the service.

Equality Statement

The Equality Statement sets out our commitment to promote equality of opportunity in all our services:

Carlisle is home to a wide range of people who make different and valuable contributions to life in the area. We believe that everyone should be treated fairly and with respect, and are committed to challenging inequality, discrimination and disadvantage. Our commitment applies whether the Council is acting as an employer, providing services, or commissioning services from other organisations.

Working closely with all our statutory partners, including social enterprise, business and voluntary sectors, we aim to achieve the highest possible standard of service delivery and employment practice. We also seek to build closer links with all communities across the district to promote equality.

All employees and councillors have responsibility for equality and ensuring that we meet our duties.

How we will deliver equality in our services

Consultation and engagement

We are committed to listening to people's views and to working with communities to help us make informed decisions. This means talking and listening to everyone in the community, not only those who regularly use our services or actively offer their views.

We recognise that a targeted approach may be required to engage successfully with some members of local communities, to ensure that their views are properly taken into account. We will engage with representative groups to meet our duties, and we will encourage these groups to work with us to improve our services.

We will gather customer information in a number of ways that will include Carlisle Focus surveys, online surveys, face to face interviews, road shows, and consultation events. The development of our social media tools help improve communication with customers and encourage feedback on our services.

Equality impact assessment

Equality impact assessments are about making sure that our services and policies are fair and to identify the impacts of these on groups of people within our community.

There are two stages to impact assessment:

- initial screening - an overview to assess if there are any equality issues and to see if any action can be taken to change the likely impact of a decision on a particular group.
- full impact assessment - a longer piece of work which relies on the findings of the initial screening to research and take action where impacts are judged to be unknown or are considered to be major.

An impact assessment should be proportionate to the proposed change and the potential impact on equality. We will undertake impact assessments of our policies and services to help inform our decision making. We will ensure that any potential negative consequences are removed or balanced out by either changing the policy or service, or introducing other measures alongside it.

Procurement and commissioning

We recognise our responsibility as a major procurer of goods and services in the Cumbrian area. We need to ensure that the suppliers and contractors that we work with do not operate in a way that contradicts legislation or our Equality Policy.

Our Procurement and Commissioning Strategy (2014-2016) sets out a clear framework for procurement activity and enables us to promote a positive approach to equality.

We request equality compliance in our tender documents and expect all potential providers to be committed to equality and diversity in their employment practices and service provision. Our aim is to ensure that suppliers, contractors and their agents provide goods, supplies and services that do not discriminate against people in any way. We will, if appropriate, monitor the successful provider's compliance throughout the term of the contract.

Service delivery

We are committed to providing services that are responsive and accessible to all. People who use our services are entitled to do so free from discrimination and harassment.

Managing service delivery is about providing appropriate services, according to need, for everyone in the district. We continually look for ways to increase the flexibility of the services we provide so that they are more responsive and inclusive. We are encouraging residents to register for online services where possible and we also continue to work with partners to improve services in the community (for example using community centres as hubs).

We will continue to ensure our customers' experiences are of the highest possible standard and they can confidently and easily access the Council services they need. Key to this is developing customer information to shape service delivery around our customers' needs.

We regularly measure customer satisfaction with our services and monitor other information such as complaints and customer contact data. We will apply a consistent approach to recording equality information across our services and improve data quality.

Communications and accessibility

Our website has been redesigned so that information is easily accessible in a friendly, intuitive structure. Our content will be clear and present our service in a confident way so that our customers know what they can expect from us and our commitment to their service.

We will continue to develop our services and ensure that they are accessible to all customers. This means that we will make information about our services accessible by:

- Using “Plain English” (language that an English speaking audience can understand and act upon from a single reading).
- Providing appropriate translation and interpretation for non-English speakers on request.
- Providing appropriate options for people with disabilities.
- Reviewing the way we publicise our services, to reach people not already using them.

We will review our communications guidance to ensure that the images and language we use help to promote equality.

Complaints and feedback

We value feedback and recognise the right of all our customers to complain, compliment or make a suggestion about any of our activities or services. We are committed to ensuring that we use customer feedback to help improve services and to focus on the needs of our customers. The Complaints and Feedback Policy contains further details on how any type of feedback concerning our functions and services is considered.

We encourage those submitting written complaints to provide equality information in order to establish if there are specific issues relating to one of the equality strands. All equality data collected remains confidential and anonymous.

How we will deliver equality as an employer

Employment

We will continue to develop our most important asset, our employees, to deliver our priorities and respond to the needs of our customers. Staff health and wellbeing is promoted in the workplace and we undertake a range of actions and initiatives to support this. We will continue to monitor and develop our workforce profile to ensure that we fulfil our equality reporting requirements. This will also help us to identify areas where we can support our employees.

We have achieved the Two Ticks symbol to show that we encourage applications from disabled people and are looking for ways to continue to improve support for staff.

Recruitment and selection

Our workforce should reflect the diversity of the population of the district. We will achieve this by positively encouraging applications from those sections of the community that are currently under-represented in our workforce. As a major employer, we will aim to be a positive example of good practice to other employers in the district and Cumbria. Where a particular group is under-represented in an area of work and there is evidence of discrimination positive action may be taken. Our Recruitment and Selection procedures contain further information about this.

Learning and development

We will provide appropriate learning and information resources to ensure that all employees and councillors understand and fulfil the organisation's commitment to equality. We will continue to work in partnership with other local authorities and organisations in Cumbria to develop best practice across the county by sharing information, developing training and procuring services to support equality work.

Reporting equality information

We must provide information about how equality is considered in decision making, policy development and engagement. This information will be published within an annual equality report that includes progress of the following:

- equality objectives
- equality impact assessments
- workforce profile
- customer satisfaction
- complaints
- consultation and engagement

We will use this information to identify equality issues and develop areas for action or improvement. We will publish information in an accessible format and ensure it follows the principles of our Data Quality Policy, giving confidence to the users of the information. We will give details as to what we publish and why, explaining how the information is used. We will also acknowledge gaps in our data and explain how we can improve this.

Progress will be reported to Senior Management Team, the Executive and Overview and Scrutiny through the annual report and published on our website.

Our equality objectives 2016-2019

Our equality objectives have been updated to develop the work of the previous objectives. Progress will be reported as part of the annual equality report.

Equality objective	Rationale behind objective and link to the Public Sector Equality Duty	Outcome or improvement sought by 2019	Baseline	Lead team(s)
a) Improve health, wellbeing and economic prosperity in Carlisle	Our vision is to improve the health, wellbeing and economic prosperity of the people of Carlisle. We have a key role in addressing health and wellbeing inequalities on a daily basis and have a positive impact on the lives of some of the most vulnerable residents in Carlisle. This links to the work being undertaken by the Carlisle Partnership to deliver the Healthy City programme. Health inequalities are the unjust differences in health between persons of different social groups and can be linked to forms of disadvantage such as poverty, discrimination and lack of access to services and goods. This links to the duty to advance equality of opportunity.	Health inequality can be measured through observing differences in subgroups of a population Prevent the health inequalities gap between the most and least affluent areas in Carlisle from growing Improved economic prosperity through increased economic activity and reduced unemployment	Approximately 13 years difference in life expectancy in females when comparing the most and least affluent areas in Carlisle and 12 years in males. ¹ Carlisle Economic activity rate 78% (i.e. % 16-64 year olds who are economically active) July 2013-June 2014 ² Carlisle Youth unemployment rate 1.6% (16-24 year olds) September 2014 ³ 13.9 % of Carlisle households with an annual median income of less than £10k 2015 ⁴ 12.3 Carlisle Benefit Claimants rate (working age client group (16-64years) Department for Work & Pensions, November 2014 ⁵ 15.3% Carlisle children in poverty – All Children (0-19 years) 2012 ⁶	All Council Services

1. Cumbria Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Health Inequalities, July 2015
2. Carlisle Economic Partnership, Economic Review of Carlisle, July 2015
3. Carlisle Economic Partnership, Economic Review of Carlisle, July 2015
4. Responding to Welfare Reform - Carlisle Summary, July 2015, Cumbria Intelligence Observatory

5. Responding to Welfare Reform - Carlisle Summary, July 2015, Cumbria Intelligence Observatory
6. Responding to Welfare Reform - Carlisle Summary, July 2015, Cumbria Intelligence Observatory

Equality objective	Rationale behind objective and link to the Public Sector Equality Duty	Outcome or improvement sought by 2019	Baseline	Lead team(s)
b) Improve quality of workforce profile and report recruitment and selection data	The workforce profile and recruitment and selection information show inaccuracies due to missing or undeclared information, and systems duplicating data and not integrating effectively. These issues are being addressed through the development of the Council's Human Resources system, iTrent, to capture employee data. This links to the duties to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to advance equality of opportunity.	Increased data for all equality characteristics within the workforce profile Report recruitment and selection data	Workforce profile in annual equality report 2014/15 Not currently reported due to inaccurate data	Policy and Communications, Human Resources, Personnel and Payroll
c) Ensure people have appropriate access to the services they need	The Customer Access Strategy aims to use customer information to shape service delivery around our customers' needs so that they are delivered responsibly, accurately and cost effectively. All residents of Carlisle should be able to confidently and easily access all the Council services they need. This should be in a timely and appropriate manner, irrespective of where they live, their skills, knowledge and ability. This links to the duty to advance equality of opportunity.	Improved satisfaction with our services Improved internal processes, leading to clearer information for our customers. Further progress of Smarter Service Delivery Programme Increased number of corporate complaints completed at stage one	Overall satisfaction with Council Services in 2014/15 was 61.25% very or fairly satisfied ⁷ 7 Smarter Service Delivery Reviews completed between early 2014 and October 2015, new website launched September 2015 88% of corporate complaints completed at stage one 2014/15 ⁸	All Council Services, Policy and Communications

7. End of year Performance report 2014/15 - Baseline report, Executive July 2015

8. End of year Performance report 2014/15 - Baseline report, Executive July 2015

Equality objective	Rationale behind objective and link to the Public Sector Equality Duty	Outcome or improvement sought by 2019	Baseline	Lead team(s)
d) Foster good relations between different people by celebrating communities	This builds on the previous equality objective to diffuse community tensions and promote understanding. It supports our Carlisle Plan priority to develop sports, arts and cultural facilities to support the health and wellbeing of our residents and our events programme. This links to the duty to foster good relations.	Improved satisfaction with events programmes Increased reporting of hate crime	83.7% very or fairly satisfied with the programme of events in Carlisle ⁹ 113 hate crimes in Carlisle June 2014 - May 2015 ¹⁰	All Council Services, Policy and Communications

9. Carlisle Focus Events Survey Winter / Spring 2013/2014

10. Crime and Policing dashboard - May 2015

Further information and feedback

We welcome feedback on our Equality Policy. If you have any comments or questions about how this policy affects you, please contact the Policy Team at:

Email: policy@carlisle.gov.uk

Telephone: 01228 817258

Post: Policy Team

Carlisle City Council
Civic Centre
Rickergate
Carlisle
CA3 8QG

If you require this guide in an alternative format or language please contact us to discuss your needs.

For further information about our equality and diversity work please visit our website www.carlisle.gov.uk/Council/More-about-the-Council/Equality-and-Diversity

Carlisle City Council Annual Equality Report 2014/15

Introduction

Under the Equality Act (2010), the Council must provide information about how equality is considered in decision making, policy development and engagement. This report presents our key equality issues by analysing the following information from April 2014 to March 2015:

- equality objectives
- equality impact assessments
- customer satisfaction
- complaints
- consultation and engagement
- workforce profile

We use this information to identify equality issues and develop areas for action or improvement. We aim to publish information in an accessible format and ensure it follows the principles of our Data Quality Policy, giving confidence to the users of the information. We give details as to what we publish and why, explaining how the information is used. We also acknowledge gaps in our data and explain how we can improve this.

This document is reported to our Senior Management Team, the Executive, Overview and Scrutiny, and published on our website.

Equality objectives 2012-15

The Council's equality objectives for 2012-2015 are:

- Improve the quality and volume of our customer information.
- Improve access and inclusion for all our services and across our partnerships.
- Diffuse community tensions and promote understanding.

Progress of the equality objectives was provided to the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting on 11 September 2014¹. Work has continued on these objectives throughout 2014/15 has resulted in the development of revised equality objectives for 2016-2019. These will form part of the new Equality Policy and will build on the work of the previous objectives.

Equality impact assessments

We undertake impact assessments of our policies and services to help inform our decision making. An impact assessment is always proportionate to the proposed change and the potential impact on equality. For example, we provided an impact assessment regarding changes to the policy on a local knowledge test for taxi drivers on request from a local organisation.

The impact assessment of the new Local Plan (2015-30) was published as part of the consultation on the Council's website. Please see Core Document SD012 in the Examination Document Library:

<http://www.carlisle.gov.uk/planning-policy/Local-Plan-Examination/Examination-Document-Library>

¹ PC 09/14 Public Sector Equality Duty review

Customer satisfaction

We have developed a baseline measure of customer satisfaction with Council services through a combination of survey work undertaken through the website, Focus magazine and face to face interviews. We will continue to measure this to identify how satisfied our customers are in future.

Overall satisfaction with Council services in 2014/15 was 61.25% very or fairly satisfied².

Our online satisfaction surveys include optional equality monitoring questions. These provide information about the equality characteristics of people using our services in relation to their level of satisfaction. The number of respondents to the equality monitoring sections for 2014/15 was too small to provide a statistical sample. We will look at ways to boost the sample size for 2015/16 to provide a baseline figure if possible.

We are working on improved means of measuring customer satisfaction, recording activity through the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system and the website. There is an opportunity to apply a consistent approach to recording equality information across Council services by streamlining data processes and improving data quality. This will ensure that the Council is regularly reporting accurate data.

Complaints

The Council's Complaints and Feedback Policy contains details of how complaints are managed. Formal corporate complaints are received in writing and recorded through the Council's Customer Relationship Management system. The figures for September 2014 to March 2015 are provided in the table below. Figures for 2013 up to August 2014 are available on the Council's website.

At present, the equality monitoring does not identify if the complaint is linked to an equality issue or characteristic. The complaints form will be revised to include questions about if the complainant felt that the issue was related to equality.

² PC10/15 End of year Performance report 2014/15

Corporate Complaints		
September 2014 to March 2015 - 15 in period		
Gender	Count	%
Female	6	47
Male	7	40
Transgender	0	0
Undeclared	2	13
Age	Count	%
0-15	0	0
16-24	0	0
25-34	2	13.3
35-44	4	26.6
45-59	3	20
60-74	5	33.3
75+	0	0
Undeclared	1	6.6
Sexuality	Count	%
Heterosexual	12	80
Homosexual	1	6.6
Lesbian	0	0
Bi-Sexual	0	0
Undeclared	2	13.3
Religion	Count	%
Buddhist	0	0
Christian	6	40
Hindu	0	0
Jewish	0	0
Muslim	0	0
Sikh	0	0
Non Religious	5	33.3
Other: (Please State)	1	6.6
Undeclared	3	20
Disability	Count	%

None		10	67
Registered Disabled under DDA Definition		1	7
Disabled under DDA definition but not registered		0	0
Long term limiting condition that affects health		2	13
Long term limiting condition that does not affect health		0	0
Undeclared		2	13
Ethnicity		Count	%
White	British	12	80
	Irish	0	
	Gypsy Traveller / Roma	0	
	Irish Traveller	0	
	Polish	0	
	Lithunian	0	
	Other White background	2	13.3
Asian or Asian British	Indian	0	
	Pakistani	0	
	Bangladeshi	0	
	Other Asian background:	0	
Mixed	Caribbean	0	
	African	0	
	Asian	0	
	Other mixed background: (Please State)	0	
Black or Black British	Caribbean	0	
	African	0	
	Other Black background	0	
Chinese or other Ethnic Groups	Chinese	0	
	Philippine	0	
	Other	0	
Undeclared		1	6.67

Consultation and engagement

Discussions with service managers across the Council were held in Summer 2014 to gauge awareness of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), identify areas of good practice and give managers the chance to raise issues. A follow up workshop on the PSED was held for managers in October 2014. This workshop gave an overview of the Equality Act, PSED obligations and an understanding of the role of the manager in embedding this into services, policies and procurement activities.

Managers commented that general implications of policy changes would be considered as part of policy development. If there were specific proposals or changes to service provision that were likely to affect groups, an impact assessment would be undertaken on the proposals. Assessments should act as a critical challenge and help improve the service. Although awareness of the equality duty was good, managers commented on the impact of reduced resources on the ability to provide alternative service provision or make adjustments. The Council has to respond proportionately given the constraints placed upon its services.

Information about customers' needs was also mentioned by managers as a barrier to improving services. This could be due to lack of awareness of problems, difficulty in accessing different groups of people or the small numbers of people with specific needs. There is also a need to improve access to information the Council holds across the authority and services that are available to support staff. These concerns are being reviewed as part of the Council's project to improve customer data through the Management Information System (MIS). The Council also plans to review its communication, consultation and engagement policies.

The Council undertakes a wide range of consultation on various issues to inform decision making. A sample of consultations undertaken in 2014/15 are shown in the table below.

Title	Start date	End date	Internal/External Use
Recycling Survey 2015	17/02/2014	17/07/2015	External
Entertainment City Centre	26/02/2014	25/05/2015	Internal; External
Carlisle Arts Centre	07/04/2014	Ongoing	External
Talkin Tarn Visitors	21/05/2014	Ongoing	External
Carlisle Focus Communications Summer Autumn	01/06/2014	31/08/2014	External
Carlisle Visitors Survey	01/07/2014	30/09/2014	External
Food Charter	08/07/2014	Ongoing	External
Carers Survey	01/08/2014	18/03/2015	Internal
Neighbourhood Services	07/08/2014	Ongoing	External
Member Involvement Survey 2014	15/10/2014	18/11/2014	Internal
Carlisle Focus Recycling Winter Spring	01/11/2014	31/01/2015	External
Disability Survey	01/11/2014	31/01/2015	Internal
Christmas Lights Switch on Survey	01/11/2014	30/11/2014	External
Discover Carlisle Events Guide	01/11/2014	31/01/2015	External
Carlisle Food City	06/02/2015	Ongoing	External

Workforce profile

Bringing the information together for the equality report and workforce profile highlighted issues with data quality. These issues are being addressed through the development of the Council's Human Resources system, iTrent, to capture workforce data.

Our workforce has reduced by 15% from January 2012 to March 2015 due to local government budget cuts and the impact of transformation plans. Recruitment has also been limited over recent years as the Council implements efficiency savings, and makes it more difficult for the authority to target recruitment at specific groups. Workforce data showed some inaccuracies due to missing information or being undeclared, and systems duplicating data and not integrating effectively. Any inaccurate information, including recruitment and selection figures, has not been included in the equality profile. The Council is working to improve the data and will encourage employees to self-declare their information.

Staff health and wellbeing is promoted in the workplace and we undertake a range of actions and initiatives to support this, including an attractive and flexible benefits package to suit the life stages and lifestyles of employees. The findings of the employee opinion survey reflect this as 90.8% rated the Council as a good employer in 2014, compared with 89.4% in 2013. In 2014, 61.7% of staff said they felt valued at work, compared to 53% in 2013 and 46% in 2012. The survey will be undertaken again in summer 2016.

Workforce Profile as of 31 March 2015	
No of staff	531
<i>Age Range</i>	<i>Proportion of Workforce %</i>
16-24	2.8
25-35	18.1
36-45	24.3
46-59	46.3
60-65	7.5
65+	0.9
<i>Marital Status</i>	<i>Proportion of Workforce %</i>
Civil Partner	0.4
Divorced	5.6

Married	50.8
Separated	1.5
Single	32.6
Undeclared	8.7
Widowed	0.4
<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>Proportion of Workforce %</i>
Asian or Asian British	0.2
Black or Black British	0.2
Chinese	0.2
Prefer not to say	0.2
Undeclared	11.7
White British	86.4
White Irish	0.4
White Other	0.6
White - Other European	0.2
<i>Gender</i>	<i>Proportion of Workforce %</i>
Female	55.9
Male	44.1
<i>Disability (self declared)</i>	<i>Proportion of Workforce %</i>
No	77.4
Yes	2.6
Not Known	20
<i>Sexuality</i>	<i>Proportion of Workforce %</i>
Heterosexual	11.9
Lesbian or Homosexual	0.2
Prefer not to say	0.4
Undeclared	87.6
<i>Religion</i>	<i>Proportion of Workforce %</i>
Christian	6.6
No Religion	5.6
Prefer not to say	0.8
Undeclared	87.0

Pregnancy and Maternity

The number of employees who commenced their maternity leave in 2014/15 was 21.

3 employees were granted a reduction in working hours and 1 was pending a decision as of June 2015.

Grievances

3 formal grievances were received from April 2014 to March 2015.

Gender	Count	%
Male	2	66.7
Female	1	33.3
Marital status		
Married	2	66.7
Single	1	33.3
Disability		
No	2	66.7
Yes	1	33.3
Ethnicity		
White British	3	100.0
Age		
25-35	1	33.3
36-45	1	33.3
46-64	1	33.3

1 grievance was upheld and 2 were not upheld. A number of informal grievances have been received and dealt with on a regular basis. Managers have undergone significant management development activities in the previous three years and this may have had an impact on the number of formal grievances received by the Council.

Carlisle and Cumbria profiles

Carlisle and Cumbria profiles are included for reference. This information is taken from the Census 2011 and the profile will have changed since then, however, it acts as a general guide to the population in the local area.

See the Cumbria Intelligence Observatory for further details on local profiles: <http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/eLibrary/Content/Internet/536/642/1750/4130310250.pdf>

Carlisle		Cumbria	
<i>Age Range (years)</i>	<i>% Persons</i>	<i>Age Range (years)</i>	<i>% Persons</i>
0-15	17.2	0-15	16.7
16-64	64.3	16-64	62.7
65+	18.5	65+	20.6
<i>Marital Status</i>	<i>% Persons</i>	<i>Marital Status</i>	<i>% Persons</i>
Married	47.3	Married	50.8
Single	32.2	Single	29.1
Divorced	9.7	Divorced	9.5
Unknown		Unknown	
Separated	2.5	Separated	2.0
Widowed	8.2	Widowed	8.4
Civil Partner	0.2	Civil Partner	0.2
<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>% Persons</i>	<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>% Persons</i>
White British	95.0	White British	96.5
White Other	3.1	White Other	2.0
Asian or Asian British	1.2	Asian or Asian British	0.8
Black or Black British	0.1	Black or Black British	0.1
Chinese		Chinese	
Mixed	0.5	Mixed	0.5
White - Other European		White - Other European	
White Irish		White Irish	
Prefer not to say		Prefer not to say	
Not Declared		Not Declared	

Other Ethnic Group	0.1	Other Ethnic Group	0.1
<i>Gender</i>	<i>% Persons</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>% Persons</i>
Female	51.2	Female	50.8
Male	48.8	Male	49.2
<i>Disability and health – day to day activities limited?</i>		<i>Disability and health - day to day activities limited?</i>	
	<i>% Persons</i>		<i>% Persons</i>
No	80.8	No	79.7
Yes a lot	9.2	Yes a lot	9.7
Yes a little	10.0	Yes a little	10.6
<i>Religion</i>	<i>% Persons</i>	<i>Religion</i>	<i>% Persons</i>
Christian	69.1	Christian	71.9
Buddhist	0.26	Buddhist	0.27
No religion	22.9	No religion	20.3
Other	0.95	Other	0.7
Undeclared	6.8	Undeclared	6.9

Report to Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Agenda
Item:

Meeting Date: 18 February 2016
Portfolio: Finance, Governance and Resources
Key Decision: No
Within Policy and
Budget Framework YES
Public / Private Public

Title: 3rd QUARTER PERFORMANCE REPORT 2015/16
Report of: Policy and Communications Manager
Report Number: PC 04/16

Purpose / Summary:

This Performance Report updates the Panel on the Council's service standards that help measure performance. It also includes a summary of the Carlisle Plan actions 2013-16. The End of Year report will include the new priorities / activities outlined in the new Carlisle Plan 2015-18.

The details of the service standard applicable to this Panel is in the table in Section 1. The table illustrates the cumulative year to date figure, a month-by-month breakdown of performance and an actual service standard baseline that has been established either locally or nationally.

The summary of the actions in the Carlisle Plan follow on from the service standard information in Section 2.

Recommendations:

1. Consider the performance of the City Council presented in the report with a view to seeking continuous improvement in how the Council delivers its priorities.

Tracking

Executive:	4 April 2016
Overview and Scrutiny:	Community – 18 February 2016 Resources – 25 February 2016 Economy and Environment – 3 March 2016
Council:	N/A

1. BACKGROUND

Service standards were introduced at the beginning of 2012/13. They provide a standard in service that our customers can expect from the City Council and a standard by which we can be held to account. The measures of the standard of services are based on timeliness, accuracy and quality of the service we provide in areas that have a high impact on our customers.

2. PROPOSALS

None

3. CONSULTATION

The report was reviewed by the Senior Management Team on 2 February 2016 and will be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels on the following dates:

Community – 18 February 2016

Resources – 25 February 2016

Economy and Environment – 3 March 2016

4. CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The Panel are asked to comment on the 3rd Quarter Performance Report prior to it being submitted to Executive.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO THE CARLISLE PLAN PRIORITIES

Detail in the report

Contact Officers: Steven O'Keeffe

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Martin Daley
Gary Oliver

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Appendices **None**
attached to report:

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**

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS/RISKS:

Chief Executive's – Responsible for monitoring and reporting on service standards, customer satisfaction and progress in delivering the Carlisle Plan whilst looking at new ways of gathering and reviewing customer information.

Economic Development – Responsible for managing high level projects and team level service standards on a day-to-day basis.

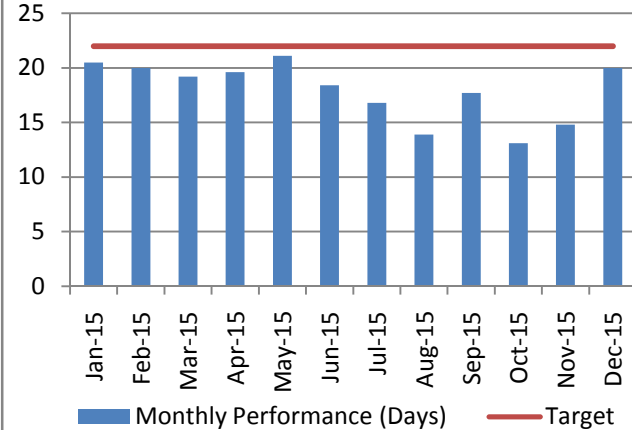
Governance – Responsible for corporate governance and managing team level service standards on a day-to-day basis.

Local Environment – Responsible for managing high level projects and team level service standards on a day-to-day basis.

Resources – Responsible for managing high level projects team level service standards on a day-to-day basis.

SECTION 1: 2015/16 SERVICE STANDARDS

Service Standard: Average number of days to process new benefits claims

Service Standard	Year to Date Figure	Performance by Month																										
Average number of new claims should be processed within 22 days	17.9 days* (Q3 2014/15 – 21.6 days)	 <table><tr><th>Month</th><th>Monthly Performance (Days)</th></tr><tr><td>Jan-15</td><td>20.5</td></tr><tr><td>Feb-15</td><td>20.0</td></tr><tr><td>Mar-15</td><td>19.0</td></tr><tr><td>Apr-15</td><td>19.5</td></tr><tr><td>May-15</td><td>21.0</td></tr><tr><td>Jun-15</td><td>18.5</td></tr><tr><td>Jul-15</td><td>16.5</td></tr><tr><td>Aug-15</td><td>14.0</td></tr><tr><td>Sep-15</td><td>17.5</td></tr><tr><td>Oct-15</td><td>13.5</td></tr><tr><td>Nov-15</td><td>15.0</td></tr><tr><td>Dec-15</td><td>20.0</td></tr></table>	Month	Monthly Performance (Days)	Jan-15	20.5	Feb-15	20.0	Mar-15	19.0	Apr-15	19.5	May-15	21.0	Jun-15	18.5	Jul-15	16.5	Aug-15	14.0	Sep-15	17.5	Oct-15	13.5	Nov-15	15.0	Dec-15	20.0
Month	Monthly Performance (Days)																											
Jan-15	20.5																											
Feb-15	20.0																											
Mar-15	19.0																											
Apr-15	19.5																											
May-15	21.0																											
Jun-15	18.5																											
Jul-15	16.5																											
Aug-15	14.0																											
Sep-15	17.5																											
Oct-15	13.5																											
Nov-15	15.0																											
Dec-15	20.0																											

These figures are estimated and will be updated at the Panel Meeting.

Section 2: Carlisle Plan 2013-16 Summary

The Plan included six priorities:

- We will support the growth of more high quality and sustainable business and employment opportunities
- We will develop vibrant sports, arts and cultural facilities, showcasing the City of Carlisle
- We will work more effectively with partners to achieve the City Council's priorities
- We will work with partners to develop a skilled and prosperous workforce, fit for the future
- Together we will make Carlisle clean and tidy
- We will address Carlisle's current and future housing needs

PRIORITY – We will support the growth of more high quality and sustainable business and employment opportunities

Major projects under this priority included the development of the Local Plan 2015-2030 and within it the promotion and allocation of land for employment purposes, as well as improvements made to Durranhill Industrial Estate and Talkin Tarn having succeeded in securing significant external funding.

The successful bid for the Carlisle Enterprise Zone will help attract new businesses and with them, jobs.

Work will continue in this area under a priority in the new Carlisle Plan: *Support business growth and skills development to improve opportunities and economic prospects for the people of Carlisle*

PRIORITY - We will develop vibrant sports, arts and cultural facilities, showcasing the City of Carlisle

Major developments under this priority included The Old Town Hall / TIC, and the Old Fire Station (OFS). Obviously, the OFS – like many other Council assets – was severely damaged as a result of the floods and is scheduled to be re-opened in May 2016.

Work on other major projects such as the Harraby Campus Development will continue as part of the new Carlisle Plan under the priority: *Further develop sports, arts and cultural facilities to support the health and wellbeing of our residents.*

PRIORITY – We will work more effectively with partners to achieve the City Council's priorities

This is best demonstrated by the many projects and initiatives worked on across the district as part of the Carlisle Partnership and the Ambassadors.

Some of this work will continue as part of a priority in the new Carlisle Plan: *Promote Carlisle regionally, nationally and internationally as a place with much to offer - full of opportunities and potential*

PRIORITY - We will work with partners to develop a skilled and prosperous workforce, fit for the future

As well as some of the cross-over work carried out with the Carlisle Partnership and the Ambassadors, the City Council continues to work closely with partners through the Carlisle Economic Partnership (CEP), the action plan from which sets out actions to address skills gaps by identifying skills needs for growth and encouraging provision which meets those needs.

Engagement with Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership (Cumbria LEP) and Centre of Nuclear Excellence (CoNE) continues to be vital in supporting the CEP key priorities for Carlisle of Infrastructure, Skills and Housing to help deliver growth.

As with the above priority, similar work will continue as part of the priority in the new Carlisle Plan: *Promote Carlisle regionally, nationally and internationally as a place with much to offer - full of opportunities and potential*. The recent skills summit succeeded in bringing key partners together, highlighting the extent of the challenge and will prove a valuable platform from which to generate momentum on this agenda moving forward.

PRIORITY - Together we will make Carlisle clean and tidy

Successes to date have included a significant improvement in the reduction in dog fouling visible on the streets. The launch of the “We are Watching You” campaign and the continued programme on education and enforcement delivered by the Neighbourhood Enforcement Team is targeted to continue this improvement.

The ‘Rethinking Waste’ project continues to be developed following presentation of the business case to Executive in September. Recommendations were also made to Executive for the delegation of authority regarding funding and procurement of

replacement vehicles. A further business case relating to the development of the depot will be developed at a later phase of the project.

During this 3rd quarter an additional large mechanical sweeper and driver was brought in to support leaf-clearing as a priority, and this resource was maintained as the cleansing teams transferred to flood clean-up activity following the major flooding in December. The priority now is to bring Carlisle back up to standard and further resources are being sourced to increase the Council's response. This and other activity will be subsumed by the new priority: *Continue to improve the quality of our local environment and green spaces so that everyone can enjoy living, working in and visiting Carlisle.*

PRIORITY - We will address Carlisle's current and future housing needs

The new Local Plan has successfully moved towards the final stages of its preparation with adoption anticipated in Spring. The plan is a key catalyst for housing growth via allocating the land needed to accommodate new homes and containing the policies which will enable the Council to maximise the supply of new affordable homes through the planning system.

The "Demonstration Project" will deliver between 30 and 40 new affordable homes on a Council owned site at Harraby, in conjunction with Carlisle College. Interviews to select the Housing partner for the scheme will be taking place in early March 2016.

Executive approved the new Low Cost Home Ownership policy on 14 July for the 300+ properties on the Council's register. This gives a greater priority to households in the greatest need for particular property types.

Active Promotion of Carlisle to the Development Industry has been ongoing in partnership with the adjoining Districts and Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership, to showcase Cumbria (including Carlisle) to house builders and other related investors. Evidence supports that new development industry players are active on the ground in Carlisle the need for which is essential if we are to succeed in meeting our targets for increasing the number of new homes moving forward.

The City Council continues to with local Housing Association partners to address housing need.

These, and other housing related projects will continue in the new priority: *Address current and future housing needs to protect and improve residents' quality of life.*

