

**PORTFOLIO:**

**GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES**

Report of  
Portfolio Holder:

**COUNCILLOR JOHN  
MALLINSON**

**GOVERNANCE**

**Electoral Services**

The Annual Canvass has now been completed and the new Electoral Register for 2011/12 was published on 1 December 2011.

The review of polling stations has been carried out and the report and recommendations arising from the review which were agreed at the last meeting of the Council are now being acted upon with a view to making the necessary bookings for elections to be held in 2012.

Preparations for the City and Parish Elections to be held on 3 May have commenced. Members will also be aware of the preparations for the election of Police Commissioners scheduled to be held on 15 November 2012.

The Registration Officer is required to carry out a refresh of postal votes in 2012. This will require a new signature in respect of any postal votes which are 5 years old i.e. in respect of applications made in January 2007 or earlier. Officers will write to any voters affected in late January with a request that they supply a new signature. If a new signature is not provided within a six week period the postal vote will be cancelled and voters will need to make a new application or make arrangements to vote in person. It is envisaged that a reminder will be sent to voters within the six week period.

**RESOURCES**

**Financial Services**

Annual Audit Letter 2010/11

The Audit Commission have issued their annual audit letter which contains very positive comments in respect of the work undertaken by the authority during 2010/11. This report is being considered by the Audit Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> January.

## Strategic Planning

The budget reports for 2012/13 to 2016/17 have been considered by the Executive and relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panels, with the Executive issuing its draft Budget Proposals for consultation purposes at its meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> December. The consultation process will end on 16<sup>th</sup> January with feedback being considered by the Executive on 16<sup>th</sup> January, following which the Executive will make final budget recommendations to Council on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2012.

## Audit Services

The last Audit Committee on 31<sup>st</sup> October received the Audit Services' progress report along with a copy of the Audit Plan, which illustrated the work completed by the Audit Shared Service for the first 6 months of the year. The following matters were noted by the Audit Committee:

- The audit of Insurance Arrangements was considered by Members. This review provided for a reasonable assurance rating.
- The audit of Bereavement Services was also considered, which again provided for a reasonable assurance rating.

## Property and Facilities

### Asset Review Disposal Programme

An officer Working Group, chaired by the Chief Executive, is co-ordinating the implementation of the property disposal programme which was approved by Council in January.

The project aims, through a period of rationalisation and consolidation, to create a portfolio which is based on fewer assets and is easier and less expensive to manage. Through the reinvestment of capital receipts, and the release of embedded value, the portfolio will improve performance with the delivery of better yields and more revenue for the Council.

So far the disposal of 7 assets has been completed realising £945,000, which is ahead of target projections. Sales have been conducted through a mixture of private treaty transactions and public auctions. Officers have now finalised work to bring forward the next tranche of 9 properties to the market and an auction is planned to take place in February.

Montagu Evans LLP, the national firm of surveyors who were appointed to bring the Morton Superstore and District Centre site to the market, continue to advise the Council on operator/developer selection. Following a strong response to the marketing exercise in September and October initial bids were submitted from interested parties in November. The process of evaluating these offers, selecting and short listing bidders to determine the preferred purchaser, is well underway in line with the programme timetable.

### **Accommodation Review**

The aim of this project is to review our own accommodation to ensure the space we use matches our needs and is operating efficiently and cost effectively.

The project will deliver corporate standards for the space we occupy, optimise usage and increase capacity. It will reduce wasted space; identify savings and the potential to generate additional income or capital receipts.

The demolition contract at Bousteads Grassing is nearing completion, the roadside building has been demolished and the contractor is now carrying out fencing work and making good the ground cover over the footprint of the old building.

Following an initial review of the use of the Council's depot and storage accommodation, the Depot at Willowholme Industrial Estate has been identified as surplus to current requirements. A Report on this will be going to the Executive on 16 January recommending the asset is released for disposal.

### **Renewable Energy**

The government has reduced the feed in tariff for solar energy and this has had a major effect on the business case for the project. As a result the Executive has agreed to go ahead with a smaller scheme at the Civic Centre. Tenders are currently being evaluated.

## **LICENSING**

The **Best Bar None Scheme** is an accreditation and awards scheme that was introduced in 2008 by the Carlisle and Eden Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership, focussing on safety and customer care. Carlisle City and Eden District Council Licensing Authorities and Cumbria Police are working together with pubs, clubs and bars in the area to create a safer and more welcoming environment.

The awards seek to establish a standard of excellence within the pubs, clubs and bars in both Carlisle and Penrith. The aims of the scheme are:

- To reduce the incidents of crime and disorder associated with the consumption of alcohol
- To promote Carlisle and Penrith as a safe and professional environment in which to live, work, visit and socialise
- To identify and reward responsible operators
- To share good practice with others in order to raise standards

On Thursday 22 December 2011, Lord Henley, the Minister of State for Crime Prevention and Anti-Social Behaviour Reduction, paid a formal visit to Outrageous nightclub in Carlisle. This was in recognition of them being the Joint Overall Best Bar None winners for Carlisle in 2011 and them entering

the national final. Also in attendance were the Mayor and organisers of the local scheme.

**Councillor J Mallinson**  
**Governance & Resources Portfolio Holder**