

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**THURSDAY 28 AUGUST 2003 AT 10.00 AM**

PRESENT: Councillor E Mallinson (Chairman), Councillors Boaden, Earp, Fisher, G Hodgson, Parsons and K Rutherford

COS.76/03 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Hendry.

COS.77/03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor E Mallinson declared a personal interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Members in respect of two items on LSVT Action Plan Update and Monitoring of Contract for Carlisle Housing Association. She stated that her interest was in respect of her membership of the Board of Carlisle Housing Association as a City Council nominee. She added that although it was a personal interest, she would leave the meeting during consideration of each of these items, and hand the Chairmanship of these items over to the Vice Chairman, Councillor Parsons.

COS.78/03 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meetings held on 17 July and 1 August 2003 were noted, subject to the typographical error in COS.64/03(c)(i) where it should read "Health Visitors" and not "Help Visitors".

In relation to Minute Reference COS.73/03, the Overview and Scrutiny Manager advised that the Head of Culture Leisure and Sport would submit a report on the Sheepmount Project to the next meeting of the Committee.

COS.79/03 WORK PROGRAMME

The Overview and Scrutiny Manager presented the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for this Committee for 2003/04 highlighting the following :

- Performance Monitoring – Disabled Access - A report would be submitted to the October Meeting of the Committee.

Members commented that, at the last meeting they had been advised that a number of buildings could not be physically adapted to meet disabled access requirements and there would therefore be service delivery issues which would have to be considered if performance was going to improve. They suggested that the report to the October Meeting should focus on consideration of alternative methods of service delivery, where services are provided from buildings which cannot physically be altered to meet disabled access requirements.

- Subject Review – Post Foot and Mouth Disease Environmental and Health Matters - This would be considered later in the Agenda and would be the subject of special meetings.
- Member Training - In conjunction with the North West Employers, a countywide training session for Overview and Scrutiny Members had been arranged for 8 October 2003 at Tullie House starting at 9.00 for 9.30.

In addition, Performance Management had provisionally been scheduled for 14 October 2003. Members suggested that if new performance management software was going to be introduced they should be made aware of how this would work, and that they should also be informed of how they would get exception reports for consideration. These issues could be addressed within the Performance Management training.

- Local Air Quality – In response to Members' questions about the absence of a presentation or report on monitoring of local air quality, the Head of Environmental Protection Services explained that this was due to staff vacancies and recruitment difficulties. The Chairman suggested a meeting with the relevant portfolio holder to discuss the situation.

RESOLVED – (1) That the Work Programme be noted.

(2) That the report on Performance Monitoring in relation to disabled access (to be submitted to the meeting in October 2003), should look into options for service delivery where services are provided from buildings which cannot physically be altered to meet disabled access requirements.

3. That it be noted that the following Member Training had been arranged:

- Overview and Scrutiny– 8 October 2003 at Tullie House
- Performance Management - 14 October 2003 (provisional date). The Performance Management Training should encompass information on any new software to be used, and an explanation of how Exception Reports would be provided.

(4) That in relation to local air quality monitoring, the Overview and Scrutiny Manager, the Chairman, Councillor Bloxham, the Portfolio Holder and the Head of Environmental Protection Services, meet to discuss how to progress consideration of local air quality by the Committee in view of staffing shortages.

COS.80/03 LSVT ACTION PLAN UPDATE – EX.154/03

Councillor Mallinson, having declared a personal interest in this item, left the meeting during consideration of the matter. Councillor Parsons chaired the meeting during consideration of the item.

With reference to Minute EX.154/03, the Executive had referred a report from the Executive Director (CE.11/03) updating Members on progress with the LSVT Action Plan, to this Committee for its information and to keep it updated with progress.

Ms Mooney advised that she had written report CE.11/03 but since that time responsibility for LSVT had passed to the other Executive Director. She did however outline the contents

of the report and updated Members on progress on the LSVT Action Plan. She advised that a further Action Plan would be produced in Autumn 2003.

In response to Members' questions regarding the transfer of the DSO to Carlisle Housing Association, Ms Mooney advised that an Action Plan had been submitted to the Executive and that it would be reported to this Committee at a future meeting.

RESOLVED – (1) That the report and progress with the LSVT Action Plan including the transfer of DSO to Carlisle Housing Association be noted.

(2) That it be noted that a further Action Plan would be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee.

COS.81/03 COMMUNITY SAFETY CO-ORDINATOR POST – EX.185/03

With reference to Minute EX.185/03, the Executive had referred this in order to keep the Committee informed of the action being taken regarding the recruitment of a Community Safety Co-ordinator and discussions over the formation of a Carlisle and Eden Team to deal with community safety.

Ms Mooney then gave a verbal update to the Committee on progress with the post of Community Safety Co-ordinator. She gave a detailed account of developments relating to this post and on the potential formation of a joint Carlisle/Eden Community Safety Team. Discussions had been held with Eden and with the Police and proposals for the joint team would include:

- secondment of a Police Inspector in the role of Co-ordinator;
- formation of a Carlisle and Eden Team including clerical support from the current Police team; and
- separate Community Safety Officer posts at Carlisle and Eden. The Eden Officer would work in the Carlisle Office one day a week.

Carlisle City Council's post was currently being evaluated by Member Support and Employee Services with a view to advertising it as a Community Safety Officer post. The proposals for a Carlisle Eden Team, the secondment of a Police Inspector as the Co-ordinator and the Community Safety Officer post in Carlisle would be considered at the next Community Safety Leadership Meeting.

If the proposals were agreed at that Leadership Meeting on 24 September 2003, the City Council's post could be advertised with interviews provisionally scheduled for October 2003.

In relation to the Monitoring of Performance and Crime by this Committee,

Ms Mooney advised that she would ask the Police to provide an update to the next meeting of this Committee on the majority of the Performance Indicators which fell within the Police's remit, and that she would chase up further information on the Performance Indicator's within the Council's remit.

Members emphasised the importance of monitoring this area, and whilst they recognised the benefits of taking advantage of the formation of a Carlisle Eden Team, they were concerned over the delays in the appointment of a City Council officer and the consequent delays in monitoring of crime and disorder.

In response to Members' questions about the accountability of Officers in this new Carlisle and Eden Team, Ms Mooney advised that the Police Inspector would be seconded to the Council and he would be line managed by the Head of Economic and Community Development, with day to day support being provided from a Superintendent from the Police.

The Inspector who would be seconded was aware that he had a reporting line to this Committee in terms of monitoring crime and disorder.

A Member suggested that it may be beneficial for the Carlisle Community Safety Officer to spend one day a month at the Eden Office.

RESOLVED – (1) That the Executive Director's Report on Progress with the formation of a Carlisle and Eden Community Safety Team, and with the recruitment of a Community Safety Officer be noted.

(2) That the Executive Director report to the next meeting of this Committee with an update on performance both in relation to the indicators which fall within the Police's remit and on those which fall within the City Council's remit.

(3) That the Executive Director keep the Committee fully informed of progress with the proposals for the formation of a Carlisle and Eden Community Safety Team and with the recruitment of a Carlisle City Council Community Safety Officer.

COS.82/03 THE MUSEUM AND ARTS SERVICE – OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE DELIVERY OF SERVICES – EX.186/03

With reference to Executive Minutes EX.186/03, the Executive had agreed that the comments and recommendations of this Committee be taken into account when further consideration is given to the options for the future delivery of the Museum and Arts Service.

Members referred to the five specific concerns which the Committee had raised and suggested that when a report on the Museum and Art Services is submitted to this Committee, it should indicate how each of these concerns had been addressed. In particular, Members highlighted their concern that there should be greater clarity in usage figures of the split between Museum customers who pay to enter Tullie House Museum and customers of the Restaurant, who may enter through Museum doors but are not paying an entrance fee.

RESOLVED – That when the Head of Culture, Leisure and Sport submit a report to a future meeting of this Committee, he should indicate how each of the five concerns raised by this Committee had been addressed, and in particular to deal with the concern in relation to greater clarity in usage figures of the split between Museum customers and Restaurant customers.

COS.83/03 BEREAVEMENT SERVICES BEST VALUE REVIEW - REVISED IMPROVEMENT PLAN – EX.187/03

With reference to Minute EX.187/03, the Executive had agreed that the observations of this Committee be noted and the position regarding funding for a replacement Cremator be kept under review.

The Overview and Scrutiny Manager advised that the final Bereavement Services Best Value Review and the revised Improvement Plan would be submitted to the Council, and that once it had been signed off by the Council, six monthly Monitoring Reports on the Action and Improvement Plan would be submitted to this Committee.

In response to Members' questions about the capital funding for replacement Cremators, the Head of Environmental Protection Services advised that this be the subject of a budget bid, not for additional funding, but as a bid to retain and increase a proportion of income over and above the amount currently retained.

RESOLVED – That the matter be noted.

COS.84/03 FORWARD PLAN – ITEMS RELEVANT TO THE COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Overview and Scrutiny Manager presented Report LDS.51/03 highlighting the Forward Plan (1 September to 31 December 2003) issues which fell within the ambit of this Committee.

The Overview and Scrutiny Manager then reported on the present position on each matter within the plan.

In relation to KD.084/03 - Licensing Policy, the Head of Environmental Protection Services advised that it was difficult to be absolute with a timetable as Government guidance had not yet been produced. He assured the Committee that they would be consulted on the draft policy. Members sympathised with Officers as the Government Guidance were not yet available and advised that if necessary, a special meeting of the Committee should be held to discuss the draft policy.

In response to a Member's question about KD.083/03 – Home Improvement Agencies, the Head of Environmental Protection Services assured Members that the matter would be reported to a future meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

COS.85/03 DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT BEST VALUE REVIEW UPDATE

The Communications Manager presented report SP.18/03 updating Members on progress with the Democratic Engagement Best Value Review. The Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer was also in attendance at the meeting to answer Members' questions.

Ms Taylor gave a full update on progress with the Review, including details of the consultation process which was being undertaken. It was anticipated that the consultation process would be completed by the end of September with analysis taking place during October, prior to the development of an options report. It was anticipated that the draft options report would be submitted to this Committee at its meeting in October 2003. The Review is on target for completion by the end of November 2003.

The Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer advised that the consultation strategy/policy had been tidied up and sent out for informal consultation with Business Unit Heads and would then be subject to a formal consultation process including CMT and the Executive.

Members referred to the consultation with Parish Councils and advised that as Parish Councillors they had not been advised of this by Parish Clerks. Members were concerned that Parish Clerks may not have received the letters and they asked the Communications Manager to ensure that a reminder is sent to Parish Clerks regarding this consultation process.

Members also referred to the attainers questionnaire and responses and requested that further analysis of these responses be undertaken. Dr Taylor confirmed that analysis was due to be undertaken of the results of this survey.

RESOLVED – (1) That progress of the Democratic Engagement Best Value Review be noted.

2. That it be noted that a report including the draft options paper would be submitted to the October meeting of this Committee.
3. That the Communications Manager write to Parish Council Clerks to remind them of the requirement for responses by the end of September.
4. That the Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer and the Communications Manager undertake an analysis of the results of the survey of attainers.

COS.86/03 HOSTEL ACCOMMODATION – EX.167/03

With reference to Minute EX.167/03, the Executive had considered a report by the Head of Environmental Protection Services (EPS.49/03) indicating that the Action Plan within the Homelessness Strategy identified the need to review the type of hostel accommodation and support provided by the City Council. The Executive had noted the report and forwarded it to this Committee as part of the consultation process. The Executive had also agreed that the initial views of this Committee be taken into account as part of the process.

The Head of Environmental Protection Services advised that the Hostels Review was scheduled to start in September and should be completed by the end of 2003. He would continue to submit reports on the Review to this Committee.

In response to a Member's question about budgetary implications of the Review, Mr Speirs stated that it was anticipated that any staffing issues could be resolved within existing resources but that there may be budgetary requirements in relation to maintenance of hostels. This was one of the matters which could be addressed through the development of effective partnership working with other Housing Associations.

In discussing the matter Members commented in particular on the following.

- a) The lack of provision of a 24 hour service to assess homelessness.
 - b) The particular needs, and their implications for the Hostels Review, of the following groups of people:
 - i) Vulnerable 16 – 17 year olds

ii) Individuals with psychological or mental health problems

iii) Priority need groups under Chapter 8 of the revised Code of Guidance including individuals leaving prison.

RESOLVED – (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That the Head of Environmental Protection Services submit further reports to this Committee on progress with the review of hostel accommodation and that this report address the issues raised by Members as outlined above.

COS.87/03 MONITORING OF CONTRACT WITH CARLISLE HOUSING ASSOCIATION – EX.172/03

Councillor Mallinson, having declared a personal interest in this matter, left the meeting during consideration of the item and Councillor Parsons chaired the meeting for this item.

With reference to Minute EX.172/03, the Executive had considered a report from the Head of Environmental Protection Services (EPS.48/03) detailing the outcome of negotiations with Carlisle Housing Association (CHA) to agree a series of Performance Indicators and processes to monitor the contract between the council and Carlisle Housing Association.

The Executive had agreed that a suggested list of indicators, based on indicators produced by the Government for evaluating LSVT undertakings, be forwarded to this Committee to provide a basis for discussion on the suitability of the indicators and to agree a timetable for monitoring reports.

The Head of Environmental Protection Services reported that the indicators were as follows:

A.1 - Overall placing in inspection report

A.6 - Percentage of repairs completed within target

A.9 - Improvement in average re-let time

A.17 Management and supervision costs as percentage of Business Plan

A.19 - Proportion of tenants satisfied with service overall

A.20 - Percentage increase in proportion of tenants satisfied with service overall

C.1 - Percentage of homes provided to decent homes standard

C.5 - Percentage increase in decent homes above a base line

C.8 - Percentage change in tenant satisfaction with general property condition

C.14 - Percentage of proposed investment programme achieved

D.6 - Percentage improvement in tenant satisfaction with the area in which they live

E.6 - Percentage homeless nominations housed by the RSL

E.7 - Time taken to provide accommodation for the homeless

E.8 - Change in length of time taken to provide accommodation for homeless applicants

Additional indicator relating to target response time for correspondence of five working days

Mr Speirs commented on the advantages of using the above Performance Indicators, which were also used by the Housing Corporation, as it would:

- enable comparison for the Housing Associations;
- provide an extra lever if there was concern about the performance of Carlisle Housing Association in that these concerns could be voiced to the Housing Corporation; and
- involve Housing Corporation statistics which are subject to external audit.

He added that he was meeting with the Managing Director of Carlisle Housing Association next week as the first of the formal quarterly meetings to monitor and discuss performance. At the first meeting there would be discussion on suitable targets for each of the indicators. He suggested that six monthly reports be brought to this committee with the first report in six months time to look at the targets and how performance was progressing towards achievement of them.

In response to Members' questions about tenant satisfaction surveys, Mr Speirs advised that these are required by the Housing Corporation on a two or three yearly basis. A Member asked him if he could request that Carlisle Housing Association submit a copy of their satisfaction surveys to this committee before they are issued to tenants. Mr Speirs responded that he could ask Carlisle Housing Association to do this but that they are not under any compulsion to report to this Committee.

In response to a Member's questions about how the regeneration proposals submitted by CHA prior to the transfer would be monitored, the Overview and Scrutiny Manager suggested that when the first six monthly report is produced, the Managing Director of Carlisle Housing Association could be invited to attend the Committee to answer Members' questions. Mr Speirs advised that CHA were currently developing comprehensive area regeneration policies and that these would be the subject of consultation with the City Council.

RESOLVED – (1) That the Performance Indicators outlined above and proposed by Executive be agreed.

(2) That the Head of Environmental Protection Services submit six monthly monitoring reports based on these Performance Indicators and that the first of these reports be submitted to the Committee in six months time.

(3) That the Overview and Scrutiny Manager invite the Managing Director of Carlisle Housing Association to attend a meeting of the committee after the first monitoring report in

order to answer Members' questions.

(4) That the Head of Environmental Protection Services ask Carlisle Housing Association to submit a copy of the tenant satisfaction surveys to this Committee before they are issued to tenants.

COS.88/03 THEATRE ARTS CENTRE REVIEW

With reference to Minute COS.70/03, the Overview and Scrutiny Manager submitted report OS.06/03 on the Committee's review of a potential Theatre/Arts centre.

Mr Mallinson reminded Members of the process which had been adopted in this subject review and the evidence which had been received including verbal evidence from a number of individuals and the Carlisle Lonsdale Arts Centre Trust report and presentation from July 2003.

Mr Mallinson then outlined a draft of the Committee's findings from the evidence received. The City Council would need to be clear about whether development of the theatre/arts centre was a high priority and it was proposed that the matter should be referred to Executive for them to consider taking the matter forward.

The Chairman and Members then thanked Mr Mallinson for the work he had done in drawing together this report from all the evidence gathered. They commented that he had brought together the deliberations well and summed up all the issues fairly.

Members again spoke of making the most of opportunities which presented themselves but also expressed concerns about the matters which had been unresolved in the Lonsdale Arts Centre's feasibility study.

RESOLVED – (1) That paragraph 4(a) – (o) of report OS.06/03 be approved as the Committee's findings from the evidence received.

(2) That as the City Council needs to be clear about whether development of a Theatre/Art Centre is a high priority, the findings of this Committee be referred to the Executive to consider :

- a. How the Council should be involved in taking it forward.
- b. The nature of any financial commitment it would be willing to make.
- c. Then make appropriate recommendations to the City Council and any further comments to this Committee.

(3) That the thanks of the Committee to the Overview and Scrutiny Manager for his work on the Theatre/Art Centre Review be placed on record.

COS.89/03 SUBJECT REVIEW/INQUIRY – POST FOOT AND MOUTH

DISEASE, ENVIRONMENTAL AND HEALTH MATTERS –

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Overview and Scrutiny Manager submitted Report OS.07/03 outlining draft Terms of

Reference and associated matters for the post Food and Mouth Disease Environmental and Health Matters Review/Inquiry.

Mr Mallinson reported on the scope of the Review, stating that it was important that the Committee adheres to the topic as defined i.e. only post Foot and Mouth Disease and only the two aspects of environmental and health matters.

It was proposed that the County Foot and Mouth Disease Inquiry, a comprehensive and independent Inquiry, would be a suitable starting point as it included work on these two areas of concern. The proposed Terms of Reference of the Review/Inquiry could be :

- a. To review the County Foot and Mouth Disease Inquiry findings on environmental and health impacts.
- b. To seek evidence to update the position on both aspects.
- c. To establish what action has been taken in respect of that Inquiry's findings by relevant agencies on these matters.
- d. To make any recommendations consequent upon the evidence received.

Mr Mallinson then outlined a list of potential witnesses and added that this list would be reviewed by the Committee as the Review/Inquiry progressed, as evidence may well suggest additional witnesses. He suggested that a Select Committee style would be appropriate and should be held as special meetings with no other business when taking evidence.

The provisional timetable was outlined which would include special meetings in October and November, and consideration of a draft report in January or February 2004.

Members suggested that in order to work effectively in a Select Committee style they should meet together before the meeting to agree on a structured list of questions to ask witnesses.

A Member proposed that the NFU be invited as a potential witness. After discussion the Overview and Scrutiny Manager advised that he was happy to contact them, but would rather be certain that they had done some work in this area themselves, as they would then have something concrete to offer to the Inquiry. He advised that he would contact the NFU to establish if they had undertaken any work on either of the areas of environmental or health matters. There was also discussion on other witnesses who may be invited and a recognition that as the Review progressed the list of witnesses may be subject to change and addition.

The Chairman proposed that a Select Committee style be adopted and that Members ensure that they are available for the whole day until at least

3.30 pm on the days the special meetings are held. Lunch would be provided at these special meetings. She also suggested that a pre-meeting be scheduled in at 9.30 on each of the days with the proper start of the meeting at 10.30 am. This would allow Members to formulate and finalise questions for witnesses.

RESOLVED – (1) That the Terms of Reference, initial List of Witnesses, Ways of Working and Provisional Timetable as set out in OS.07/03 be approved.

(2) That the Overview and Scrutiny Manager approach the NFU to discuss any work they have done in relation to the specific areas which are the subject of the Review/Inquiry.

(3) That a Select Committee style be adopted when receiving evidence from various witnesses, and that Special Meetings of the Committee be held in October and November with the pre meeting at 9.30 am, a start time for the meeting at 10.30 am, a lunch would be provided and a finishing time of no later than 3.30 pm.

(4) That Members pass any questions to the Overview and Scrutiny Manager in advance of the meeting in order that these could be discussed at a pre-meeting.

COS.90/03 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED - (1) That Special Meetings of the Committee be held on 28 October and 26 November 2003 at 10.30 am (with a pre meeting at 9.30 am) to progress the post Foot and Mouth Disease Environmental Health Matters Review/Inquiry.

(2) That the next ordinary meeting of the Committee which was scheduled to be held on 9 October 2003 at 10.00 am be re-scheduled to be held on Thursday 2 October 2003 at 10.00 am. (Councillor Earp asked that his apologies be recorded).

(The meeting ended at 12.40 pm)