

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)