

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY CHAIRMAN:

CORPORATE RESOURCES

Report of
Chairman:

**COUNCILLOR
J GUEST**

This marks the start of the Committee's first full year and for me, a new Vice-Chairman, Marilyn Bowman. Whilst wishing Judith all the best, I welcome Marilyn's appointment and look forward to a harmonious working relationship over this year.

This year also brings about changes in the budget process and we are seeing a more open approach that should mark improvements and better understanding for Members of this Committee, the Executive and the Treasurer's department. However, I will be the first to admit that Member training in this complex area remains a priority.

SPECIAL MEETING – 7 JUNE 2002

All three Overview and Scrutiny Committees met for a presentation and to discuss the Corporate Plan. This has now been dealt with at a Special Council.

COMMITTEE MEETING – 13 JUNE 2002

This meeting was, as part of their studies, attended by students, accompanied by a lecturer, from "Cumbria Institute of the Arts". The format of the meeting was relaxed to accommodate them.

The two main items of business at that meeting were:

CROS.73/02 CUSTOMER CONTACT BEST VALUE REVIEW

The Committee was, with some reservations, pleased with progress so far. Some improvements have already been implemented and separate

recommendations regarding proposals, according to cost implications, were made to the Executive. A final draft report will be presented to the Committee at its August meeting.

CROS.74/02 MEMBERS' TELEPHONE ALLOWANCES

As to be expected with items that directly affect the pockets of Members, this was the most controversial item on the Agenda. Members were, not surprisingly, unhappy with the proposals put forward and asked for a further report, which included full consultation with Members, to be submitted. The Portfolio Holder may wish to bring any further developments to the attention of the Council, however, in verbal exchanges with him since I was assured that improvements to the proposals have been made.

SPECIAL MEETING – 7 JUNE 2002

As the beginning of the Budget process this was an informal information gathering exercise for the Committee. The Treasurer and the Portfolio Holder were both in attendance.