

## **Report from Overview and Scrutiny**

Lead Members: Councillors B Dixon, Mrs Y R T Clarkson, J Kane, Mrs W Metherell

Since Overview and Scrutiny last reported:

### **1. Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee**

#### **(A) Place Survey**

- The committee decided to set up a Task and Finish Group to look at the Place Survey Results and the role of the council's communication in relation to the Place Survey. The Task and Finish Group to be Councillors G Garrity, Mrs W Metherell, P Whalley, K Hitchen and Mrs Y Clarkson.

#### **(B) Overview and Scrutiny Terms of Reference**

- The Committee agreed that following all comments on the four options for changing Overview and Scrutiny that Option 3 – Committees based on Task and Finish Groups should be pursued
- The Committee felt that Overview and Scrutiny produced its best results through Task and Finish groups and this option increased these groups and would help to improve the council
- A number of concerns regarding this option though would need to be resolved. These included the right level of Officer support; how Scrutiny Leads and Task and Finish Groups would be appointed and whether all non Executive members would be involved
- This decision would not come to full council until the Independent Remuneration Panel had considered the effect of these changes
- In the meantime a workshop would be arranged for all Members of the Council on these changes.

#### **(C) Commitments Survey**

- The results of the recent Customer Commitments Survey exercise had shown a high level of satisfaction with the council's customer commitments and how the council's performance on these
- These were at odds with the results from the Place Survey and as they were both surveys of perception on the council these results should be considered by the Place Survey Task and Finish group.

### **2. Children, Young People and Healthy Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

This Committee did not meet since the last report to council was written although it is intended to hold a special meeting on the progress at West Cumberland Hospital.

### **3. Economic Development and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

This Committee was due to meet after this report was written.

### **4. Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

#### **Whitehaven Multi Storey Car Park**

- Celia McKenzie, Chief Executive at the Harbour Commissioners, explained a number of concerns as to ability of the commissioners to repair and or repair the lift, toilets and signage at the car park

#### **Departmental Presentation**

- The Open Spaces Manager highlighted a number of successes last year. These were:
  - Secured £24k funding for four rapid deployment CCTV cameras.
  - Secured £35k for works in Egremont Castle Grounds.
  - Achieving a number of ASPE (Association of Public Service Excellence) awards, four National Green Flag Awards, three National Green Heritage Awards, a National RHS Neighbourhood Award and a West Cumbria Crime, Disorder and Reduction Partnership Award.
  - Secured Big Lottery funding to support five community play projects and Play-builder funding to support six further community play projects.
- The Waste Services Manager highlighted a number of successes last year. These were:
  - Appointments system for bulky collections introduced In September 2008 with 4355 requests for the service so far
  - Alternate week collections extended to 650 properties in Moor Row and St Bees
  - Limited bag collections introduces in St Bees, Pica, Keekle and Padstow and Moor Row
  - Plastic and Cardboard recycling service introduced in September 2008 with almost 12,000 homes having access to the service
  - Area based Cleansing system introduced in April 2009
- Of the challenges that faced the services in the next year the committee agreed that Task and Finish groups should be set up to look at the areas of Grass Cutting; Environmental, Crime Education & Awareness and Recycling Participation Rates
- Grass Cutting should be the first priority with the Task and Finish Group to consist of Councillors Mrs W Metherell, Mrs E Eastwood, Mrs M Woodburn, P Watson, F Heathcote and if possible Community representatives.

#### **Liveability Task and Finish Group**

- The Liveability Task and Finish Group continues to meet and is now close to reporting to the Safer and Stronger Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It will need one more meeting to draw up its recommendations.

## **5. Cumbria Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

- Councillors Brian Dixon and Keith Hitchen attended the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting in Barrow
- Councillor Peter Farmer, Carlisle City Council was elected Chair of the Committee with Keith Hitchen as Vice Chair
- A presentation on the results of the Place Survey across Cumbria showed how different areas of the county compared for public satisfaction with services and the wider themes it highlighted for local authorities, including the clear link emerging between higher levels of satisfaction and communication and information to the public
- The three key services that had the most effect on the satisfaction with council services indicator were street cleaning, refuse and bus services
- A task and finish group was established to undertake a short piece of scrutiny work to examine how levels of public satisfaction with local authority services may be raised generally and specifically in areas where levels are comparatively lower
- The Task and Finish Group will comprise of five members with Keith Hitchen being involved from this council
- The Committee will look at the Performance of the Local Area Agreement and the Cumbria Strategic Partnership's Community Strategy to gain a picture of how the county is performing against National, Local and 'Stretch' (or 'Legacy') target.