

## **WEST CUMBRIA DELIVERY TEAM**

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER:** Cllr Mike Ashbrook

**LEAD OFFICER:** Michael Tichford

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Michael Tichford

**Summary:** Copeland, and West Cumbria, has significant current and future regeneration challenges but limited resources to deliver projects. This report recommends a way forward through the formation of a single delivery team for West Cumbria.

**Recommendation:** That the Executive approve the proposals within the paper: “West Cumbria Delivery Team – creating a single regeneration delivery organisation for West Cumbria” in principle, subject to:

- further detail being brought back to the Executive for its agreement and
- inclusion of a commitment to a dedicated board as part of the governance of the Team.

**Impact on delivering the Corporate Plan:** The proposal could assist in achieving a number of corporate regeneration objectives.

**Impact on other statutory objectives (e.g. crime & disorder, LA21):** The projects to be delivered through the proposed team impact on a number of statutory objectives, including those concerned with community safety, housing, and the environment. More generally it will assist in meeting the requirement to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the community.

**Financial and human resource implications:** The proposal at this stage does not have financial implications. The financial implications if the proposal is implemented are not quantifiable at present. However, it is considered that the implications will be less than if the Council adopted an approach of delivering of projects through its own resources and processes.

**Project & Risk Management:** In respect of project delivery the work of the proposed team would be subject to the procedures of West Lakes Renaissance, as agreed by the partners. Staff employed by the partner agencies would remain their responsibility but work to an agreed programme. Project delivery requirements would be specified in an SLA between the sponsoring partner and WLR. It is not considered likely that a separate governance or board arrangement will be required.

### **Key Decision Status**

- **Financial:** N/A

- **Ward:** N/A

**Other Ward Implications:** N/A

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 At a meeting called by Copeland in April 2005 Allerdale and Copeland Borough Councils (ABC and CBC), West Lakes Renaissance (WLR) and the North West Development Agency (NWDA) discussed the capacity of partners to deliver regeneration projects 'on the ground' in West Cumbria. It was agreed that the capacity to deliver against existing, but more markedly against future, programmes was inadequate. This had been known by practitioners for some time but had not been addressed formally.
- 1.2 In 2005 the Executive agreed to the principle of a joint regeneration delivery team for West Cumbria.
- 1.3 The product of the last meeting of the partners in August was a paper produced by the Head of Regeneration at Allerdale Borough Council, on behalf of the partners (attached to this report as Appendix 1).
- 1.4 The paper proposes a way forward in partnership to deliver regeneration projects across West Cumbria. Partners to the draft agreement agreed as a first action to take the proposal back to their respective organisations to secure agreement from the relevant committees and boards and that is the purpose of this report.

## **2. DISCUSSION**

- 2.1 I have been of the view since joining the Council in January 2005 that the number of regeneration projects to be delivered in Copeland exceed the capacity, and in some areas the expertise, of the organisation. The number of staff directly involved within Regeneration (the Community Renewal and Economic Development Teams) has doubled from three to six through restructuring; however, developing regeneration strategies and projects is only part of the role of both teams. Regeneration demands also bring resource implications for the areas of town planning policy, development and building control, housing, legal, finance, project management, procurement, community development and corporate management.
- 2.2 The development of a partnership in West Cumbria focusing on the delivery of regeneration projects offers a real opportunity to ensure that ambitious plans are turned into reality.
- 2.3 The attached document details the rationale for the West Cumbria Deliver Team and proposes a way forward. There are still issues to be resolved, such as whether any additional governance arrangements are necessary and the location of the core team but the proposal presents a sound foundation on which to further develop the proposal.
- 2.4 Part of the WCDT will be the Whitehaven Regeneration Programme Delivery Team (WRPDT). The funding for this team, its role and contractual arrangements, are currently the subject of negotiations with WLR. However, the WRPDT will have a key role in work that falls outside of the remit of the WCDT, in developing project ideas as well as their delivery.
- 2.5 It should be noted that the WCDT is not intended to address the outstanding issue of a lack of a clear direction and vision for West Cumbria and the lack of strategic alignment between partners. The West Cumbria Master plan exercise is addressing this and will likely recommend how this might best be tackled.

### **2.6 Consultation Response**

- 2.7 Feedback from consultation has highlighted concern that with potential limited resources within the WCDT prioritisation could be a contentious issue. It is also considered that partners should have oversight of the work of the Team. It is to be proposed therefore that a change is recommended to the partners that the proposal is amended to specifically refer to the creation of a separate member / officer board to have oversight of the work of the WCDT.
- 2.8 It has also been requested that in the development of the team the sustainability and future support for externally funded posts, such as those for the Market Town Initiatives, are considered.

### **3 CONCLUSIONS**

- 3.1 I strongly support the proposal for the WCDT as being, in the light of current constraints and demands on internal resources, the most effective means to secure delivery of regeneration projects in Copeland in the short to medium term.

#### **List of Appendices**

Appendix A – West Cumbria Delivery Team

**List of Background Documents:** None

**List of Consultees:** Leader of the Council  
'Regeneration' Portfolio Holders  
Corporate Team,