

Executive Report to Full Council – 12 December 2006

The report follows the same format of replicating and reporting against the priority themes identified in the Councils Corporate plan.

This highlights to Members the progress we are making towards achieving our strategic objectives.

A Quality Council Delivering Quality Services

Performance – Deputy Leader

Each quarter the Council's performance against targets in the Corporate Plan is reported to Executive. The good news is that looking at our performance at the end of the financial year (2005/06), and comparing this to other District Councils, 31% of our PIs were in the top 25% of all English districts. Our performance compared to the previous year has also improved in 52% of indicators.

This good news is reflected in the second quarter PI results for 2006/7 (end of September 2006), where 44% were in the top quartile and 36% had improved over the previous year. The areas of greatest improvement include Planning and Culture

North West Employees Organisation (NWEO) Member Development – Resources & Local Democracy

The Member Training and Development Panel and Tim Capper attended the NWEO Member Development Accreditation Charter event at Salford Quays on 17th November. The Councils Accreditation Award was presented to the Chairman Cllr Margaret Barnes by Rt Hon Beverley Hughes MP. This award was achieved through the hard work and commitment of Members, and we now need to build on this success and continue to ensure we go from strength to strength.

Parish Charter for Copeland – Resources & Local Democracy

Following approval by the Executive of the draft Parish Charter for Copeland it is now out for consultation and has been circulated to all Town and Parish Councils and Parish Meetings. There follows a two month consultation period which ends early January, during which time comments can be made individually or at a consultation event being held in Drigg on the 7th December.

The National Quality Parish scheme recommends the agreements of Charters between principal authorities and local councils in order to promote partnership working and enhanced opportunities for citizen engagement.

Kerbside Recycling Facilities – Environmental & Cultural Services

Since mid September the kerbside recycling scheme has been run by the Council. As a result of the poor performance of the previous supplier the waste team have been out in a number of areas monitoring levels of participation. In areas where participation is low leaflets have been distributed further advertising the services and encouraging people to recycle and request a box. This has led to increased interest in the service and over 200 requests for boxes are being dealt with.

Shortly new leaflets and calendars and information to all the 26-000 properties served by the box collection will be delivered. The team have re-routed the service to create a more efficient service and a balanced workload for the crews. More than 200 new properties will be provided with the service when the new schedules start in December. The intention is for the kerbside collections to continue over both the Xmas and New Year period.

The North of England Business Excellence Awards 2006 – Environmental & Cultural Services

Members will be pleased to learn that the Councils open spaces section was once again selected as one of the finalists to attend the North of England Business Excellence Awards 2006. As one of only 17 finalist award winners this is a real success for the Council and the area. The award is presented to those organisations from both the private and public sectors that demonstrate business excellence through a detailed assessment of the organisation against the European Quality Foundation Model.

Environmental Health – Health & Diversity

The Council has been successful (1 of 50 local authorities) in an application to the Foods Standards Agency for extensive no cost food safety resources linked with the science curriculum for junior school children. The food safety team will be working initially with the Millom school co-ordinator to loan resources or work with teachers and after school clubs to deliver the essential message of food safety in an interesting and useful way.

It is then anticipated the scheme can then be made available to other schools in Copeland.

Safer Food Better Business – Health & Diversity

The funding from the Food Standards Agency which has been used to provide free workshops and one to one coaching to locally based food businesses to develop food safety management systems is coming to an end. There has been an exceptional response from Copeland's food businesses and to date 134 local businesses throughout Copeland have benefited from the scheme.

Smoke Free Legislation – Health & Diversity

The 1 July 2007 has now been set as the date for the introduction of smoke free legislation for workplaces and public places. Environmental Health staff are planning for the introduction and are awaiting final details from the Department of Health of funding that will be made available for this purpose. The planning includes identifying those activities within Copeland that may be affected by the detail of the legislation, for example planning (planning applications for smoking shelters) licensing (compliance licensing conditions) providing information to business on the requirements of the legislation and enforcing compliance.

A Well Managed Council Striving for Excellence

Procurement – Resources & Local Democracy

Executive approval was given in November for progress towards establishing a shared procurement service of the seven Cumbrian authorities. One District has confirmed that it is not engaging in the shared service and Executive approval is conditional on all the remaining authorities agreeing to join, this will be confirmed in December. A Cumbria Procurement Board has been established to move the project forward, consider the make up of a shared support core unit and to establish use of the IDeA market place until April next year to prove the level of savings that may be made. Further reports will be made should the Council progress with further stages.

Councillor Role Descriptions – Resources & Local Democracy

The Member Training and Development Panel have recently commissioned NWE0 to assist the Council in drawing up a comprehensive set of role descriptions for Councillors. It is intended that this project will be completed in time for approval at the February Full Council. If agreed they will then be included in induction packs for all re-elected and new Members following the elections in May.

NWE0 will be visiting the Council in January to conduct interviews with a cross section of Councillors as part of the project. Arrangements for this visit will be made available shortly.

Local Government White Paper – Resources & Local Democracy

A presentation will be given on the implications of the White Paper for Copeland. There are many positives within the paper and some others that could affect the future of Copeland permanently, but it is, as we always do, essential that we make decisions that ensure the best for the people of Copeland.

Quality of Life

Cumbria Housing Strategy – Housing & Community Safety

The Cumbria Housing Strategy was launched last month and the Housing Market Assessments will be brought to Executive in February as part of the consultation process. These assessments will give a “flavour” of the Borough, for example house prices in a particular area, housing need, affordability, employment trends etc....

Choice Based Lettings – Housing & Community Safety

Work is progressing on Choice Based Lettings; we need to have a scheme in place by 2010. We are working in partnership with Copeland Homes and other Registered Social Landlords to develop a scheme. Progress reports will be made to the OSC Social on a regular basis.

Homelessness – Housing & Community Safety

Copeland Homes have offered the Council another property which will take our total to seven units of temporary accommodation. The increase in temporary accommodation will reduce the need for B & B.

Safer, Cleaner, Greener – Environmental & Cultural Services / Leader

Four of the five projects in the South Whitehaven area managed by Council are well underway. The area now has its own mechanical sweeper as well as a dedicated environmental cleaning team to respond to problems such as litter and fly tipping and to tackle environmental clean ups. A newly appointed waste awareness officer will be working with schools, community and youth groups to encourage waste reduction, recycling and composting.

Violent Crime – Housing & Community Safety

The Violent Crime Task Group will be launching the 'Lock Em Inn' initiative on 30/11/06 followed by a series of visits, for at least four hours per visit, to high profile stores throughout West Cumbria. We are now well under way with dates, times and venues and a schedule of such events will be available in the near future.

A street drinking ban has been approved for Frizington and a decision is pending for Hensingham.

Anti-Social Behaviour Injunction- Health & Diversity

On 17th November at Whitehaven County Court an Anti Social Behaviour Injunction was granted to Copeland Homes against the tenant at 25 Tennyson Drive, Egremont, it was in respect of noise issues. The Council's environmental health section was involved in the noise problems as a result of having received complaints and an officer of the section provided evidence to support the application.

This is further example of effective partnership working.

Making Space for Water – Environmental & Cultural Services

DEFRA are presently reviewing the governance arrangements for matters relating to flooding and coastal defence. They are giving consideration to the future role of the Environment Agency (EA) and the possibility of powers and responsibility from Local Authorities. This could include the EA taking over the LA's role in protecting the coast from erosion and in the production of shoreline management plans.

We will be kept informed of developments and the outcome of this review through our membership of the North West Coastal Group.

Drugs and Alcohol – Housing & Community Safety

Leaflets recently released giving guidance from NHS on – 'How much alcohol is too much'. These booklets explains how alcohol affects the body now and later in life; tips on personal safety; binge drinking and safe drinking limits and what to do if someone is in trouble after drinking too much.

The Police have recently set their priorities for the next 6 months and they have changed their priority from Class A drugs to all drugs, which will make an impact on lower classes of drugs locally.

Arts Development – Environment & Cultural Services

Arts development staff has been working with the North West Copeland Youth Alliance to develop a video project alongside other more traditional arts activities. This type of project will be attractive to young people that have, to date, not been interested in arts; it also provides an opportunity for skills development.

In October arts staff met with other key agencies in the County to develop an Audience Alliance. By working with other partners in similar environments all

organisations will benefit from initiatives such as cross facility marketing. This will increase the range of activities available to Copeland residents and also make services more accessible through clearer information.

Sports Development – Environment & Cultural Services

Sports and Arts development staff have been working with the School Sports co-ordinators in Copeland to provide an exciting Healthy Lifestyles Card for selected school children in Copeland. This will provide a range of incentives for young people to both eat healthy food and participate in physical activity in their own time.

Plans are underway, linked to the Healthy Lifestyles Card, to establish a community dance and physical theatre group in Millom. This is also being supported by the Dance Development officer that Copeland shares with Allerdale.

Officers have been working with the Hate Crime officer for West Cumbria following on from a previous successful initiative at Ehenside School. This new initiative will tackle race issues in local communities, using sport as the tool to help address issues through young people in secondary schools.

Creating and Sustaining a Healthy Local Economy

West Cumbria Masterplan – Leader

The plan is now on the website www.cumbriavision/westcumbria.co.uk for consultation. It is progressing extremely well and will be ready to go to Government in the New Year. After the very positive visit from the Prime Minister to Sellafield we now have the opportunity to take the plan direct to No 10. This demonstrates an understanding in Government about how important this document is to the future of Copeland. There will be many difficult decisions ahead, especially when we get to the spatial part of the planning, which will indicate what goes where but we need to be prepared to make these if they are in the best interest of Copeland's economy.

Parton / Lillyhall Bypass – Economic Infrastructure and Coalfields

The recent Parton/Lillyhall presentation to the liaison committee was cancelled but will take place early in the New Year, but the scheme is very much on track for a 2007 start.

Cycle Tourism - Deputy Leader

We are currently working with partners to review the extension of the Hadrian's Wall Cycleway to Sellafield; this piece of work is being led by The Tourism & Conservation Partnership. A meeting with stakeholders regarding the possibility of the project and funding of the route which would also potentially benefit BNG employees travelling to/from work has been held.

In addition to this piece of work an audit for development of cycle tourism in the Western Lake District Area is currently taking place. This audit will help with map developments and review gaps in support to eventually develop a family of maps cascading from the Cumbria Cycling map.

Regeneration North East Copeland – Business Growth

The Partnership has now identified a work programme that will be the focus of the Partnership activity for the short to medium term.

Projects that will be developed within this financial year are the proposals to enhance the gateway entrance into the Leconfield Industrial Estate; this is part of a wider investment package to enhance the Industrial Estate to support economic growth. West Lakes Renaissance is leading on the programme

although additional resources have been identified by the partnership to enhance the entrance. A report was presented to the Executive on the 21 November detailing the scheme.

A Building Improvement Scheme is being developed in association with West Lakes Renaissance and Copeland Borough Council to provide assistance to buildings within the Partnership area to improve the built environment; this will roll on from the current Townscape Heritage Initiative Programme which is due to be completed in March 2007. A detailed report is expected to be presented to the December Executive outlining the scheme in detail.

Evolution – Business Growth

The section had their 100th enquiry during October. Plans for the future involve the purchase of a business database to be incorporated within the system. This will enable the team to communicate more effectively with local businesses. Further meetings are to be arranged with commercial agents, to promote use of the system, in the next few months.

RAF Museum Millom - Deputy Leader

Millom Market Town Manager has approached the Economic & Tourism Development Section to provide support to look at the future of the RAF Museum at Millom. They are currently looking at new premises as they are quickly outgrowing their existing site. A potential opportunity has arisen on the former Doodles Factory Site at Millom. Discussions are taking place re the potential of this site for such a use.

The next stage is to conduct a feasibility brief for consultants to look at the potential for the museum and the services. It will need to show that it will become a sustainable attraction. This project is in the early stages.

Employment Sites Review – Business Growth

In addition to planned improvements at Leconfield Industrial Estate, Cleator Moor, the Council has been asked to give their support to further development at Bridge End, Egremont. This support may involve the Council acquiring land on behalf of the project funders, to enable the development to proceed. The intention of the project is to provide the right quality of land and premises, to attract businesses looking to relocate to Copeland

Millom Tourism Development Officer – Deputy Leader

Since July 2005 a group of participants have been working with writer Antoinette Fawcett and photographer Rob Fraser on a participatory project based on the work of Norman Nicholson. On Jan 5th 2007 there will be a celebratory launch event, to be held in St. Georges Church, Millom. Following this, the exhibition will become a touring display on the Cumbria County Library bus, and will travel to a variety of events in Cumbria and the North West during summer 2007. One of the aims of this will be to promote the project and Norman Nicholson's Millom to new audiences, many of whom will be unfamiliar both with West Cumbria as a tourism destination, and with the work of Millom's most famous son.

Graduate Placement Programme – Business Growth

This programme aims to support 30 of Copeland businesses next year by part funding the wages of 20 graduates. St Martins College is working with the Council on this project and further meetings have been held with them to agree a timetable for marketing the initiative in January 2007.

NDA Industry Day – Leader

The Council attended the NDA industry day, where companies interested in becoming the Parent Body Organisation (Tier I contractor) for Sellafield spent two days gathering information. Copeland's MP Jamie Reed, Sellafield Trade Unions and the Leader gave presentations on the community perspective and expectations from the preferred bidders, which included the European Headquarters located here in Copeland, commitment to the West Cumbria Masterplan, Corporate Leverage etc...

The NDA emphasised throughout the two days the importance of the community and the workforce and that the successful bidder would have to work hard to secure the continued confidence of both. Socio economic issues were given equal weighting alongside safety, security and environmental protection which is extremely pleasing to hear. The two days are the start of the process which will conclude summer 2008, the community involvement throughout this time is imperative and all that was heard gave the assurance that this was a message heard and understood by the NDA

It was also confirmed by Mike Parker, Chief Executive of BNG that BNG would not be putting in a bid to run the Sellafield site, and that in reality once the contract was awarded BNG would be no more. This will not affect 99% of the workforce who are within the Sellafield Licence Company and will remain but it will affect the top tier who we have worked alongside over a long period of time.

Market Town Initiative – Business Growth

- Network Centre – The construction process is now nearly completed and handover is imminent. The project is now contracting with users of which the most notable one is PHX Training, who are based in Barrow and will be moving to Millom to provide a range of courses in the area, allowing local people to access its courses in Millom for the first time.
- BBC Live Broadcasting – The MTI is now working with the BBC to stage a live broadcast from Millom on the 15th December. The broadcast will include good news stories of what is happening locally.
- Millom Palladium – The Partnership is on the verge of taking ownership of this building as part of its regeneration. They will be looking for 1.8 million to regenerate the building and once completed will be a major asset for the local partnership.
- Haverigg Café – Millom Town Council is considering ceding Haverigg Beach Café to the partnership. The café is not, at the moment, a major income generator but it is a vital gold nugget towards setting the partnership on the road to becoming an asset owning development trust.
- Haverigg Nursery – This project is seeking to build a new nursery with the Haverigg School. The partnership has so far secured 14K to develop a business plan and appoint a funding consultant. The building of the nursery will require around 0.8 million and the partnership is also negotiating with CCC with regards to bankrolling the project.

Egremont Market Town Initiative – Business Growth

- Building Renovation Grants – The first building to be brought back into use through the grant scheme opens very shortly. 50 South Street has been out of use and increasingly derelict for the past decade but has now been restored to a very high standard and should be used as an example to other buildings in the town. The business occupying the building will employ 4 full time staff.

There are several other businesses wanting to take advantage of this grant scheme so the partnership has submitted an application to West Lakes Renaissance to extend the scheme and secure further funding.

- Fair-trade Town – Egremont recently received its Fair-trade status. The Town now hosts successful farmers and craft market every third Friday of the month, this supports the Fair-trade Town Campaign and will fund the publication in February of a Fair-trade directory which will promote the town as a place to shop locally, ethically with sustainability.

- Arts Council – A grant from Arts Council England has been received to implement a series of projects under the Creative Egremont banner, in partnership with Grizedale Arts. In the New Year there will be a community radio programme which will work across generations to produce programmes to be broadcast over a number of weekends. The partnership will also shortly launch a design competition for architect's proposals for a demountable pavilion for the Castle, to allow performances and events to be held regardless of the weather.
- Building re-use – Age Concern North West have acquired a prominent empty property on the Main Street and are working with many partners to provide a multifunctional facility for the community. A lottery bid is currently being prepared to secure further funding to convert the facility and provide management resources for the facility.

EXECUTIVE DECISIONS RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

Revised Sanctions Policy

Date of Decision: 24 October 2006

Decision Reference: EXE/06/00108

Context:

Sets out a revised prosecution policy for use in connection with Council Tax and Benefit fraud.

Decision

That the revised prosecution policy be recommended to Council for approval

Provision of Amenities on Highways

Date of Decision: 21 November 2006

Decision Reference: EXE/06/0113

Context:

The report seeks approval to a policy being adopted which will regulate how the Council deals with applications for permissions under the Highways Act 1980 to execute works or use objects on the highway

Decision

That subject to a) the restriction of activities to be between 9.00am and 10.00pm; and

b) the list of consultees be amended to include only the Cumbria Constabulary in addition to those required by statute;

Council be recommended that (1) the policy be approved;

(2) applications be determined by a Licensing Sub-Committee or the Head of Legal and Democratic Services;

(3) future amendments to the policy be dealt with by the Taxi and General Licensing Panel; and

(4) a monitoring report be submitted in 6 months.

Subject: South Whitehaven Neighbourhood Management

Date of Decision: 21 November 2006

Decision Reference: EXE/06/0121

Context:

To present to members the agreed Neighbourhood Management Governance Board and seek agreement for delegated authority to the Board for management of the programme

Decision

That

- 1. the Governance Structure as agreed by partners be approved;**
- 2. the delegated member representation on the Board as detailed in the report be approved; and**
- 3. Council be recommended that the Environmental and Cultural Services Portfolio Holder in the capacity of Chair of the South Whitehaven Neighbourhood Management Board be delegated authority for management responsibility of the programme (including financial profiling of the Delivery plan) to ensure delivery is achieved.**