

Executive Report

HOUSING & COMMUNITY SAFETY PORTFOLIO

COUNCILLOR GEORGE CLEMENTS – PORTFOLIO HOLDER

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1. KEY ISSUES – PROGRESS REPORT

1.1 Community Safety

Violent Crime: Recent test purchasing visits in Whitehaven have resulted in no under age sales of alcohol. Trading Standards with their partners have done a lot of work in the West on this issue and hopefully we will continue to get the same result on future visits.

The launch for 'Carrying the Can' took place on the 1st December; the initiative is aimed at 13 to 15 year olds and is delivered through our secondary schools. The DVD shows young people the implications for binge drinking.

A multi agency initiative to design and produce posters reminding drinkers that there is zero tolerance county wide towards alcohol related violence within our health centres, doctors surgeries and hospital departments. These posters will be distributed to the pubs and clubs in West Cumbria at the same time.

Anti Social Behaviour: Copeland has a growing problem with criminal damage. We are obtaining data on all incidents of criminal damage and will work with stakeholders and communities to develop an action plan and make an attempt to reduce these incidents.

A West Cumbria Intervention Panel is being established and is developing a process that is to be adopted by local authorities, housing associations and the police for when matters arise out of anti social behaviour; there will be a consistent and comprehensive process to follow.

Drugs and Alcohol: A group are looking specifically at discarded needles across West Cumbria and locations in Copeland are being identified so that we can develop a multi agency action plan to resolve the problem. Posters and leaflets are being developed to give information to the public to explain what they should do should they find a discarded needle.

1.2 Homelessness

The number of applications continues to rise throughout Cumbria, although the numbers across the rest of the North West are now seeing a slow decrease. The temporary accommodation we have is full and we continue to use bed and breakfast.

Homelessness, which has never been a significant issue in the North West, is now rising up the regional agenda and the North West Regional Housing Board are now drawing up a Regional Homeless Strategy. Officers have already met with Government Office North West to outline the difficulties faced in Copeland compared to other parts of the region. The emphasis of the strategy will be to focus on where the Board can make a difference: -

- Where housing providers or practitioners can adjust their policies to better address homelessness, and
- By highlighting examples of good practice which others might follow

This strategy will compliment the current Cumbria wide homelessness strategy.

1.3 Approved Development Programme

The Housing Corporation have received bids from Carr-Gomm, Two Castles and Impact housing for schemes in Copeland. One bid is for shared ownership housing in Moresby (six 2 bed roomed properties), one is to improve a current property by adding bathrooms and one is for a mixture of properties for rent/shared ownership in Egremont. The Housing Corporation will let us know in late December/early January which bids have been successful.

1.4 Trusteel

Consultants have been appointed and will work with members of the working party that includes the owners of Trusteel properties to appoint a contractor to carry out the works. A timetable will be produced over the coming months, which will give residents a clear indication of when works to their properties will commence. It is anticipated that the first phase will start in early spring 2006.

1.5 Housing Market Renewal Prospectus

The Housing Market Renewal Prospectus has been submitted to the Regional Housing Board and a decision is awaited. The Copeland areas highlighted for intervention in the first two years are Greenbank, Woodhouse and the Town Centre. Submissions made for Mirehouse were not programmed in the first two years, as statistically the area is not amongst the worst in Furness and West Cumbria. Specific mention is given to Cleator Moor, Egremont, Frizington, Distington and Millom as areas to be progressed through the programme in the medium term of

two years onward. The programme will include some demolitions, renovations and new build. The sites identified are those owned by Copeland Homes and the Council will be working closely with them to deliver the programme and, should the bid be successful, begin developing the programme for year 3 on.

1.6 Potential Policing Boundary Changes

Cumbria Constabulary is currently developing their proposals in response to the Government's presentation of two options for the future structure of policing in the area. The options are for Cumbria to join with Lancashire or Cumbria to join with Lancashire and Merseyside. The option of Cumbria remaining by itself is not available. Both options available meet the Government's criteria for new forces including importantly having a force of at least 4,000 police officers.

The decision on which option to support will be going to Government in December with a response expected late in the month.

2. **EXECUTIVE DECISIONS RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL**

None

3. **EXECUTIVE DECISIONS REPORTED FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

Subject: Housing Market Renewal

Date of Decision: 18 October 2005

Decision Reference: EXE/05/0082

Context: To consider the draft Housing Market Renewal and its implications.

Prior to consideration of this item it was noted that the draft Housing Market Renewal (HMR) Prospectus had only been received and had not been circulated to Members therefore this would not be considered.

Members expressed concern that they had not been able to consider the prospectus and were assured that a detailed plan would be brought back to the Executive for consideration.

Decision

That

1. **the Chief Executive and Head of Regeneration are delegated to make a decision as to whether to approve the final HMR Prospectus in consultation with the portfolio holder for Housing and Community Safety.**
2. **the proposal for a joint delivery team for HMR and Regeneration be approved in principle as a basis for developing detailed proposals**