

WEST CUMBRIA PARTNERSHIP

**Notes of the meeting of the Social Well-being Review Group held on 29th April 2005
hosted by West Cumbria Primary Care Trust at the Town Hall, Oxford Street,
Workington**

Community representatives present

Peter Johnstone (*Older People*), Willie Slavin (*Families*), Cllr Phil Tibble - Chair (*Allerdale Borough Council*), Roland Woodward (*West Cumbria Primary Care Trust*)

Public services representatives present

Christine Clark (*Teenage Pregnancy Co-ordinator*), Valerie Hallard (*Learning & Skills Council*), Christine Harrison (*West Cumbria Primary Care Trust*), John Head (*Cumbria Chamber of Commerce*), Jan Naylor (*Cumbria Children's Fund*).
Michael Priestley (*Connexions*) was present for Agenda Item 5 only.

Advisers present

Michael Heaslip (*West Cumbria Partnership Co-ordinator*), Clare Killeen (*West Cumbria Partnership Support Officer*), Jane Muller (*Lead Officer to the Group*)

Apologies received from community representatives

Cllr Willis Metherall (*Copeland Borough Council*), Chris Shaw (*Cumbria Association of Local Councils*),

Apologies received from public services representatives

Janet Connolly (*Allerdale Borough Council*), Anne Phillips (*Cumbria County Council - Social Services*)

1. Introduction

The Chair opened the meeting by thanking the Primary Care Trust for their hospitality in hosting the meeting.

The group were also informed that Willie Slavin had recently been elected Chair of the Partnership's Strategic Co-ordination Group.

2. Announcements/Correspondence

There were no announcements or correspondence to report.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 1st April 2005 were **agreed** as a correct record.

Matters Arising

Nominations for Chair – the group were informed that no suggestions or nominations had been received since the last meeting, however, it was reported that the Chair and Vice Chair of Strategic Co-ordination Group were to give this issue

some priority. Councillor Tibble stated that he was happy to continue chairing meetings until the matter was resolved.

Number of targets for which the group is responsible – the group noted that Partnership policy and performance officers would be giving this issue further consideration at their meeting in early May.

Letter to Teenage Pregnancy Partnership – the group considered a draft letter, prepared by the Lead Officer to the Group, to the Teenage Pregnancy Partnership regarding the gap in provision in West Cumbria identified by the group at the last meeting. The group **approved** the letter.

Sub Regional Spatial Strategy – the group noted that it had been agreed, following discussion at the Strategic Co-ordination Group meeting on 12th April, that officers from Cumbria CC will meet with officers from Allerdale BC and Copeland BC to resolve the issues raised.

4. Update on Target Delivery Plans

The group noted reports summarising the Traffic Light Assessments of the Target Delivery Plans for Life Expectancy, Mortality Rates and Teenage Conceptions agreed at the last meeting of the group. These were accompanied by a report detailing the overall assessment of Health.

The group then considered a Target Delivery Plan in respect of worklessness which was tabled by the Lead Officer to the Group. This highlighted an issue to be addressed in relation to equality and diversity. The intention was to address this through the recently formed West Cumbria Equality and Diversity group. An intention to incorporate information into the Plan from the study of baselines and indicators currently being carried out by the Centre for Regional Economic Development (CRED) for the Partnership when complete was also reported.

AGREED: an AMBER/GREEN Traffic Light Assessment of the Target Delivery Plan on worklessness.

The Lead Officer to the Group tabled a Target Delivery Plan in respect of Education. The plan contained county-level information only, although locality-level information had been obtained by CRED for the study outlined above. The group felt that this indicated that the Local Education Authority (LEA) was not using locality-level data to inform their education plans. Taking this into account, the group considered it inappropriate for the Government to sign-off the LEA's education plan as they had done. The group were informed that the Target Delivery Plan had only been submitted by the LEA as a result of significant political and senior management, pressure.

AGREED: a RED Traffic Light Assessment of the Target Delivery Plan on Education – the Plan contained insufficient information and no information at locality-level.

5. Education – 14-19 Action Plan Annual Progress Report

Michael Priestley, Connexions Cumbria's West Cumbria Area Manager, gave a presentation focussing on the activities of Connexions in relation to school leavers. He explained that the Connexions West Cumbria area did not cover Millom (covered by Barrow) and Wigton (covered by Carlisle). Connexions set these boundaries as they considered that young people in Millom would benefit from the continuity of being served by Connexions in Barrow as it is generally Barrow that young people from Millom look to for employment opportunities. The same considerations had been taken into account in relation to Wigton and Carlisle. Michael acknowledged that these boundaries led to some problems as they were different to those used by many other agencies and stated that he would be happy to look at these issues again. Michael informed the group that much of Connexions' activities focussed on those young people not in employment, education or training as these young people required intensive support. He also highlighted that the Government has recognised the value of vocational strands, demonstrated by the focus on training as well as education.

Michael expressed concern at the number of young people entering employment without any formal training. This reason for this was often that young people chose employment above training as wages often amounted to more than the training allowance they would receive if engaged in formal training. This decision often had negative longer-term consequences for the young people with no formal training. In 2004, there had been an increase in the percentage of school leavers in education. Michael suggested that the reasons behind this increase included the Aim Higher initiative and the Education Maintenance Allowance.

Government have set a target of increasing successful completion of apprenticeships by 75% by 2008. Michael commented that there was a decent chance of making good progress towards this target in West Cumbria; however, this is largely dependent on local employers recruiting apprentices. He suggested that the development and adoption of targets relating to the employment of local young people in regeneration-related contracts would be helpful in working towards an increase in apprenticeships in West Cumbria.

Michael assured the group that Connexions does recognise the importance of the growth of the voluntary sector and have a role to play in pulling organisations and activities together at local level.

Valerie Hallard presented a one-page summary of an update in respect of the West Cumbria Area Wide Inspection Action Plan and 14-19 Pathfinder. This provided updates on the key activities being undertaken in the three strands of Strategic Collaboration and Curriculum Planning, Quality Improvement, and Young People's Choices. The full Annual Progress Report, January 2005, had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

6. Group Workplan

An updated workplan for the group for 2005/06 was noted.

7. Annual Report – narrative

The group were informed that it was currently envisaged that the narrative annual report would be likely to include a paragraph on each theme reviewed by the group during 2004/05. The format had still to be agreed and would be informed by production and distribution costs.

AGREED: the Lead Officer to the Group to draft the appropriate paragraphs related to the activities of this group for consideration at a future meeting.

8. Partnership Update

Willie Slavin, as Vice Chair of Strategic Co-ordination Group, reported that the Government's Neighbourhood Renewal Unit was currently commissioning significant expertise to support Partnership members in tackling a number of issues, as identified by the Neighbourhood Renewal Adviser who recently completed a diagnostic assessment of the issues facing the Partnership.

Willie also reported that he and the Chair of Strategic Co-ordination Group, Councillor Tim Knowles, had aspirations of the Well-being Review Groups undertaking more of a select committee role.

The group were also informed that Cumbria County Council had recently abolished their Consultative Forums. The Council's Overview & Scrutiny Committees were now undertaking the consultation duties that had previously been undertaken by the Forums. The Partnership Co-ordinator reported that he had suggested to Council officers that the Overview & Scrutiny Committees consult with the Well-being Review Groups.

A table setting out the proposed target areas for further development for Round 2 of Local Public Service Agreements was circulated for information to the group.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Friday, 27th May 2005 at 10.00am.

Jan Naylor informed the group that she was leaving her employment with Cumbria Children's Fund to take up a new post as the assistant support officer to the West Cumbria Community Empowerment Network and would no longer be attending meetings of this group.

Clare Killeen
Partnership Support Officer, May 2005