

EXECUTIVE REPORT

FULL 20 10 2005

HEALTH AND DIVERSITY SERVICE PORTFOLIO**COUNCILLOR GEOFF BLACKWELL - PORTFOLIO HOLDER****MARTIN JEPSON - LEAD OFFICER****1 KEY ISSUES - PROGRESS REPORT****1.1 HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The Council's new Health and Safety Officer has been recruited and will commence employment in November.

1.2 PLANNING POLICY ISSUES

The Local Plan Inquiry hearings were completed on Friday 7th October although the Inquiry itself will not be formally be closed until the end of the month – the additional time is taken up by the Inspector's site visits and any additional documentation required. The inspector will now begin writing up his report which will include recommendations to the Council on every outstanding objection to the Plan. This should be available during late January/early February next year when the Council will need to consider what further modifications should be made.

In the meantime, work will commence on the documents scheduled in the Council's Local Development Scheme including the Statement of Community Involvement and a new Recreation and Open Space plan. Another important document which has to be submitted to government in December is the Annual Monitoring Report recording progress with the new planning regime. This is also likely to be the basis for the planning policy element of next year's Planning Delivery Grant. This year the planning policy element was worth £52,000 which we received in September. My concern at this stage is the level of staffing resources we have available for this work and the difficulty experienced as regards recruitment over the last 6 months.

Formal consultation on a new Regional Spatial Strategy is scheduled to commence this month and a report will be made to the Executive in due course. Early indications are that the allowances for housing development are going to be closer to existing annual completion levels in the Borough than previously thought.

1.3 **FOOD HYGIENE TRAINING**

As I have reported previously the Council, through the North West Food Alliance, made a bid to the Food Standards Agency for funding to pay for the training of operators of high-risk food businesses to help them comply with forthcoming new legislation.

I am delighted to be able to announce that the council has been awarded £20K, which is significantly more than we had expected. Most of the money will be spent by funding local trainers to provide free training to local businesses, but, because there is a local training capacity problem, a small amount will be spent on providing training for the trainers.

149 local businesses have been identified as needing training in respect of the forthcoming new legislation. It is anticipated that the training will be done through the Lakes College at Lillyhall.

The award to the North West Food Alliance is one of the major ones nationally and is receiving close attention by the Food Standards Agency.

The award is obviously excellent news for the local economy, particularly for local food businesses and training organisations.

1.4 **HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK – “SLIPS AND TRIPS”**

Following a very successful Cumbrian campaign in January dealing with the dangers of slips and trips in workplaces, a national campaign is taking place this month. Although this Council participated fully in the local campaign it will also participate in the national campaign. As before, the campaign is a joint one between the Health and Safety Executive and Local Authorities.

1.5 **APPLICATION FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY INNOVATION AWARD**

The Cumbria Health and Safety Liaison Group, of which this Council is a member, is to apply to the Health and Safety Commission for a “Health and Safety Innovation Award” in respect of its work regarding Health and Safety in the Grounds Maintenance Sector and the “Slips and Trips” campaign. (The group ran a very successful day’s seminar for all grounds maintenance businesses at Seascale Golf Club last year.)

1.6 **Meeting with PCT**

A positive meeting has been held since the last Council with Marie Burnham and Eric Urquhart. A decision will be coming through shortly. Any further developments will be reported at the Council meeting.

2 **EXECUTIVE DECISIONS RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL**

None

3 **EXECUTIVE DECISIONS REPORTED FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

None