

CHOOSING TO CHANGE – BOARD MEETING 4 AUGUST 2010

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Cllr Elaine Woodburn
LEAD OFFICER: Chief Executive – Paul Walker
REPORT AUTHOR: Keith Parker

Summary: This report provides an update on the Choosing to Change Programme for Full Council since the last report(s) of 24 June 2010.

Recommendations: Council is asked to:

- a) Note this report
- b) Adopt the revised Contract Procedure Rules (dealt with in a separate report to this meeting)
- c) Note the need to change additional Resource Planning working Group meetings from September to October/November in order to facilitate a more rigorous service review process.
- d) Note the additional £24,000 'offer' from Local Government Improvement and Development and receive a further report when details have been worked up.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Council on 8 December 2009 agreed to a number of recommendations in relation to the Choosing to Change (C2C) Programme, including the Terms of Reference for the Choosing to Change Board, Roles and Responsibilities, Critical Success Factors, the Communication and Engagement Plan and the overarching Objectives for the programme. It also delegated responsibility to the Choosing to Change Board to make funding applications to the North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (NWIEP) and others in order to support the objectives of the programme. Full Council on 24 June 2010 received reports that confirmed the Leader as the Council's representative on the Cumbria Strategic Partnership Chairs meetings until such time as a Copeland LSP Chair is identified; authorised officers to work with partners to develop a single sustainable communities strategy for Cumbria; agreed to enter into a formal partnership with Chorley Borough Council and to receive reports back on the outcomes of the partnership; and accepted recommendations in relation to the Councils constitution. Since then the Choosing to Change Board has met once on 4 August and this is a report back on matters discussed on this date.

2. CHOOSING TO CHANGE BOARD MEETING – 4 August 2010

2.1 At its meeting on 4 August 2010 the Board received reports on a number of issues as follows:

2.2 C2C Reference Group

2.2.1 Choosing to Change Board meetings are followed by meetings of a 'Reference Group' of external agencies, chaired by the Council's Officers, with a remit to provide external challenge to the C2C Board. Minutes of the Reference Group are considered by the C2C Board at each of its meetings. The Reference Group of 22 June noted that the NWIEP's offer of £85k had now been received in writing, made positive comments about the Council's partnership with Chorley Borough Council, suggested that Copeland could act as a best practice model for the 'Mock Council' training exercise and noted progress with accounts closure and the PFI valuation issue (ie the difficulty with deriving a valuation and its technical impact on the accounts).

2.3 **Constitution Review**

Board Members received a report from the Constitution Working Group. They agreed that revisions to Financial Regulations should be deferred for a period to enable the Council's Director of Resources and Transformation to consider what changes should be made once in post. In addition given the potential changes to arising from Service Reviews it was agreed the Scheme of Delegation to Officers should also follow later in the year. In relation to Contract Procedure Rules, and subject to minor points of clarification, the Choosing to Change Board recommends to Full Council adoption of the new Rules covered in a separate report to this meeting of Council.

2.4 **Bid for additional resources**

As indicated above Board Members were advised that the bid for £85K had been successful and an offer made in writing by the NWIEP to cover the cost of Service Reviews and other necessary external assistance.

2.5 **Copeland LSP and Sustainable Community Strategy**

Board Members considered a detailed report concerning the creation of a Copeland LSP following the stakeholder conference held on 30 July at Egremont Market Hall. At this event it was agreed that the new Copeland LSP should (in comparison with the past) have:

- A simple relevant and realistic structure
- Fewer meetings
- Less bureaucracy
- Effective but lean delivery mechanisms
- Appropriate use of all modern communication methods

As reported previously to Council the agreed intention is that the LSP should be closely aligned with the Council's locality working structures, rather than having a more 'top down' structure as was the case with the West Cumbria arrangement. On deliberating this item Board Members considered that the governance arrangements for the new LSP needed further detailed development. Accordingly it is now proposed that recommendations should come to a future meeting of Full Council. In the meantime work with community groups, partners and localities continues.

2.6 **Partnership with Chorley**

The Board considered a report on the partnership with Chorley Borough Council in which it was confirmed that on 25 June the Council's Monitoring Officer wrote to Chorley's Chief Executive to formalise the Agreement between both Council's. In addition an Officer Core Project Team has been established in support of the Partnership. The Group being Chaired by Paul Walker, supported by Keith Parker, Hilary Mitchell and Richard Quayle plus representatives from Chorley.

As agreed by Full Council on 24 June, Chorley were commissioned to assist the Council, via a two stage process, to enhance the capacity and skills available to the council in carrying out service reviews and other process improvements. These activities have now been worked up into five more detailed work packages:-

- Initial Service Reviews – to include making recommendations about the way support services should be undertaken to drive change in the organisation and realise efficiencies.
- Internal Communications Campaign – aimed at ensuring we have a robust communications and marketing activity that allows the organisation to embrace the support partnership and choosing to change programme, encouraging all staff at all levels to actively engage in the process and any improvements outlined from it. In addition the work package will support the Initial service review package in its review of support services.
- Review and refresh of HR & OD Policies and Practice – these will focus initially around strengthening our approach to attendance management, change management, disciplinary, grievance and reward and recognition.
- Review of the Councils approach to customers – this work package will support the Council's objective to provide high performing, customer focussed services and will involve the creation of an action plan to support the improvement and development of customer focus going forward.
- Corporate Plan Refresh – the work package aims to support the Council in developing a robust Corporate Plan that leads to change and improvements within the Council. It supports the Council's existing leadership theme and will lead to revised business planning and service planning processes.

As far as practical these work packages have been tied into existing Council processes and timetables to avoid duplication, maximise the added value of the Chorley partnership and reduce the impact on capacity within the Council.

Council is asked to note that the Service Review work package in particular introduces some additional steps in the service reviews to add further rigor and challenge to the process. As a result of this planned Resource Planning Working Groups in September will now be replaced with meetings towards the end of October.

2.7 Local Government Improvement and Development

The Board received a progress report and offer of additional support from Local Government Improvement and Development, formerly known to Members as the IDeA. The 'offer' of an extension to the current arrangements with LG Improvement and Development includes support worth in the order of a further £24,000 on top of that already committed to the Council. In this case however the Council is being asked to contribute approximately 15% of total costs to cover expenses in the order of £3,600. The Board asked the Chief Executive to work with LG Improvement and Development to work the proposal up in more detail linked to existing work underway through the Choosing to Change Programme and report back at a future meeting.

3. FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no changes to the Financial or Human Resources position since the last report to Full Council with the exception already commented on in this report that the £85k bid to the NWIEP has been confirmed in writing and subsequently accepted.

List of Consultees:

Choosing to Change Board, Chief Executive

Background Papers:

Choosing to Change agenda papers – 4 August 2010