

**CUMBRIA COUNTY JOINT SCRUTINY OVERVIEW GROUP
TUESDAY 4 NOVEMBER AT 2.00 PM
GEORGIAN ROOM, TOWN HALL, KENDAL**

PRESENT: Councillor Chris Hogg (Chairman)
Councillor Vivienne Rees – South Lakeland District Council
Councillor Colin Nineham – Cumbria County Council
Councillor Malcolm Smith – Eden District Council
Councillor Peter Connolly – Copeland Borough Council
Councillor Peter Farmer – Carlisle City Council
Councillor Timothy Heslop – Allerdale Borough Council
Councillor Nik Hardy – Allerdale Borough Council
Councillor Carole Rutherford – Carlisle City Council

ALSO PRESENT: Steve Richards – South Lakeland District Council
Emma Ludlam – South Lakeland District Council
Michael Hyatt – Cumbria County Council
Alan Gunston – Cumbria County Council
Neil White – Copeland Borough Council
Gillian Kartach – Eden District Council
Yvonne Clarkson – Copeland Borough Council
Rebecca Tibbs – Carlisle City Council
Jane Murray – Allerdale Borough Council
John Penfold – Barrow Borough Council
Jackie Evans – South Lakeland District Council

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Sid Simpson

2. NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was pointed out that Sheila Brown was listed both as a Councillor and an officer, when in fact she was only an officer.

RESOLVED – That the notes of the meeting held on 19 March 2008 be received, subject to the agreed amendment.

3. COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT – DELIVERING THE COMMUNITY STRATEGY TOGETHER

Michael Hyatt presented a report outlining the various facets of the Comprehensive Area Assessment, with a focus on the scrutiny dimension. This latest national initiative represents change in a number of areas. Whereas it was previously focused on process, this has shifted now to outcomes. The idea is to focus on things which matter to local communities and put this into an accessible format. The Audit Commission are keen to pilot the scheme in different parts of the country,

and it represents an ongoing process rather than a more specific and targeted scheme such as those which have gone before. The emphasis here is on continuous assessment.

A handout was distributed amongst the group, which showed the priorities to focus upon within the Cumbria LAA – tackling worklessness, getting young people into education, tackling health priorities, reducing re-offending rates, improving road safety and reducing household waste collected. The Assessment won't be a 'scored' system as such, but green and red flags will be used to indicate areas of effectiveness and also areas requiring improvement.

The Area Assessment will focus on Cumbria as a region, whereas the Organisational Assessment will be primarily concerned with authorities (ie. Councils).

In conclusion, it was felt that this scheme will provide big opportunities for Cumbria, given that scrutiny within the county is already advance in joint working, and there will be an opportunity to show effective partnership action.

There was some discussion over the potential outcomes of the scheme. It was agreed that the joint committee was well placed to liaise with key players and explain the role of scrutiny to them.

RESOLVED – to receive the report and consider the scheme's future implementation.

4. NEW JOINT SCRUTINY OVERVIEW GROUP

Alan Gunston talked through the draft protocol, terms of reference and rules of procedure for the new joint scrutiny overview group. It was suggested that the group should meet more regularly to engage and more consistently follow up work. An emphasis was placed on the need for continuity.

There was some discussion amongst the group as to ensuring the group remains inclusive, and not just for local authorities. It was noted that CALC should be included, but that the National Park Authority would not be an appropriate inclusion because of its status as a partner authority to the Local Area Agreement and in turn its potential to be scrutinised under the LAA. There was some consideration over whether only one elected member from each authority was necessary, but the group resolved that there should still be two to make sure continuity was maintained.

A consensus was reached that the group should meet four times a year, and that the terms of reference should include the sentence 'review and scrutinise Cumbria Strategic Partnership' at point 4.2.

It was also agreed that the legislation should be reviewed to ascertain how to best go about linking reviews back to overview and scrutiny in each authority. There was some concern over sending the reports to the

Cumbria Local Authority Strategic Board as it isn't a decision-making body.

RESOLVED –

- (1) that the draft protocol, terms of reference and rules of procedure be received subject to amendments; and**
- (2) that the new joint scrutiny overview group meet quarterly**
- (3) that officers return to the Committee with proposals for a reporting structure.**

5. JOINT SCRUTINY OFFICER POSITION

The group considered the job description and person specification for the newly created Joint Scrutiny Officer position.

6. UPDATE ON THE REVIEW OF COUNTY PARKING POLICIES

Alan Gunston presented a report on the outcomes of a recent review of county parking policies. Cumbria County Council Cabinet had taken the recommendations onboard and the report had been well received as a piece of joint scrutiny work. The Chair asked whether there had been a follow-up, and it was agreed that more frequent meetings of this group would result in a better focus on outcomes. Members considered whether it was worth looking at how each authority's scrutiny procedures operated. It was agreed that officers from each council present could send a copy of their procedures out with the meeting's minutes.

RESOLVED – that the report be received.

7. FUTURE MEETING DATES

It was agreed that a future meeting date would be emailed out to each authority to avoid confusion and any dispute.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Alan Gunston informed the group that Tracey Ingham at the County Council was about to start a review on engaging young people in the democratic process, and would like to hear from anyone else who might be interested.

Gillian Kartach added that Eden District Council were looking at this area.

The meeting ended at 3.35 p.m.