Report to Corporate Improvement Board 3 November 2008

LOCALITY WORKING IN COPELAND

Summary of Meetings in September 2008

1. The Copeland Borough Council Corporate Plan for 2008/9 includes an objective to introduce a scheme locality working to Copeland. To take this aim forward it was decided to involve elected members in how to proceed.

2. A briefing session was planned for members, including opportunities to assess current support for and understanding of locality working and its implications. A series of meetings was held with elected members of Copeland BC and Cumbria CC in five localities across Copeland in September 2008. All the Borough and County Council members were invited to the meeting taking place in their locality.

Attendance was as follows:

Locality	Date	Borough Councillors	County Councillors
Whitehaven	9/9/08	12	2
Northeast Copeland	16/9/08	3	0
Egremont	25/9/08	2	0
Mid-Copeland	29/9/08	3	0
South Copeland	30/9/08	6	2

Up to 6 officers from Copeland BC, Cumbria CC and West Cumbria Strategic Partnership also attended each meeting.

3. A presentation was made to each meeting describing a proposed model for locality working in Copeland, what each part of the proposed model would do, possible resources and timescales for its introduction, if it was decided to go ahead.

4. The first of two tasks was then undertaken by the members present. They were asked what they liked about what they had heard, their concerns and what questions they had. The complete feedback is attached at Annexes A-C.

5. Overall the areas that members present liked were :

   - That locality working would provide more opportunities for the **public** to **influence** services
   - That locality working would be based on more **engagement** with the **community**, including those that are currently hard to reach
   - That locality working would enhance **accountability** of **agencies** to the community

- That it would need **joint working** between agencies
- That it allowed for **local differences** and diversity between localities.

6. The issues that caused concern among members present were:
   - Some **partners** were absent from current discussions
   - **Availability** of **resources** needed for long term success
   - **Commitment of members** needed to make it successful
   - **Proportionality** on boards
   - **Willingness** of the **public** to engage with the arrangements
   - How **responsive agencies** would be to locality requirements
   - **Rural/urban** relationships
   - **Share of resources** between localities
   - **Reliability of information** available
   - **Boundaries** are wrong

   The full transcription of this feedback is in Annex B.

7 The questions that members raised are found in Annex C.

8 The next part of the meeting was a presentation on the business that the Locality Boards might transact in future. Members present then undertook a second task. They were asked to say, if locality working was to go ahead,
   - What needs to happen next?
   - Who should help develop the Locality Board for the locality
   - Who should help develop Terms of Reference for the Boards?

9. Notes were taken at the meeting recording what councillors at the meetings in each locality saw as important next steps if we are to move forward with locality working. The following checklist was created as a summary from that feedback. The detailed points made at the meeting on next steps are shown at Annex D.

   9.1   Who is going to sit on the locality board and how do we decide?
   9.2   Which public sector agencies are going to help with shaping locality working now and as it progresses?
   9.3   Who else, perhaps from the community, would we want involved on the board?
   9.4   How can the councils involved take the decision on proceeding with locality working?
   9.5   We will need Terms of Reference. Who and how?
   9.6   What officer support would there be?
   9.7   What other resources would we need?
   9.8   How can we engage the community in the locality working approach?
   9.9   How can we reflect the locality differences and community identity?

9.10 Will there be devolved budgets, or will it be about influencing mainstream agency budgets?

9.11 How can we ensure that public sector agencies will respond to locality needs?

9.12 What arrangements to ensure probity do we need to make?

9.13 What do we need to do to plan for the future of the locality?

9.14 What can we learn from good practice elsewhere?

10. Each of the meetings covered the same agenda, and many of the same views were put forward during the discussions. At none of the meetings was there a consensus view from those present that locality working would be inappropriate for the locality or for the Borough as a whole. It was recognised that introducing locality working would be challenging, take time and need careful consideration, but that in the longer term it would be beneficial.

Locality Working- National Context

11. In addition to the work that has been undertaken locally, councillors and managers should be aware of the national context. The development of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment is widening the responsibilities of local authorities and other public sector agencies. The CAA will examine both the effectiveness of services and the "place shaping" capabilities of agencies. Particularly for larger agencies, having access to and opportunities to understand the priorities of communities should ensure that public services are more fit for purpose and efficient, because they meet the actual needs of people in localities.

Supporting the CAA process, the new National Indicators, introduced in April 2008, include several that could be influenced and performance improved by locality working:

NI 1 % of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area
NI 2 % of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood
NI 3 Civic participation in the local area
NI 4 % of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality
NI 5 Overall/general satisfaction with the local area.

NI 4 is the measure for locality working and will contribute to the Council's performance under the Comprehensive Area Assessment.

Cumbrian Context

12. In Cumbria there is interest in several other districts in the introduction of locality working. The County Council has an objective to have made further progress in developing locality working in the county by the end of the municipal year 2008/9. In South Lakeland District the Council is progressing a scheme to introduce it across the district, and is actively

working on it. In Carlisle and Allerdale there are two examples in each district being progressed during 2008/9. The County and district councils are working jointly in these areas, as we are in Copeland.

13. The Police service in Cumbria has shown an interest in developing and working through a form of area management, in order to meet the requirements of the Flanagan Report. As part of this work, the Police working through the Cumbria Strategic Partnership Safer Stronger Communities theme group have developed some guidelines for public agencies participating in area management. These are attached for information at Annex A. They will be included for consideration in the scheme in Copeland.

14. A risk assessment has been developed by the group of Borough and County officers working on the locality working project. It details the risks envisaged to the introduction of locality working, and some possible controls. It is attached at Annex E.

Recommendations

15. Therefore it is **recommended** that the Copeland BC Executive is asked to support taking the next step in introducing locality working to Copeland Borough. It is envisaged that this will involve:

    a) a further round of meetings in the localities involving representatives of partner organisations;
    b) identifying and progressing the establishment of a pilot Locality Board in Copeland,
    c) commissioning the development of draft terms of reference, staffing, budgets, communication plans etc.
    d) communication of the intention to progress locality working to the public to raise awareness.

Annex A

Draft proposals for Locality Working principles for service providers.

1. Community Focus - democratic accountability

Successful delivery of services in a locality requires the leadership of that community through the elected County, District and Parish Councillors and effective engagement with all sections of the community. Through effective involvement the community shares responsibility for its own future and provides information to tackle the issues identified and direct participation in problem solving.

2. The Locality Coordinator

A dynamic co-ordinator, who works in each locality with local councillors, leads involvement of local residents and has the authority to facilitate the alignment of local services delivered by different partnership organisations.

3. Management of each locality takes place in partnership

Each locality area includes partnership working between the individuals who have management responsibility for local delivery services. The partnership is where agreement is reached to align resources for the planned operations of the locality.

4. Multi agency delivery team

The ideal position is for a "one stop shop" centre, where local service delivery resources are based within a locality service area, and should be the ultimate aim for all locality areas. However a recognised virtual multi agency team is an effective delivery tool for locality working to succeed.

5. Joint community intelligence analysis

Service delivery should be driven through an approach whereby all available community intelligence is collated and analysed to provide the locality manager with the information required to effectively task partnership resources.

6. Communication

A willingness to share information between agencies that motivates and encourages communication between all levels and services.

7. Strategic buy in

All partners are committed to the principles and aims of locality working. At a Chief Officer/Executive/Cabinet level there is an acknowledgement that this is delivered through mainstreamed resources.

8. Budget

There is no requirement for any additional budget to make locality working successful. Effective locality working is based around realignment of existing resources and core costs being met by mainstreamed budgets.

9. Agreed shared targets

Local service delivery is based around an agreed shared plan identifying priorities and performance targets. Where relevant these will be linked to the Local Area Agreement and addressed in a holistic way.

10. Clearly defined and understood mapping of localities and communities.

All partners have a common understanding of the local service delivery area boundaries and the identified neighbourhoods / communities within that area. Locality working should be built upon what is currently known and understood.

11. Commitment to step changes towards 2011

Public service organisations will to move towards the above principles, within existing structures in their current agendas, ready for full integration by 2011.

12. Learning and development

Locality working is a developing agenda requiring activity in new areas of work. Organisations undertake to commit to develop elected members, community activists and staff, in order they have the skills, knowledge, behaviours and support, to effectively provide locality working in Cumbria.

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Annex B

Likes
- Local councillors involved
- Opportunity for face to face contact with service providers
- Local businesses and public involved
- About democratic governance – not a quango
- Opportunity to enhance accountability
- County and borough working together
- Focussed on priority outcomes, promoting performance measurement
- Should lead to stronger public engagement
- We're preaching to the converted – rural communities have to self-help.
- Each community could have different decisions, structures and ways of working.
- Good that the preliminary meetings are happening in localities.
- People like quiet, low crime rate, good schools. Locality working will give more voices to speak up for the community.
- Young people need a voice and locality working could provide a better way to give them a voice.
- Understanding of real local needs
- Opportunity for people to understand agencies better
- Opportunity to engage with other groups we don't see
- Allows local authorities to meet the statutory duty to involve people in local services
- Local government can exercise leadership appropriate to needs of the community
- Audit Commission recognition of value of local responsiveness
- Recognition of previous work
- Established code of conduct
- Joined up working more efficient
- Group of people together to plan priorities for the area
- Openness and accessibility of process
- The Government's requirement on public services to engage more meaning fully is driving this.
- Each locality would produce a plan which would address the local priorities and guide local activity
- LDNPA – could tap into their resources in South Copeland
- Service Centres will be developed in Bootle and Millom and LDNPA needs partners to work with for this.

Concerns
- Lack of participation of others including service providers at this stage
- Funding to resource locality working
- Fair representation for population size
- Member commitment
- Who will drive this forward?

- Public services that are centrally managed, e.g. Env Agency, how responsive will they be?
- County divisions do not fit current localities
- Faith groups, young people must be represented at neighbourhood forums to make them work better and locality working work more effectively, if this is not just another tier of working
- Could further isolate South Copeland
- Rurality is not addressed as it should be. Rural-proofing is ineffective.
- Rural communities should get funding sufficient to resolve problems
- Rural areas are struggling for access to services
- Need to involve parishes
- Who are the front-line councillors for mid-Copeland?
- Working with contractors or partners would complicate local discretion
- Organisation boundaries would get in the way of common sense and improvement
- Relationship between members, parish councils may need attention
- Stakeholders should include housing associations and agencies
- Survey results (e.g. BVGUSS) how representative of locality views?
- Some protectionism between parishes and urban/rural tensions
- Lack of attendance of members from outside Egremont at the meeting
- Limited number of activists in the community and whether they will give time to this, but may uncover more people prepared to stand as councillors
- If not the proposed model of locality working what else?
- Cost
- Who is going to be able to spare the time?
- Boundaries are wrong
- How to involve the National Park
- Transparency
- How can value for money be demonstrated?
- Will it be sustainable?
- Are the timescales realistic?
- What is the appetite for devolved working?
- Differences that may arise
- Decisions made in 2004 – how relevant now?
- Some partners not currently involved in locality discussions
- Ownership
- Locality boards should not end up as a grants panel – need sustainability
- What difference will they make?
- Too ambitious
- Will the public buy in?
- Could just be a talking shop
- Democratic deficit
- Conflicts of interest arising from involvement of so many agencies
- Will services respond?
- Replication or duplications
- If done well, good, if done badly, not good.

- Whitehaven locality is too big
- Equity between areas
- Can district boundaries be crossed?
- Is this back-door unitary?
- Another initiative?
- Risk of rural areas being swamped by urban areas
- Pilot for Borough is South Copeland, but pilot for County is in South Lakes DC area
- Access to services - needs to be local, not in Whitehaven
- Communication should be improved
- Duty to Involve means that the Locality Working Boards would have to have more functions than Neighbourhood Forums currently have, holding the public sector providers to account

Annex C

<u>Questions</u>
- Board membership – decided according to population?
- Rural/urban split – how to reflect that in proportional representation?
- Is South Copeland the correct description of the area?
- Where will locality officers be based?
- What resources will we get?
- If county divisions do not fit, how to ensure county councillors are fully involved.
- Will the above affect identity?
- How will parish councillors be involved?
- What is the funding?
- Who takes the decision about the funding?
- What about the effect on councillors' workloads – extra meetings?
- What happens to Copeland Local Committee?
- Who sets the agendas?
- Who will fund the locality workers' accommodations etc?
- Are we talking about additional local precepts?
- How is Executive power going to change?
- Why were parishes not invited to the preliminary meetings?
- There had been a letter to community groups proposing that they lobby for locality working. How had that arisen?
- Where does the LDNPA fit in?
- How does affordable housing fit into the plans for locality working?
- Would the Locality Board have a budget?
- Which bodies would be on the Board?
- Who would the locality working support officers be? Would the Boards be involved in choosing them?
- How would the localities link with existing arrangements e.g. MTI areas?
- Would there be enough capacity (skills and people prepared to give up time) on the Boards?
- If the cash, like SWNMB, is not available will the stakeholders be interested?
- Will each Board have its own spending criteria?
- Are the 5 boundaries appropriate?
- Where does the enhanced role of councillors fit in?
- Locality with 30k population – what size board would this need?
- What if the communities in a locality won't come together?
- Have there been discussions with County Cabinet Portfolio-holder (Cllr Cannon)?
- How are public sector agencies going to be brought in? Will there be other shared services?
- What good practice is there to learn from in other locations with similar remoteness and urban/rural and coastal effects (e.g. Northumberland, Durham, N Yorks)?

- What exit strategies might there have to be, as Working Neighbourhoods area based grant stops in 2011?
- Are we creating more bureaucracy – another tier of local government?
- How much duplication would there be? Like all the regeneration bodies duplicating effort?

Annex D

Next steps

South Copeland

- Local councillors (all tiers 10 county and borough:6 parish:4 town)
- 3rd sector representative
- Public services agencies: education partnership, NHS, transport providers, 3rd sector
- Community reps: local businesses, faith group reps, young people,

Mid-Copeland

- Involve partner agencies; set up pilot; seek council decisions
- Involve the parish councils
- Get communities involved, including groups
- Find officer support (2 days a week admin support all that's necessary)
- Have a list of things that can be at the discretion of locality board
- Identify lead councillors
- Continue to raise awareness with members of significance of locality working
- Implement Councillor Call for Action – refer issues to scrutiny
- Will there be a power to call officers in the constitution of locality boards?
- It can be driven from the bottom up by Borough and parish councils
- Work on the constitution to involve upper tier members
- Do we want financial responsibility or to influence spending decisions?
- If a formal joint committee was established between County and Borough Councils it would preclude parishes
- Work at releasing resources already in public sector agencies
- A group of community representatives could pull together a parish plan and talk to agencies
- Public sector agencies would include surgery, education partnership, adult services, 3rd sector, LDNPA, Connexions
- Board could include a representative of young people, WI, 3rd sector
- Real devolution would involve spending
- The size of the existing public sector spend could be influenced
- Address cultural change – needed from agencies' officers
- Identify locality working enthusiasts and free them up from other council duties.

Egremont

- Residents' Associations should be included.
- Parishes must be invited very soon
- Involve Youth projects and Connexions
- Name of locality to be decided by locality

- Think through agenda/minutes/report processes and how the meetings would work
- Need to specify the financial and probity issues
- Need also to think through proper conduct, access to the public, FOI, audit trail etc.

<u>Whitehaven</u>

- Assemble reps from other agencies
    - Business
    - Police
    - Charities (maybe later)
    - WCSP
- Draft T of R & Constitution (Voting)
- Involve a smaller group
- Identify key players.
- Hold a summit of members, WCSP to facilitate.
- First summon elected members plus Police, Health and Fire & Rescue?
- Majority should be elected members.
- What powers it could have?
- Agree boundaries and establishment.
- Officers are to submit papers.
- Work plan.
- How to get community involved.
- Size of board, 12 → 15 → 30.
- Select a member per Ward.
- Who should help develop the locality board for Whitehaven?
- Partners, service delivery/providers – PCT, Police, School etc
- Community Boards.
- Community Representatives
- Officer led – Members will make ultimate decisions.
- Officers set up TOR - Board will approve
- Funding Decisions Approval
- Clarity in relation to decision making (codes of conduct) – conflict for Councillors, needs clarification
- Develop from best practice, (local & National pilots)
- Important TOR – done early
- Need for separate officer resources, not an extra to someone's existing job
- Key partners, HAs (RSLs), Police, Health, young people
- Parishes Clerks – Development
- Member Reps - Working
- How many Ward Councillors and who?

<u>Cleator Moor</u>

- How to select councillors for the Board as there will be too many
- Who else needs to be there? Regeneration Board? Other community leaders?
- CBC will have to decide on a staffing structure, but CCC will be continuing its existing arrangements
- Look at existing accommodation in the locality and its use –rationalise?
- Increase accessibility?

Annex E

INTRODUCING LOCALITY WORKING - RISK ASSESSMENT

Ref	RISK	EFFECT	Likelihood	Impact	CONTROL
1	Demand for financial and non-financial resources to sustain locality working will be unaffordable	The scheme is not adequately supported or managed and is ineffective.	3	3	Take time to plan and understand implications of introducing locality working, before rolling out. Plan and use the pilot to assess implications.
2	Agencies and their employees can't or won't change culture or structures to meet locality working requirements	Agencies do not respond appropriately to different needs of localities, and scepticism sets in.	3	3	Strong political leadership, clear Terms of Reference, fair resourcing and consistent communication about benefits of approach
3	Councillors can't or won't be fully committed to locality working, through lack of time, other priorities etc.	The Locality Boards lack influence, vision and direction.	2	3	Full explanation of reasons for going ahead: community leadership; future efficiencies; improved community support for public services; CAA
4	Information based on locality rather than Borough average will present a greater political and managerial challenge to agencies.	Averaged figures mask locally poor performance which embarrasses agencies when it is clearer.	3	2	Support locality based information collection through explanation about the benefit of looking at local variation.
5	There will be a mismatch between what localities want and what agencies can provide.	Raising and disappointing expectations will damage locality working	3	2	Clear Terms of Reference, supported by a transparent process for negotiating and discussing what can be provided or devolved.

Ref	RISK	EFFECT	Likelihood	Impact	CONTROL
6	The media will not understand what locality working boards can do or how they work	Unfavourable publicity damaging the commitment of communities and agencies	3	2	Clear explanations about the purpose and limits of locality working.
7	Locality working may not be sustainable when the immediate funding runs out	The scheme declines or stops.	2	2	Plan for period after funding available, including bending mainstream budgets. Acknowledge importance of locality working in achieving efficiencies.
8	The pilot may not adequately inform the development of the rest of the locality working scheme, as all the localities will be different	Analysis of the progress of the pilot does not produce learning relevant to other localities.	2	2	Take into account the local distinctiveness of each locality in planning for locality working, as well as learning from pilot.
9	Locality working is misconstrued as being only about regeneration when it has wider community implications.	Slow progress in community involvement, local leadership, cross-agency working, pooled or devolved budgets, bending mainstream agency budgets.	2	2	Provide clear explanations of what locality working is about. Appoint staff with appropriate span of skills.
10	Joined up working between CCC and CBC will not continue.	Independent schemes might start and collapse through over stretched resources	2	2	The importance of locality working being a joint programme is reinforced through communications and at events. All partners involved in decision making throughout.

Ref	RISK	EFFECT	Likelihood	Impact	CONTROL
11	The local authorities might not provide the locality arrangements needed by other agencies to meet their objectives.	Independent schemes might start and collapse through over stretched resources	1	3	Principal authorities take responsibility for delivering locality working arrangements.
12	Performance against NI 4 might not improve over time as a result of locality working.	Adverse external scrutiny judgements	1	3	Develop local performance measures, monitor and review processes and practices.
13	The public will not buy into locality working.	Agency effectiveness and efficiency would be impaired.	1	2	Neighbourhood Forums provide existing models. Clarity of messages while locality working is being set up.
14	Service agencies can't or won't adopt a locality approach	Agencies do not respond to requests for locality variations	2	1	Demand from communities who will increasingly expect a locality approach; need to change to meet Government guidelines.