

**DRAFT version 1**

**WEST CUMBRIA DELIVERY TEAM**

***CREATING A SINGLE REGENERATION DELIVERY ORGANISATION FOR WEST CUMBRIA***

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The aim of this paper is to set out the key principles and future actions to create a Single Delivery Vehicle to deliver regeneration in West Cumbria - to be known as the West Cumbria Delivery Team (WCDT). The need for WCDT has been a subject of discussion for some time. In recent months, papers by Bob Ponting of West Lakes Renaissance and David Martin of Allerdale Borough Council have set out how it might work. Both papers pointed toward the benefits of creating a single body, combining and amalgamating the existing expertise in regeneration in West Cumbria to achieve an integrated delivery model.

David Martin's initial paper, approved by the CEO group of the West Cumbria Partnership (LSP) in 2005, argues that the existence of a single team for regeneration delivery would provide West Lakes Renaissance (WLR) and other funding bodies with a pro-active focus for physical development projects. It will also add value to the softer, community driven projects, because it will have close links with those communities.

Over the next few years, West Cumbria will be engaged in a number of major new investment and development projects. These include projects commissioned both by West Lakes Renaissance and by the local authorities.

With this new investment now imminent, and initial work on the WCDT idea already in place, officers responsible for Regeneration in Allerdale and Copeland called together a representative group to take forward the practical details of an SDV on the 8<sup>th</sup> of May 2006. Representatives from Allerdale and Copeland Borough Council, the County Council and from the NWRDA and WCLSP attended the workshop. The aim was to explore the potential for the creation of a WCDT, what its functions would be, who would be involved and what it might look like.

This workshop resulted in a paper which outlined the principles of any WCDT and was agreed by all parties. This was followed by a meeting with Allerdale, Copeland and West Lakes Renaissance on 19<sup>th</sup> May which again confirmed a number of key principles of any joint team.

To take the broad principles further forward, a meeting of the 3 Local Authorities and West Lakes Renaissance took place on the 11th August 2006 to review the key principles and discuss how to firm up on the principles. This

paper is the outcome of that discussion and will be the basis of Agreement to take the proposal forward.

## **2. THE NEED FOR A SINGLE BODY**

A single body to deliver regeneration in West Cumbria can be justified on many levels, and for many different reasons. Firstly, it will benefit both the funding bodies and the community. It will be driven by the practicalities of achieving outcomes, and will be much better able to deliver those outcomes. Secondly, it will simplify the current structure. It must not be seen as a new organisation, but as an amalgamation the existing regeneration organisations in West Cumbria. Some additional capacity may be required, but this has already been anticipated as new programmes emerge. A key advantage of placing existing and new staff and resources into a single body is that it will remove the danger of overlap and duplication and give a focus to activity.

**Key Principle 1. It was agreed by all that the West Cumbria Delivery Team will be based with West Lakes Renaissance.**

**Key Principle 2. The governance of the WCDT will be through a Service Level Agreement with partners. It is unlikely that a separate Board will be required to manage the process as policy and strategy will be determined elsewhere and WCDT will simply deliver projects.**

**Key Principle 3. Non WLR funded projects can be delivered by the team and these projects will not require WLR Board approval, providing robust management, funding and decision making frameworks are in place through local authority processes.**

### **Simplification**

At present there is some confusion over who does what. A single body would help remove some of the current confusion because all the hard regeneration projects would be focused through the amalgamated service that is currently spread between West Lakes Renaissance, Allerdale, Copeland and the County Council.

**Key Principle 4. WCDT will be a delivery mechanism for physical regeneration projects in the WLR Business Plan and others as identified by the partners.**

**Key Principle 5. WCDT will cover the geographic areas of Allerdale and Copeland, understanding that WLR can only fund projects within its operational area which does not cover the whole of both districts.**

### **Clear Roles**

Since the new organisation would be under contract and output driven, its role would be clear and any potential confusion or duplication would be avoided.

For North West Regional Development Agency (NWRDA) and other funding bodies, the management, monitoring and auditing of projects would be direct and consistent because they would only need to deal with a single body.

## **Capacity**

Allerdale Copeland and the County currently employ approximately 20 people in regeneration projects from Town Centre Development to Housing Renewal and land reclamation. However, this capacity and expertise is not evenly spread across both Boroughs. At the same time, there is scope for the County Council to become more involved - something they are keen to do. The County would like to become more active in West Cumbria and to emulate their successes in Barrow-in-Furness where joint working and a single focus delivery of most regeneration projects already exists. This pooling of resources and expertise would ensure the better use of existing skills and rapid identification of where additional skills and capacity were needed.

With the end of the SRB's in Whitehaven and Workington, and the arrival of new resources through the 'single pot', as well as HMR, there is a need to sustain and retain the expertise that exists in West Cumbria rather than start again. Existing staff from the West Allerdale Regeneration Programme would provide an important core of expertise in the new WCDT.

**Key Principle 6. WLR will employ a core team and the 3 Local Authorities will positively consider seconding staff into the WCDT where capacity exists. In the case of Cumbria County Council, their relationship with Capita may provide additional resource to the team.**

## **3. THE FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE WCDT**

### **Exploiting Potential**

A single organisation would create its own capacity and advantages as it developed over time. Apart from cost and efficiency savings, the organisation will be flexible and better able to change and adapt to new situations. Examples from other areas show that this creates a more sustainable and productive organisation.

### **Focus**

To be successful, the single delivery body must have a clear and comprehensive role which complements and add values to the strategies and activities of other organisations, in particular West Lakes Renaissance. The team will concentrate on project delivery, both hard and appropriate related soft projects, as its key focus. Not all of the functions set out below will be appropriate for all projects commissioned by WLR, but at the same time, the SDV must have the capacity to do these things in its own right.

**Key Principle 7. The WCDT will be responsible for the following generic project delivery activities:-**

- 1. Feasibility studies**
- 2. Letting contracts**
- 3. Contract and Project management**
- 4. Financial management and funding bids as required**
- 5. Monitoring and evaluation of projects**
- 6. Financial claims**

All these skills are currently available within the core staff team and from the three Councils, but there may well be a need to employ further staff to meet the ambitious plans of WLR, particularly in Copeland

**Key Principle 8. The WCDT will not be responsible for:-**

- 1. Strategy development**
- 2. Being Accountable Body**
- 3. Project ownership**
- 4. Project commissioning and development**

The value of knowing “who does what” can be expressed in many ways. The single body would be in a position to co-ordinate regeneration projects once they have been originated and developed by partners (this does not however prejudice involvement of the WCDT in early stages of the project if it would help define a better project for delivery).

The Local Authorities will retain capacity to develop strategy, policy and ensuing projects to the point of handover.

As sub regional strategies put forward by West Cumbria Strategic Forum, West Lakes Renaissance, and Cumbria Vision are developed, the WCDT would be in position to focus on delivery in a way partners are not able to do under current arrangements.

**Key Principle 9. The WCDT will be responsible for the following project areas:-**

- 1. Public sector components of the West Cumbria Strategic Forum Masterplan**
- 2. Housing Market Renewal programming, co-ordination and monitoring i.e. those areas outside of Local Authority Statutory responsibilities and RSL delivery**
- 3. West Allerdale Regeneration Programme in Workington and Maryport**
- 4. Whitehaven Regeneration Programme including Pow Beck, Coastal Fringe and Town Centre.**
- 5. Cleator Moor regeneration**
- 6. Supporting Market Town Initiative programmes in Copeland and other areas if requested**

- 7. Lillyhall and other industrial area developments**
- 8. Supporting the delivery of the Port of Workington Investment programme**
- 9. Destination Maryport**
- 10. Supporting other regeneration initiatives as appropriate**

Clearly, within these programmes there are many high priority projects which are expecting funds to be injected over the future. Other projects can be added as the WCDT becomes fully operational. These might even include softer measures from the WCSF Master Plan, projects channelled through the Local Strategic Partnerships, and projects that might be developed through opportunities to attract funding from the LEGL, Coalfields, NRF and 'one-offs' of many different types.

#### **4. ORGANISATION AND GOVERNANCE**

Everyone attending the workshop on the 8<sup>th</sup> of May agreed that the WCDT should be a real, not a virtual body – in other words it will have a physical location with the staff dispersed into the regeneration priority areas

Seconded staff would remain the employees of the Councils or organisation to whom they are currently under contract, but would be seconded under a service level agreement to the WCDT .

As the WCDT would be part of WLR, the WLR Board would be the prime governing and managing body for the team. Local Authority input will be through its representation on the Board and operationally through Service Level Agreements with WLR would require regular and effective reporting back to the Local Authorities on project progress, financial reporting etc.

The WCDT will need to secure lines of reporting to the West Cumbria Strategic Forum and LSP as required to ensure the necessary link between strategic planning and project delivery is maintained, particularly in relation to HMR and Masterplan issues.

#### **5. RESOURCING THE WCDT**

Funding the WCT will be from a combination of project specific funding and mainstream Local Authority and WLR budgets through secondment and direct employment. Local Authority secondment will be their commitment to the WCDT and this will clearly have impact on their own internal capacity and priorities.

#### **6. THE WAY FORWARD**

- 1. In order to get the WCDT up and running at the earliest time, an incremental approach is recommended. In the short term, WLR would

employ the existing Core team from Workington and Maryport Regeneration (excluding the Town Centre Managers who in the case of Allerdale, should remain with the Local Authority and funded by the agreed WAR programme.)

2. The WCDT Managers post will need to be profiled and a job description prepared and recruitment put in hand by WLR.
3. In the medium term staff could be seconded into the WCDT from the Local Authorities and in the longer term the issue of additional capacity will need to be resolved by additional WLR recruitment.
4. To create the WCDT, a full business plan including the identification of a suitable office location and financial and staffing plans, as well as a cost benefit analysis, will need to be worked up over the next few months.
5. Local Authority Partners to seek support for the proposal through their respective Committees at the earliest opportunity
6. West Lakes Renaissance to seek Board authority to proceed.
7. The proposal should be considered by the West Cumbria Partnership (LSP) Chief Executives group and possibly the Board on the 19<sup>th</sup> September.
8. It was agreed that partners come together again in September for further discussion on the detailed arrangements for putting in place the WCDT.

In conclusion, the creation of a West Cumbria Delivery Team is overdue. The initiative will offer clear benefits – both financial and managerial - to all the organisations involved. It will focus on delivery, not strategy, and provide organisational and operational clarity that is lacking at the present time.

Allerdale Borough Council  
Copeland Borough Council  
Cumbria County Council  
West Lakes Renaissance