

JOINT AUTHORITY SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP: WEST CUMBRIA
STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP MEETING
28 SEPTEMBER 2007

Present:

Cllr John Ardron	Allerdale Borough Council
Cllr Yvonne Clarkson	Copeland Borough Council
Cllr Peter Connolly	Copeland Borough Council
Cllr Ray Cole	Cumbria County Council
Cllr Keith Hitchen	Copeland Borough Council
Cllr John Hunter	Allerdale Borough Council
Cllr Ron Munby	Allerdale Borough Council
Cllr Martin Wood	Allerdale Borough Council
Jane Murray (Scrutiny Officer)	Allerdale Borough Council
Neil White (Scrutiny Officer)	Copeland Borough Council
Michael Heaslip (Co-ordinator)	West Cumbria Strategic Co-ordination Unit
Nicola Brooker (Policy Officer)	West Cumbria Strategic Co-ordination Unit

Apologies:

Cllr D Fairbairn	Cumbria County Council
Cllr Mrs W Metherell	Copeland Borough Council

1. Chairmanship

It was proposed, seconded and

AGREED – that Councillor Keith Hitchen be elected Chair.

2. Joint Scrutiny Work from 2006-07

The Joint Scrutiny Working Group noted that it had been set up in April 2006 to provide a scrutiny function of the West Cumbria Strategic Partnership. At that time there was a pressing need for scrutiny into the input into the Annual Review of the West Cumbria Strategic Partnership. However due to the impending deadline for the submission of the Annual Review to the Government Office for the North West (GONW) the group had set the following terms of reference:

“To review the processes of the West Cumbria Strategic Partnership including those to be used in creating an effective Community Strategy and to challenge performance through the Annual Review (in effect GONW's assessment) and any action plans arising from the Annual Review.”

The Joint Scrutiny Group were reminded of the 11 recommendations that it had agreed that focused on the most part on clarifying roles and responsibilities, and on the constitution and profile of the Partnership.

3. Post Scrutiny Report Action

The Joint Scrutiny Working Group considered the progress that had been made by the Strategic Partnership on the recommendations from the scrutiny review.

The Group considered that the membership of the Board and the Thematic Groups should be made available to the public and noted that it was intended to put these on the partnership's website and could be obtained from the Co-ordination Unit.

The Group noted that the Government was intending to reintroduce the performance targets for partnerships nationally with a new set of 200 indicators. These indicators would no longer be tied to individual funding streams and that funding would now be by block grant which would have regard to the effectiveness of the partnership against all 200 indicators.

The partnership was intending to provide the performance management information from these indicators at the most local level possible but it was waiting for the details of the national indicators before they could be defined more clearly. There would also need to be some work done on ensuring what other performance management information would be needed to aid the Scrutiny process.

The Group further considered the report of the Members Review Group that had been set up by the Partnership Board in March 2007 to undertake a review of arrangements in the light of the Local Government White Paper and other developments.

The Group noted that the representatives for the Strategic Co-ordination Group which was to be retitled the Partnership Forum were being amended and updated and expressed concern at how some representatives would be chosen and the effectiveness of the board with so many attendees.

The Group were advised that a protocol would be given to those representatives that would explain what was required from them and what support was available pre meetings, at meetings and post meetings and how best to make their organisation's contribution more effective.

4. The Community Strategy

The Joint Scrutiny Working Group received a presentation on the Sustainable Community Strategy.

The Group noted that the Strategy looked at the key policies for the next 20 years for West Cumbria through input from key stakeholders. The strategy had been agreed by Allerdale and Copeland and was due to go to the County Council's Cabinet in November.

The Group further noted that the strategy would be delivered by the Public Services Delivery Board through an implementation plan with reports on the progress of the plan going to the Partnership Board. It was important that the key priorities for West Cumbria were also included within the Local Area Agreement for Cumbria.

The Group considered the funding of market town renewal projects and the importance of continuity of funding. There was an opportunity for Allerdale Copeland and the County Council to work together to attract funding from other sources as well as from government.

5. Terms of Reference

The Joint Scrutiny Working Group considered which items it should look at over the rest of the civic year.

The Group felt that there were a number of areas that should be scrutinised.

These were:

- Monitor the progress on the recommendations made by the group from the Joint Scrutiny Work in 2006-2007
- Monitor the local delivery of the partnership and identify possible area for review
- The Implementation Plan for the Sustainable Communities Strategy
- The review of the Cumbria Community Strategy and the consultation responses to the review
- Any appropriate plans or strategies

The Joint Group further considered that one of the areas that should be looked at immediately is the lack of affordable housing. It was noted that South Lakeland had made progress in this area with the National Park Authority and the Sub Group agreed that a task and finish group should be established to look into this. The membership of the task and finish group would be made up of Councillors Cole, Connolly, Hitchen, Munby with Councillors Mrs Clarkson and Wood as substitutes.

The Joint Group also felt that it was important for the constituent councils to have regular reports on the work of the partnership to ensure that they were kept up to date with the progress that was being made.

AGREED – that (A) the work of the 2007-2008 Joint Scrutiny Group be to:

- Monitor the progress on the recommendations made by the group from the Joint Scrutiny Work in 2006-2007
- Monitor the local delivery of the partnership and identify possible area for review
- Review the Implementation Plan for the Sustainable Communities Strategy
- Review of the Cumbria Community Strategy and the consultation responses to the review

- Consider any appropriate plans or strategies, and

(B) a task and finish group be established comprising of Councillors Cole, Connolly, Hitchen, Munby with Councillors Mrs Clarkson and Wood as substitutes to look at affordable housing in West Cumbria.

6. **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 15 November 2007 at 9.30am in the Oval Centre, Salterbeck.

The meeting finished at 12.00