

**LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES UNIT
ELECTIONS AND EMERGENCY PLANNING SECTION**

1. SERVICE REVIEW 2007/2008

CORPORATE PLAN DELIVERY

Elections and Emergency planning will lead a delivery of the following:

2.1.1 Democracy projects will be redeveloped to raise participations in local issues.

2.1.8 Develop a local forum for the town of Whitehaven through consultation.

3.2.8 Ensure that Emergency Planning procedures are up to date and effective in accordance with the Civil Contingencies Act.

2. NUMBER OF STAFF AND THEIR ROLE

The section comprises of a Manager, a Local Land Charges Officer, an Election Officer, an Administration Support Assistant and a Clerk to the Gazetteer. The manager has overall managerial responsibility for the section with particular responsibility for Elections and Emergency Planning. The Elections Officer supports the Manager in the Administration of Elections and has the lead role for the completion for the Electoral Register. The Local Land Charges Officer does likewise for the Elections and has the lead role for Local Land Charges. The Admin Support Assistant supports the Elections Officer and the Local Land Charges Officer. The Clerk to the Gazetteer has the lead role for creation and maintenance of the Land and Property Gazetteer and assists with Elections and Emergency Planning under the guidance of the manager.

3. ANNUAL BUDGET

The total budget for Legal and Democratic services is £736,568. 50 and it is not possible to break this down to those just employed on section issues. Of that amount the costs directly identified for the section are £31,150 for Elections, £29,646 for Electoral Registration, an income over costs of £134,209 for Local Land Charges, and £20,114 for Emergency Planning. We are not in a position to make savings on Elections or Electoral Registration, largely because those figures include postage which are beyond our control. The cost of providing a service for Local Land Charges - which also is needed to fund the Gazetteer - is well within income of £181,021 and Emergency Planning is Government funded and as such would be reduced if the service was reduced.

4. **INCOME**

Local Land Charges income is £181,021.00, Sales of Electoral Register is £1,538. Local Land Charges income has dropped in recent years due to the advent of Personal Searchers. The fee for a full search is £108.00 and £11(a statutory figure) for a Personal Search, which means Personal Search companies are making a difference to our income. (Frankly, a personal search isn't worth the paper it is written on but we cannot advertise this fact, nor can we advertise the fact the buyer is often unaware of this and is still charged the full price by the Solicitor acting on their behalf.)

There have been discussions ongoing at National Level to establish a co-ordinated online Register of Electors (CORE) which should generate quite a substantial income from finance companies use of the information contained therein, but this could take some time to come to fruition.

There may also be some income generated from the sale of information contained within the Land and Property Gazetteer.

5. **SAVINGS POTENTIAL**

All functions of the section are Statutory and any minor savings that could be identified would be used to support other functions within the section which are in need.

LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES UNIT
LEGAL AND LICENSING SECTION
SERVICE REVIEW 2007/08

The Legal and Licensing Section ('the Section') provides two distinct services – the provision of a legal service to internal customers and the provision of a licensing service to external customers. Both services have separate budgets and it is necessary to consider each separately.

LEGAL SERVICES

As outlined in the Section's Service Plan for 2007/08 a variety of legal services are provided by the Section. These can range from day to day advice over a range of functions to the drafting and negotiating of complex significant value legal agreements.

Corporate Plan Delivery

The Corporate Plan comprises of three parts. In respect of Effective Leadership the Section's advisory involvement is limited save for advising on the occasional strategic partnership agreement, for example, the ACE partnership agreement.

The Section's role in the parts relating to Achieving Transformation and Promoting Prosperity is much more substantial.

Both parts include regeneration objectives and the Section has a role to play in achieving these objectives. A current example is the coastal fringe project where participation includes advising on grant approvals and negotiating tripartite agreements relating to such, dealing with a significant number of issues relating from the property itself, for example, footpaths, occupier's liabilities, coastal support, ownership, etc, negotiating and drafting end-user lease arrangements, and drafting reports to the Executive as well as advising on and drafting grant funding agreements and works contracts. The nature of the project, like other regeneration projects, requires a day to day input throughout the life of the project. Regeneration is an active area with a number of projects proceeding at the same time. The amount of time capable of being devoted to such depends upon the volume of other legal work at any one time. An increased legal input is desirable.

The remaining objectives of that part of the Corporate Plan relating to Achieving Transformation relate mainly to performance improvement. The Section is required to implement those objectives allocated to 'All Services'. Other than those involvement is likely to be minimal due to the nature of the objective.

Promoting Prosperity is the main area in which the Section has an input. Regeneration is outlined above. Those comments also apply to the objectives relating to sustainability (3.4) and leisure and cultural (3.6) particularly where the latter relates to the Powbeck project. In respect of making Copeland a safer place the Section has an active involvement in crime and disorder and attends meetings of a sub-group of the CDRP as well as intervention panels which considers specific cases of crime and disorder and what action should be taken. In this area of work there is also a link to the licensing function particularly public houses. This involvement will continue.

Promoting Prosperity also includes promoting a quality living environment which has intrinsic links to environmental legislation. Regular, if not daily, advice is given to enforcement officers on a range of functions. This needs to continue but should be enhanced by the provision of training on new legislation, the issue of procedure guides and a more rapid response to prosecutions.

Recently the Section has been involved in the objective relating to quality housing and new issues relating to houses in multiple occupation and new grant legislation. This advice needs to be consolidated into procedure and implementation notes.

Overall, due to the volume of other day to day work, it is felt that the time spent by the Section on corporate objectives and supporting other units in achieving those objectives is insufficient. A more proactive role is required. Discussions with WLR suggest that increased grant funding may be available to cover the cost of using external solicitors as required. This provision would support the in-house team and be at no cost to the Council. Completion of some larger projects in the near future will also relieve some of the pressure.

Number of staff and roles

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services is able to spend approximately 25% of his time on substantive legal issues; the Legal Services Manager and the Senior Legal Services Officers are respectively 80% and 50%. Support staff mainly deal with licensing administration or provide clerical support. This limited amount of time devoted to the legal issues of the Council together with the output achieved is good. Compared with other authorities the level of staffing and the cost of providing a legal service is low. The problem cannot be solved by simply employing more staff. This has been attempted three times and did not result in any satisfactory candidates applying. A report, requested by CLASB and written by the solicitor for Carlisle CC, and considering whether legal services could be shared on a county wide basis concluded, in 2006, that this was not feasible. That report indicated that this Council had the lowest cost and legal staffing levels within the County in respect of legal services.

Annual budget

The total budget for the whole of the Legal and Democratic Service Unit is £839,473. It is not possible to break this down to those just employed on legal issues. Of that budget the Section only has control of the following budgets relating to supplies and services:

Books and publications	£14,398
HM Land Registry	£200
Legal and professional	£1,800

It shares the following budget resources with other sections of the Unit:

Administrative equipment	£4,884
Stationery	£1,561
Office expenses	£20,000 (most of which comprises of a budget bid for equality and diversity)
Postages	£8,235
Other expenses	£100

Income

Only a limited income is achievable mainly in respect of land transactions. Where such income is received it is credited to the land/asset management budget. A recharge is made by the Section to that budget head for the cost of providing a commercial property service and it is only reasonable that any income received is set against that recharge. It is possible to recover legal costs incurred in respect of section 106 planning obligations and, provided the court awards the same, in contentious matters. There is a strong argument that any such costs obtained are credited to the client budget which incurs a recharge from the Section.

There is no scope for receiving any other income.

Savings potential

It is been stated that employee expenses and support service recharges are not subject to savings. In view of this any savings are restricted to those appearing as supplies and services and those within the control of the Section, that is, the first three amounts shown above under the heading 'Annual budget'. Examination of these three heads shows there is no potential for savings.

Discussions with Lexus Nexus in respect of books and publications indicate that a change from paper to web textbooks would be more expensive. There are many textbooks that the Section would like to acquire but this is not possible; subscriptions have been reduced over the years to a point where only a basic level is maintained. In respect of HM Land Registry most fees incurred are recharged to the service user required. However there are occasions when searches need to be undertaken in respect of former RTB transactions where discrepancies arise. As the HRA has been closed no client budget exists for such and a general sum of £200 for such matters within the Section's budget works well in practice. In respect of legal and professional this covers practising certificate fees which amounted to £2,100 this year thus making the budget short by £300.

LICENSING SERVICES

This Service comprises of the processing of applications for taxi and private hire licences, those under the Licensing Act 2003 (public houses, late night takeaways, cinemas, etc), those under the Gambling Act 2005 (gaming and lotteries) and those in respect of charitable collections (street collections and house to house collections). The process includes receipt of applications, validating the application, if necessary referring to a relevant committee for consideration and issuing the licence. The process is inherently legal and support staff require day to day advice from legal staff on issues arising.

Corporate plan delivery

The Council is required to provide the licensing service by statute. The service does not link to any specific corporate objectives. It has an indirect role to play in respect of making Copeland a safer place (3.2) where it must act under the two Acts referred to above with a view to promoting the prevention of crime and disorder.

Number of staff and roles

The Legal Services Manager devotes approximately 15% of his time to licensing matters; the Senior Legal Officer, 50%; the Licensing and Legal Officer, 80%; the Licensing Technical Support Officer, 90% and the Administration Support Officer, 60%. In financial terms this equates to a recharge from the legal budget to the licensing budget of £114,837. There is a lack of data to assess whether this recharge is reasonable given the volume of work undertaken. This information should be available following the CLASB licensing shared services review and the preparation of the associated business case.

Annual budget

The budget for 2007/08 is as follows:

Supplies and services:

Administrative equipment	£300
Central printing	£80
Stationery	£241
Software licences	£7,000

Support services:

Environmental health	£3,620
Legal services	£114,837
Cash collection	£2,943
Regeneration	£423
Enforcement unit	£8,500

Total costs (A)	£137,944
Less expected budgeted income (B)	£138,684
Expected budget profit (B – A)	£740

Income

The expected actual income for 2007/08 is approximately £125,000. This comprises of statutory fees for Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005 applications; and fees fixed by the Executive for taxi and private applications. No fees can be charged by law for charitable collections. There is therefore likely to be an expected loss of approximately £13,684 rather than an expected budgeted profit of £740. (In 2006/07 the actual income was £116,377 resulting in an actual loss of £12,455. A slight increase in income has been allowed for in 2007/08 [£116,377 to £125,000] to allow for fees received in respect of gambling applications).

Savings potential

Taking into account that support service recharges cannot be considered, the fact that most fees are statutory fees, and the fact that the supplies and services budget, excluding software licences, is miniscule it is difficult to anticipate any savings being achieved. In fact, the budget suffers additional expense from time to time when it has to advertise changes to hackney carriage and private hire fees or hackney carriage fares. This statutory procedure has had to be undertaken twice this year at an unbudgeted cost of around £1,000.

In respect of income hackney carriage and private hire fees can be increased. As stated a statutory consultation process needs to be followed and small increase in fees can be wiped out by the cost of advertising the proposal. Larger increases in fees will meet with opposition from licence-holders. The local association representing the interests of licence-holders has already questioned how the budget is spent. Case law stipulates that the licence fees must be related to the cost of the licensing scheme itself (R –v- Manchester City Council ex parte King, 1991).

The budget build for 2008/09 as entered in the financial matrix is as follows:

	Proposed for 2008/09 with inflation	New proposal
Administrative equipment	312	312
Central printing	83	83
Stationery	251	251
Office expenses	0	0
Licences (Lalpac software)	7280	7280
Recharges	-	-
Income	144231	125000

The income figure of £144,231 includes inflation of £5,547 on the current year's budget estimate of £138,684. By adjusting the income to something more realistic means increasing the deficit by an amount of £13,684 (pre inflation adjustment) or £19,231 (with inflation adjustment).

Whilst this is unwelcome news attempts have been made over the last 2 years to adjust the budgeted income more in line with the actual income. These attempts have only been partially successful. Following the 2005 restructuring which added the cost of two non-licensing posts into the licensing budgets the budgeted income was adjusted to £149,187. This was despite approximately 2/3rds of the fees being set by Parliament and the other 1/3rd being controlled by the Manchester case. One post was then removed thus reducing the expected budgeted income to its current level but this remains unattainable in law.

Finally, in earmarked reserves a sum of £6,372 exists for a review of taxi stands. This sum should remain as an earmarked reserve and this sum will be required pending the outcome of a review with the CCC in respect of stands.

Clinton Boyce
Legal Services Manager.

31st October 2007.

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

SERVICE REVIEW 2007

1 CORPORATE PLAN DELIVERY

Democratic Services will lead on delivery of the following Corporate Plan objectives:

- 1.1.6 Undertake a review of governance and constitutional issues
- 1.1.8 Implement the IDeA ethical governance framework
- 2.6.1 Create and deliver annual Member development programme, based on competencies
- 2.6.4 Complete the Centre for Public Scrutiny's self evaluation framework and draw up action plan for implementation

Democratic Services will contribute to delivery of the following Corporate Plan objectives:

- 1.3.2 Develop through joint scrutiny with Allerdale BC an action plan to achieve Green Light accreditation from Government Office North West for the West Cumbria Strategic Partnership
- 2.1.1 Develop democracy projects to raise participation in local issues
- 2.1.6 Work with Parish Councils to develop their role as champions of local committees
- 2.1.7 Promote quality parish status within the Borough
- 2.1.8 Develop a local forum for the town of Whitehaven

2 NUMBER OF STAFF AND THEIR ROLES

Democratic Services Manager

Overall managerial responsibility for section. Procedural & constitutional advice to members and officers. Civic and Mayoral support. Lead officer for scrutiny and Member training. Assists Monitoring Officer in ethical governance and code of conduct. Freedom of Information. Post & Despatch. Reprographics

Scrutiny Support Officer

All scrutiny support. Advice to Members in committee and sub groups. Lead officer for all scrutiny reviews and scrutiny networks.

Member Services Officer

Supervisor of Member Services team. Services Executive & other committees as necessary. Supervises all Mayoral & civic functions. Co-ordinates Freedom of Information requests.

Member Services (Technical Support) Officer

Organises and attends meetings and drafts minutes and reports as necessary. Assists with FOI, Member Training and Civic and Mayoral support.

Leader's PA

Provides clerical and administrative support to Leader and Deputy Leaders

Administrative Support Officer (Mayor's Secretary) (Job Share)

Provides clerical and administrative support to Mayor and Deputy Mayor

Administrative Support Assistant (Democratic Services)

Processes incoming and outgoing post. Provides admin support to D Servs Team

Administrative Support Assistant (Reprographics)

Provides printing and reprographics service to all departments

Mayor's Attendant

Provides chauffeur and attendant service to Mayor and Deputy Mayor and messenger service

Relief Mayor's Attendant (p/t)

Provides relief chauffeur and attendant service to Mayor and Deputy Mayor and messenger service.

3 ANNUAL BUDGET

Democratic Services has a budget of £374,179 excluding staff costs.

It is expected that existing levels of service can continue to be provided in 2009/2009 on the basis of no overall increase in budget, for the following reasons and subject to the following provisos:

1 Spending on Members' Allowances traditionally shows significant underspends towards year ends due to vacancies in Council seats. As an alternative this expected underspend can be offered as a saving (see para 5) by applying the same 2.5% vacancy management assumption to Members Allowances as is currently applied to all salary budgets.

2 Holding spending on member training at current cash levels will rely on continuation of existing subsidised regional programmes (ACE and NWIN Leadership and Scrutiny programmes) and on our ability to continue to share at least some member training costs with Allerdale. Reducing this budget will jeopardise our ability to retain accreditation to the North West Employers Member Development Charter

3 Supporting a new area committee structure on the scale envisaged within existing member support and scrutiny support resources will depend on an equivalent or near equivalent reduction in the scale of democratic activities supported centrally. We question whether this is achievable given the scale of activities likely to be involved with six or seven area committees with devolved licensing, development control and overview and scrutiny functions. As we made clear in our response to the Corporate Plan proposals, supporting area committees on the scale envisaged in addition to existing commitments would not be possible within existing resources.

4 INCOME

There may be scope for bringing in income to Democratic Services through charging for external print services. This potential is as yet unquantified.

5 SAVINGS

There is potential for savings in the members allowances budget by applying the vacancy management assumption of a 2.5% annual vacancy rate which is used in salary budgets. This budget has shown a historical underspend in excess of this in recent years. A 2.5% assumption would realise an annual saving of £7,362.

There is a potential for savings of up to £3,000 in the Annual Meeting budget from moving from an evening sit-down meal with outside guests to a buffet lunch with Councillors and spouses/partners only.

Savings of £2,500 are available in printing, paper and postage costs by reducing the number of paper copies of meeting agendas to both members and officers. There would be opportunities for further savings in these costs if all Members were able to use electronic communications.

APPENDIX

Diagnostic Questions

1 What is the purpose of the service?

To provide a support framework for the decision making process of the Council and support services to individual councillors.

2 Why do we deliver the service?

The service is not mandatory itself (with the exception of Freedom of Information) but the legal and constitutional processes supported are mostly statutory and thus mandatory.

3 What are the expected outcomes from the service?

A decision making process which is efficient, timely and based on sound legal and constitutional and ethical principles

Councillors who are well-informed and have development opportunities available to them based on their identified development needs.

An overview and scrutiny programme which is challenging and innovative.

4 Do we have a choice about the level of service to be provided relative to supply and demand (overall capacity) and opportunities for shared services?

The service is mainly demand led and within reasonable constraints (see 3.3 above) will provide support and advice to whatever democratic structure the Council chooses to operate, and whatever demands individual members place on the service. There may be opportunities for sharing services in Councillor training with other organisations, particularly Allerdale BC and this is being actively explored between the two authorities.

5. Do we have a choice about the standard of service (bronze, silver or gold)?

No

6. How much does it cost and what is the comparative level of spend compared with benchmark authorities?

The cost of the service is £374,179 excluding salary costs. There is no comprehensive financial benchmarking information available with other comparable authorities but the staffing costs of the service are the lowest of the Cumbria districts bar one. Other costs (e.g. Members Allowances) result from decisions taken by the Council on the level of resources to be utilised on direct Member support and are not therefore suitable for bench-marking comparisons.

7. How good is the service – is it becoming more or less efficient and are trends showing the service is stable, declining or improving?

Stable

8. How might things change – are there opportunities to reduce costs and/or increase productivity (i.e. make the service more efficient) or to vary the level or quality of service?

Significant changes in service are only likely to follow similar changes in the structure of the decision making process – for example the introduction of an area committee structure (see above).

There may be opportunities to reduce costs through sharing certain services such as member development (see above) and possibly scrutiny support, though introduction of an area committee structure which includes area based scrutiny would tend to militate against rather than for such opportunities.

9. What would be the impact on partnerships and the wider community of reduction or withdrawal of services?

Withdrawal of the service would have an impact on both the wider community and partnerships as Members ability to take collective decisions within the relevant statutory framework would be severely impaired.

10. Will there be an impact on key PI's of proposed changes?

No

11. Is there an impact of proposed changes in terms of knock-on effects in other areas?

No

12. Do you have any ideas for savings in other areas?

No

13. Are there changes to the way another service is delivered which could help you achieve savings?

No

Beacon & Tourism Services - Service Review 2007-08

Corporate Plan Delivery

The Service is committed to achieving the following **generic** corporate objectives (extract from Service Plan):

Ref:	Lead Service	Action	Outcomes (measurable)	Target Date
1.1.1	Corporate Team	Develop a series of 1 year delivery plans. Monitor and review progress and take action as appropriate.	Be recognised as a credible organisation that delivers on its commitments.	Annual
2.3.4	Corporate	Take a lead in setting an example to other employers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage take up of learning opportunities amongst Copeland Borough Council staff • Provide opportunities for staff progression to take up hard to fill vacancies • Continue apprentice schemes • Develop new trainee schemes. 	Staff retention More effective use of human resources Providing leadership to other employers	2007 2008 Ongoing 2008
2.4.3	All services	Implement project plan and actions against Equality and Diversity standard, and in line with the Council's Social Inclusion Policy.	Copeland Borough Council will achieve Level 3 of the Equality and Diversity Standard. Departments will consider equality and diversity and social inclusion issues within all of their activities, both internal and external.	2009
2.5.6	All services	Service areas will improve delivery to meet internal and external customer needs.	Improved customer service and BVPIs in top quartile.	to 2012
2.6.2	Policy & Performance	Create annual officers training and development plan to meet corporate objectives.	Training programmes completed and qualifications achieved.	Annual April

2.6.5	Policy & Performance	Implement effective performance management system for all staff.	Staff will have objectives linked to the corporate plan and will be monitored against them.	2008
3.2.1	All Services	Mainstream S17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 in all Council activities through an audit process.	Identification areas of good practice and gaps; report recommendations identified.	July 2007
3.2.2	All Services	Close gaps found in S17 audit.	Improved delivery of services, ensuring that they meet S17 requirements.	July 2009

In addition, **this Service** will lead on or be strongly supporting the following 5 Year Plan objectives:

Ref:	Lead Service	Action	Outcomes (measurable)	Target Date
2.3.1	Corporate	Appoint a Champion for Learning	Greater focus to learning and the Council's role. Better represent community interests. Better liaison and representation with delivery agencies	May 2007
2.3.6	Corporate	Work with partners to raise the standards in educational institutions	Increased participation and attainment and achievement of Cumbria Agreement targets.	Ongoing
2.4.5	Leisure & Regeneration	Respond to statutory guidance re Every Child Matters	Improved attainment.	2008
3.1.6	Regeneration	Increase tourism, culture and leisure spend through the Borough – refurbishing the Beacon	Council service provision will have been reviewed in respect of children and young people; will have developed a specific children and young people's strategy; and will achieve the Cumbria Agreement targets.	2008
3.6.1	Cultural Services	Develop interest and capacity amongst Copeland residents to take forward arts activities	Increase the number of jobs supported by the tourism, culture and leisure sector by 5% per annum.	2010
3.6.4	Cultural	Capture the interest in the 2012 Olympic	An increase in organisations taking part in arts or sports activities leading to greater community cohesion and healthier lifestyles in support of the CDRP agenda and Cumbria Agreement; contributing to Copeland being a place that people want to live in. To be measured by participation rates and satisfaction levels. More people engaged in community sport through	to 2012 To 2012

Services	Games to ensure Copeland residents benefit from the UK wide programmes	volunteering and participating inspired by the 2012 games. and surrounding cultural activities. Increased tourism opportunities.
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No. of staff and roles

Beacon & Tourism Services comprises 23 members of staff (one currently on maternity leave)

Beacon & Tourism Services Manager (x1) – overall management and budget responsibility for service; staff management; professional Curator to Beacon and independent museums within Borough; education services

Museum Curator (x1) - professional Curator to Beacon and independent museums within Borough; Duty Manager; education services, exhibitions and events

Education Officer (x1) – funded by Heritage Lottery for 2 years, then Copeland's responsibility; education services; learning services for all groups, schools, under 5s, informal learning, staff learning, events

Operations Officer (x 1) – Duty Manager, all day to day operations, rotas, staff management, health & safety, fire warden

Marketing Assistant (x 1) – supports and delivers all publicity, promotions, marketing, press releases, marketing spend (currently on Maternity Leave – role covered by Visitor Host with support from Manager and external marketing specialists)

Administrative Support Assistant (x 1) – all admin, purchase ordering, invoicing, bookings, covers all Visitor Host duties

Visitor Host/Caretaker (x 1) – welcoming visitors, selling tickets and shop goods, information, cash handling, security, health & safety, fire warden, room hire, equipment, maintenance of exhibitions, displays, interactives

Visitor Host (x 9; or 6 FTE) - welcoming visitors to Beacon and/or Whitehaven TIC, selling tickets and shop goods, information, cash handling

Visitor Host "casuals" (x 2) – to cover 15 hours per week during busy holiday periods – please note that these posts have not been filled during the closed period in an attempt to reduce costs

Beacon Cleaner (x 3; or 1 FTE) – cleaning, hygiene, health & safety

Millom Tourism Development Officer (x 1, temporary contract to March 2008)– funded by Market Towns Initiative; deliver of Economic Development Group's tourism action plan, Millom TIC building manager, line manager to Millom TIC assistant

Millom TIC Assistant (x 1, temporary contract to October 2007) – funded by Copeland with grant support from Millom Town Council; welcoming visitors, selling tickets and shop goods, information, cash handling, support tourism action plan events

Support is received from –

Regeneration – line management, Tourism Development support

Human Resources – staffing and recruitment

IT – computers, other technical equipment

Business Management - Public buildings maintenance, issues, procurement

Legal – Beacon redevelopment contracts

Finance – annual and monthly accounts, grants and project claims

Annual Budget

Beacon

(includes all management, operations, admin, retail buying, public buildings contribution for Museum Store and TICs)
£462234 for 2007/08

WARNING - This budget does not reflect the Business Plan upon which all funders including CBC have agreed monies towards the Beacon redevelopment.

Budget Build for 2008/09

As Year 1 of the approved Beacon Business Plan, the baseline budget should have been £485,455 and not £462,234 as current, resulting in an operational loss of £23221. This has a significant effect on savings etc within the budget build table.

Currently under discussion with Finance, but by my reckoning the "controllable expenditure" within the budget should be as follows –

£356997 (£333776 plus missing £23221); less £23200 budget adjust (budget bid for loss of 3 months income during closure); plus inflation £13352 gives 08/09 base budget of £347149. Can provide £7227 additional income (of £7206 required); also £5424 other savings (of £9546 required); but is subject to pressures amounting to £7760 (current figure shows as £30981 but should be less the missing £23221); resulting in 2008/09 budget of £342258, providing an overall saving of £4891 (towards required £11733).

Also Georgina had agreed that the **Public Buildings fund** should not appear within this "controllable" expenditure area but still appears and is currently included in the above figures.

Also the "**sinking fund**" does not appear in this table which was also discussed at the training session. Approval has been given for any additional income generated to be protected to allow it to grow for future redevelopment purposes. In the first few years we would not wish to allocate this to any particular code, but would want to carry it forward into future years.

Pressures mainly relate to increase energy costs, rates and especially ground rents relating to the new lease with Harbour Commissioners. Security services for cash collection are now borne entirely by the Beacon (formerly as a % of total Leisure bill), hence it has also increased. The Promotions budget must be made up to £34K to correspond with the Business Plan. The loss of internal catering facilities due to the creation of a new externally operated restaurant immediately means a £13721 loss of direct income (restaurant rental fee and service charges included).

Whitehaven TIC

£106951 for 2007/08

Budget Build for 2008/09

Baseline "controllable" budget £81493

£2700 income saving in 08/09 (of total £1393 required), and £2448 other saving (of a total £3558 required) and provides overall 08/09 saving of £3544

Pressures for this budget mainly relate to increased electricity costs and rates.

Millom TIC

Zero Budget; currently running at £10K loss. For the first time, this amount is being balanced against Beacon/TIC budget underspends which was not agreed.

Income Levels

Beacon

Achieving target income level for the Beacon is doubtful. A budget bid last year covered loss of income, but allowed for the Beacon to be closed for three months only (April – June). As the Beacon will not be reopening until October due to building works delays, a further 3 months loss of income has to be covered.

Required income for 2007/08 is £65227

Income to date is £9501

Balance £55726 (to be achieved from October to March 6 month period)

From Year 1 of the Business Plan (in reality 2007/08), the Beacon should be guaranteed a base line budget of £485455 (2004/05) plus annual inflation. Income/savings generated above the required amount are to be secured within the "sinking fund" to allow for future exhibition sustainability without further major redevelopment requirements.

Current overspend (due to closure) £28681 – to be reduced and controlled by increased income and restricted spending.

Income for 2008/09

Budget build offers total income of £87700

Whitehaven TIC

Income level for Whitehaven TIC has already been achieved.

Required income for 2007/08 is £12608

Income to date is £22142

Balance -£9534

It is intended that any underspend on the TIC account during 2007/08 is accrued into 2008/09 to enable a shop refit to take place (follows recommendations in TIC Review by Bowles Green, 2006). This amount can be used as match funding via Cumbria Tourist Board (NWDA money). It is anticipated that the cost of the shop fit will be covered from additional retail sales within 3 years.

Current underspend is £17260

Income for 2008/09

Budget build offers total income of £17612 (deliberately low due to anticipated shop refit)

Millom TIC

Without a retail budget, opportunities for generating income at Millom are extremely limited. Currently running at £10K loss which is being covered by Beacon/Whitehaven TIC underspends. The cost of providing the TIC service at Millom is inflated due to the fact that this budget also subsidises other tenants in the Station Building (service charges, utilities etc).

Savings Potential for 2008/09 onwards (against identified Controllable Costs document)

Beacon

All required savings can be met within anticipated income increases following redevelopment, but will affect overall "sinking fund" and will perhaps have to be approved by all 6 redevelopment funders.

Within the budget build, the following savings have been identified and included –

- Reduced contract cleaning due to changing Sanitary Services to a new supplier £1000 saving
- Catering Provisions due to no longer operating café £3348 saving
- Other savings have been identified using past budget records, or by excluding any inflation increases

Overall 08/09 savings £4891.

Over the following 2 years it will be possible to achieve the remaining required £6842 (total £11733)

Whitehaven TIC

All required savings can be met, but assumes redevelopment of shop to increase income potential.

Within the budget build, the following savings have been identified and included –

- Reduced advertising costs £1268 saving
- Other savings have been identified using past budget records, or by excluding any inflation increases

Overall 08/09 savings £3544.

Over the following 2 years it will be possible to achieve the remaining required £839 (total £4384)

Millom TIC

Zero budget; zero savings required; closure of Millom TIC likely (as recommended by TIC Review by Bowles Green in 2006).

SP:2/11/2007

Service Review 2008/09 – Economic Development



1.0 Service Description

The Council's vision statement is:

Copeland Borough Council – leading the transformation of West Cumbria to a prosperous future.

To support the delivery of this vision, the aims of this Service are to:

- Develop the local economy by supporting the growth of local businesses and the attraction of inward investment.
- Promote the borough as a location for visitors as a key player within the Western Lake District Tourism Partnership.
- Play a leading role in taking the Whitehaven Regeneration Programme forward in fulfilment of the Council's obligations under the delivery framework document.
- Deliver key elements of the West Cumbria Spatial Masterplan (2026)
- Support community renewal and regeneration through locally based strategic engagement vehicles and local area fora.
- Work with the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority to manage the downsizing of the industry and the consequent socio-economic consequences
- Support business diversification and new commercialisation opportunities within the nuclear cluster

1.1 Our customers and strategic partners are:

- Internal – Corporate Team, Members , Other departments within the Council
- External – Copeland business community, potential inward investors, tourism operators and intermediaries, developers, partner organisations – West Lakes Renaissance, West Cumbria Development Agency, NWDA , Cumbria Vision, NDA , English Partnerships (Land Reclamation Trust) , Heritage Lottery, Market Town Management Boards , West Cumbria LSP and Cumbria LAA co-signatories , Coalfield Programme , ERDF ,etc.

2.0 Staff and Roles:

Head of /Regeneration – Mike Tichford

Economic /Development Manager – Peter Meadows

Senior Regeneration Projects Officer (Community /Renewal) – Chris Pickles

Regeneration Projects Officers – Sherrie Lewthwaite
Diane Ward

Regeneration Technical Officer – Carol Robertson

MTI Managers – Simon Walker
Nash Thakker

MTI Support Staff

2.1 Inter-departmental dependencies

The following are an approximate ordering of the importance of other CBC functions to the operation of the Economic Development Service

Supplier Services	% interactions
Local Plans / Sustainability Strategies	15
Development Control inc Bldg Control	10
Beacon – Cultural Svcs	10
Finance, Business Devlpt and IT	20
Audit	5
Performance	5
Communications / PR	5
Legal	15
Leisure Services	5
MTIs	10

3.0 Annual Budget 2008/9(non-staff costs)

See budget build exercise

4.0 Options for Increasing Income

- 1) Charge a premium mark-up , above and beyond recovery costs , for providing accountable body / bankrolling facilities to regeneration project managers . collection of full recovery costs in itself would be an improvement across all the projects deriving these benefits.
- 2) Charge management fees to external organisations and funders for projects managed on their behalf within the Borough
- 3) Request to NDA socio Economic Fund for additional resources which build into a common plan with the Borough to address major socio-economic impacts of the restructuring of the nuclear industry
- 4) Increase rentals at Phoenix Ctr (Ph 3) to generate increased surplus, ot change terms of lease at next review to augment CBC return

5.0 Savings Potential

- 1) Reduce contribution to WLDTP by 20% p.a. = £5k p.a .Difficulty arises re existing SLA , but if project underperforming we can argue case for reduction
- 2) Review contribution to Invest in Cumbria (earmarked from Reserves)
- 3) Temporary redeployment (at no cost) of qualified Sellafield staff undergoing decommissioning impacts and able to transfer on short term contracts for bespoke pieces of work
- 4) Reduce grants to external bodies by set percentage. Not really feasibl in view of pressures on service and need to accommodate community renewal priorities

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES – SERVICE REVIEW 2007 / 08

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Committed to the principles of sustainability, our purpose is to provide top quality planning and building control services which help to make Copeland such a wonderful place to live, work and visit.
- 1.2 Development Services forms part of the Regeneration business unit and has an establishment of 20 fte professional, technical and administrative support staff engaged in the receipt, processing and determination of applications for planning permission and building regulations approval. This is a statutory function in respect of development control but non-statutory for building control. The service also takes a non-statutory lead on planning enforcement, disability access matters and street naming and numbering whilst also having a statutory responsibility in respect of dangerous structures.
- 1.3 Whilst pre-application advice forms an important element of service provision the regulatory role of both development control and building control is the primary function of Development Services. Statutory indicators measure development control performance whilst building control performance is measured by local indicators. Both are performing well at present as evidenced by the mid-year out turns (Appendix 1 refers).

2.0 CORPORATE PLAN DELIVERY

2.1 The Service is committed to achieving the following generic corporate objectives:

Ref:	Lead Service	Action	Outcomes (measurable)	Target Date
1.1.1	Corporate Team	Develop a series of 1 year delivery plans. Monitor and review progress and take action as appropriate.	Be recognised as a credible organisation that delivers on its commitments.	Annual.
2.3.4	Corporate	Take a lead in setting an example to other employers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage take up of learning opportunities amongst Copeland Borough Council staff. Provide opportunities for staff progression to take up hard to fill vacancies. Continue apprentice schemes. Develop new trainee schemes. 	Staff retention. More effective use of human resources. Providing leadership to other employers.	2007. 2008. Ongoing 2008.
2.4.3	All services	Implement project plan and actions against Equality and Diversity standard, and in line with the Council's Social Inclusion Policy.	Copeland Borough Council will achieve Level 3 of the Equality and Diversity Standard. Departments will consider equality and diversity and social inclusions issues within all of their activities, both internal and external.	2009.
2.5.6	All services	Service areas will improve delivery to meet internal and external customer needs.	Improved customer service and BVPIs in top quartile.	To 2012.
2.6.2	Policy & Performance	Create annual officers training and development plan to meet corporate objectives.	Training programmes completed and qualifications achieved.	Annual April.
2.6.5	Policy & Performance	Implement effective performance management system for all staff.	Staff will have objectives linked to the corporate plan and will be monitored against them.	2008.
3.2.1	All Services	Mainstream S17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 in all Council activities through an audit process.	Identification areas of good practice and gaps; report recommendations identified.	July 2007.
3.2.2	All Services	Close gaps found in S17 audit.	Improved delivery of services, ensuring that they meet S17 requirements.	July 2009.

2.2 In addition, the Service will lead on or be strongly supporting the following 5 Year Plan objectives:

Ref:	Lead Service	Action	Outcomes (measurable)	Target Date
2.2.9	Regeneration	Provide top quartile service in Development Control and Building Control.	Effective development, investment and regeneration, with increased availability of the built environment.	2010.
2.2.10	Regeneration	Enhance the architectural and historic environment in our towns.	Increase in quality of the environment; vitality of our towns; tourists visits; and regeneration.	2012.
2.2.1	Regeneration	Implementation of the Whitehaven Regeneration Programme.	Regeneration of Whitehaven – environmental and infrastructure improvements, increased no of businesses, employment, crime prevention, visitor numbers and spend.	2012 onwards.
2.2.5	Regeneration	Contribute to the West Cumbria Delivery Team for regeneration projects.	Delivery of the West Lakes Renaissance business plan and other regeneration projects across West Cumbria.	2012.

3.0 NO. OF STAFF AND THEIR ROLES

- 3.1 An organisational chart for Development Services is attached (Appendix 2). It is anticipated that all vacant posts will be filled before April 2008.
- 3.2 As a response to poor past performance in dealing with major planning applications a Planning Consultant is employed 2 days / week, funded from a combination of vacancy management and Planning Delivery Grant (PDG). The Project Administrator post is fixed term, expiring on 31st March 2008, and is externally funded through the PDG.

3.3 Support is also received from:

- Regeneration colleagues – local plan policy / guidance.
- Leisure and Environmental Services – statutory consultee (noise / odour nuisance; drainage; landscape advice; etc).
- Legal and Democratic Services – drafting legal agreements and statutory notices. Legal advice.
- ICT / GIS – technical support, especially in relation to procuring new software system.
- Policy and Performance – Process Improvement Team (PIT) involved in service improvements.

4.0 ANNUAL BUDGET

4.1 The current controllable cost for the Regeneration business unit is approx. £1.21m with target savings to be found of £65305. This review will examine how Development Services may maximise its contribution to this savings target.

4.2 The review affords the opportunity to realign resources in accordance with corporate priorities. By re-examining how we do things together with income streams the remainder of this report will look at how we propose to continue delivering high quality services next year whilst making efficiency savings to plough back into service delivery.

5.0 INCOME LEVELS

5.1 Both building control and development control generate income streams from nationally set fee schedules, although there is some local discretion in relation to building regulations fees. Surplus fee incomes since 2004 / 05 have been as follows:

	Building Control	Development Control
2004/05	58115	71580
2005/06	44037	54485
2006/07	40977	53651
2007/08 (half year)	363	37085

- 5.2 As regards development control fee income there is no indication of a likely downturn in the local economy next year. On the contrary, prospects are looking good with considerable activity in the retail sector (Tesco/Asda); Whitehaven harbourside regeneration projects; other residential developments throughout the Borough and ongoing development at Sellafield and Westlakes. It is, therefore, reasonable to assume significant surplus planning fee income next year, especially in the light of proposed 25% fee increases from 1st April 2008 except for 'householder' applications where the proposed fee increase is limited to 10%.
- 5.3 A more cautious approach needs to be taken in respect of building control fee income. As can be seen from the above figures there has been a dramatic reduction in surplus fee income for building regulation applications in the first half of this year. This may be a "one off" but there is no doubt that strong competition from the private sector combined with the increasing loss of work to other Local Authorities through partnership agreements is having, and will continue to have a significant impact unless we can rise to the challenge by enhancing and promoting our marketing profile.
- 5.4 With a few exceptions to be addressed in the final section of this report it is not considered prudent to advocate substantial savings from building control next year for the following reasons:
- Increased competition and resultant loss of income as referred to at 5.3 above.
 - The need to maintain a 3 year rolling business plan in accordance with statutory requirements.
 - Following a prolonged period of being under-resourced due to experienced staff leaving the Authority we are in a transitional period of recovery necessitating reinvestment in process improvements such as ICT / use of mobile technology; associated staff training and marketing our service offer.
 - The possibility of a Cumbria wide building control body is currently being investigated.

6.0 SAVINGS POTENTIAL

6.1 Careful consideration has been given as to how building control and development control can individually and jointly achieve savings next year.

6.2 Dealing first with building control :

- Due to staff shortages Building Regulations plan checking has been outsourced in recent years (JBC). Costs as follows:

05/06	£26534
06/07	£24082
07/08 (half year)	£10956

Although the number of non-commercial applications greatly exceeds those relating to commercial development, the value of the two elements is about the same.

Non-commercial plan checking is, incrementally, being brought back in-house.

POTENTIAL SAVINGS OF £12 – 15000 ARE LIKELY TO ACCRUE IN 2008 / 09.

- Two of the Council's Building Control Officers are qualified SAP Assessors (calculation method for domestic buildings) and have received iSBEM training (generation of CO₂ emission calculations for new commercial buildings). Local agents struggle to find suitably qualified people to carry out their calculations. There are presently no other qualified iSBEM assessors in Cumbria and only one SAP assessor in West Cumbria.
AN ADDITIONAL INCOME STREAM COULD BE GENERATED BY OFFERING THESE SERVICES TO CLIENTS. THIS WILL BE INVESTIGATED IN DETAIL TO DETERMINE A / VIABILITY B / PROJECTED INCOME
- Local Authority Building Control (LABC) partnership agreement(s) – currently in discussion with a locally based national company. If a partnership agreement is entered into, Copeland would be relevant Building Control authority for all plan checking associated with that company's developments nationwide.
ADDITIONAL INCOME STREAM WOULD ACCRUE, BUT AS YET CANNOT BE QUANTIFIED.

6.3 As regards development control :-

- Surplus planning fee income potentially offers the greatest opportunity for savings. Assuming the annual budget remains static and taking into account surplus incomes in recent years and the proposed fee increases next year a substantial surplus planning fee income can be anticipated next year. Allowing for probable increased spend on professional consultancy fees, A SURPLUS PLANNING FEE INCOME IN EXCESS OF £50000 IS ANTICIPATED NEXT YEAR.
- At present, none of the Cumbrian planning authorities charge for pre-application advice. This could provide AN ADDITIONAL INCOME STREAM BY LEVYING A SCALE OF CHARGES FOR PROFESSIONAL ADVICE offered in respect of commercial and residential development proposals. Council would have to approve such a scheme. In the first instance, however, it is proposed to raise the issue via the Cumbria Development Control Officers Group to determine whether a county wide scheme could be set up.

6.4 Finally, looking at building control and development control together :-

- Electronic scanning of planning and building regulations files is presently outsourced. This cost £8635 in 2006/07. It is proposed that we purchase our own scanner / copier / plotter for approx £12000 using Planning Delivery Grant. This is labour intensive work and even though we would need an additional labour resource (student placement?) economies would certainly accrue over a period of years.
- The MVM software contract was terminated on 30th September 2007, resulting in an annual licence saving of approx £10000. Council has approved a tendering exercise to procure and implement a replacement system. This work is ongoing. Cost implications are unknown factors at this stage.

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PERFORMANCE MONITORING 2007 / 08

	2 nd quarter July – Sept	Half year – April - Sept
PI 109 (a) Major planning applications dealt with <13 weeks Target is 60%	66.67% (2 out of 3)	66.67% (8 out of 12)
PI 109 (b) Minor planning applications dealt with <8 weeks Target is 65%	73.81% (31 out of 42)	74.73% (68 out of 91)
PI 109 (c) Other planning applications dealt with <8 weeks Target is 80%	95.69% (111 out of 116)	90.43% (208 out of 230)
PI 204 % of planning appeals allowed Target is 25%	0% (3 appeals – all dismissed)	28.57% (2 out of 7)

BUILDING CONTROL PERFORMANCE MONITORING 2007 / 08

	2 nd Quarter July – Sept	Half year April - Sept
Full plans decided within 5 weeks	78% (86 out of 110)	81% (197 out of 244)
Full plans decided within 8 weeks	97% (107 out of 110)	97.5% (238 out of 244)

APPENDIX 2

