

NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT PILOT PROJECT – SPORT AND CULTURAL SERVICES SINGLE IMPROVEMENT TOOL

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Deputy Leader Councillor George Clements
Executive Member Councillor Hugh Branney

LEAD OFFICER: Keith Parker

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Summary:

Copeland Borough Council have been selected to take part in a pilot project that will result in a new Sport and Cultural Services Single Improvement Tool for the sector. This is a national pilot project, led and supported by the IDeA.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that:

1. Cultural Services Officers develop a project plan in line with IDeA guidance and meet key milestones.
2. Other departments support the process when approached to do so.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Strong and Prosperous Communities Local Government White Paper White Paper indicates that Local Authorities will be permitted to move away from an inspection based performance culture and encouraged to use self assessment and improvement planning tools.
- 1.2 Within the Cultural sector a number of tools are used that are based on some form of self assessment. These are Towards an Excellent Service (initially for the sports sector), Arts at the Strategic Centre, Library Peer Review and Quest (for sports and leisure facilities or sports development departments).
- 1.3 The Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) has been commissioned to develop and test a single improvement tool for the sport and cultural sector. The approach employed is to assess the strengths of each of the above tools and produce one valid model that all parts of the

sector can use. This single assessment tool has been requested primarily by local government.

- 1.4 Leisure and Environmental Services Officers have attended two workshops in the preceding nine months as the outline of this tool has been developed, and expressed an interest in principle that Copeland Borough Council should be considered to pilot the new tool when available. Following the submission of an outline, detailing how cultural services are structured within Copeland, confirmation has come forward that we are being given the opportunity as one of eight authorities to pilot the tool.

2. ARGUMENT

- 2.1 The use of a self assessment tool was identified as a key objective within the 2007/08 Cultural Services service plan.
- 2.2 This tool will give the Council the opportunity to consider all of the cultural services that are available within one self assessment framework, including those services that have a cultural element but are not managed by the Cultural Services Department.
- 2.3 The inclusion in the pilot project will ensure that support and training from the IDeA will be available throughout the process.
- 2.4 Following the self assessment and partner assessment elements, a robust improvement plan will be developed that will inform the 2008/09 service plan actions.
- 2.5 The inclusion within the pilot project will also raise the profile of Copeland Borough Council.

3. CONCLUSIONS

- 3.1 This is a superb opportunity to assess the new cultural services department and other cultural elements within the Council within one framework.

4. FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOURCES OF FINANCE)

- 4.1 Senior Cultural Services staff attendance at initial briefing and feedback session led by the IDeA.

- 4.2 Prioritisation of this piece of work, above others identified within the service plan and by the Corporate Team. This is a significant but short term time commitment, as the project is to be completed by the end of September 2007. There will also be a requirement for input from other services that offer cultural activity. This is primarily related to tourism, museums (Beacon) and parks.
- 4.3 Travel and project costs to be funded from the existing Cultural Services budget in the 2007-08 financial year.

5. PROJECT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 No significant risks have been identified.

6. IMPACT ON CORPORATE PLAN

- 6.1 Section 1.1.7 of the Copeland Borough Council Corporate Plan identifies supporting improvements in value for money, customer focus and continuous improvement.

List of Appendices: None.

List of Background Papers: Cultural Services response to IDeA piloting arrangements briefing note.

List of Consultees: Councillor George Clements; Councillor Hugh Branney, Corporate Team.

CHECKLIST FOR DEALING WITH KEY ISSUES

Please confirm against the issue if the key issues below have been addressed. This can be by either a short narrative or quoting the paragraph number in the report in which it has been covered.

Impact on Crime and Disorder	The use of the tool will inform how culture can support the cross cutting agendas.
Impact on Sustainability	The use of the tool will inform how culture can support the cross cutting agendas.
Impact on Rural Proofing	The use of the tool will inform how culture can support the cross cutting agendas.
Health and Safety Implications	The use of the tool will inform how culture can support the cross cutting

	agendas.
Impact on Equality and Diversity Issues	The use of the tool will inform how culture can support the cross cutting agendas.
Children and Young Persons Implications	The use of the tool will inform how culture can support the cross cutting agendas.
Human Rights Act Implications	The use of the tool will inform how culture can support the cross cutting agendas.

Please say if this report will require the making of a Key Decision ~~YES~~/NO