

Report from Overview and Scrutiny

**ITEM 5
FULL121206**

Lead Members: Cllr Mrs A Bradshaw; Mrs Y Clarkson
P Connolly; Mrs M Woodburn

Lead officer: T Capper

October- November 2006

Since Overview and Scrutiny last reported:

1. Education standards

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a briefing from the County's School Improvement Team for West Cumbria. The overall picture was one of improvement. All 42 primary schools should expect to receive at least a satisfactory marking and the school improvement team have classified 29 of the schools in need of only 'a light touch' in terms of intervention. Targets were up in secondary schools too and although Ehenside was currently in special measures it had met its targets at key stage 3. Wyndham was one of the most improved schools in the county. Assurances were received that the gap was narrowing with respect to performance across the County as a whole. It is the intention of the committee to continue its monitoring.

2. Leisure and Environment

Members of Social Well-being received a presentation from Cath Coombs on progress against the commitments made by North Country Leisure in the first year of operation and expect to see the Chief Executive of North Country Leisure in February/March.

3. Enforcement

Members have continued to take an interest in the enforcement unit and how it will accommodate changes to legislation. Members felt that the financial information presented was difficult to understand and requested a further report for their next meeting. Following the Executive of 21st November, this issue was subsequently the subject of a call-in.

4. West Cumbria Development Fund

Members received a comprehensive presentation on the work of the West Cumbria Development Fund to find out how the Council's £60,000 is being spent.

5. NDA Socio-economic policy

Members received a presentation on the socio-economic policy and expressed concern that stakeholders would have little input into any decision-making with respect to community funding.

6. Market Town Initiatives

Members received an update on Millom and Egremont Market Town Initiatives and look forward to receiving plans in the spring for how the momentum will be sustained after the funding period has finished.

7. Food Safety Service Plan

Members considered and were impressed by the plan. Members asked whether further funding would be available from the Food Standards Agency to provide free training and workplace coaching for local businesses on new food safety legislation (as detailed in the plan) and it was agreed that Members would be kept informed.

8. Draft Masterplan

Members considered and commented on the draft masterplan. The key issue for Members was transport infrastructure, on which future prosperity depended.

9. Kerbside Collection Service

Members noted the relatively smooth transfer of the service to the Council as an interim measure pending a consultant's report on the best way forward. They noted that there were some discrepancies in the number of properties receiving a kerbside collection which might impact on targets. Members are asked to contact the department with details of any properties in their wards who are not receiving a kerbside collection when other streets in the same area are.

10. West Cumbria Strategic Partnership

Members of the joint scrutiny committee have met and are in the process of agreeing a report on a review of the partnership's procedures and processes.

11. Complaints' Monitoring

Members received and noted the complaints monitoring for April-October

12. IT Survey

Members' of the IT sub group requested that a Member survey be carried out into Members' communication needs.

13. Health Scrutiny

Cumbria Health and Well-being Scrutiny Committee.

Update 3.

10 November 2006.

The Cumbria Health and Well-being Scrutiny Committee met most recently on 25 October 2006. The Cumbria and Lancashire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee also met during October.

Older People with Complex Needs

Six “focus group” sessions have now been completed with groups of front line staff and groups of users and carers, spread across the county. This is part of the Committee’s scrutiny on joint care for older people with complex needs. The Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel is also involved. The next step in the scrutiny is for the task group of councillors to meet senior managers and directors, following which members will draw conclusions. A further Stakeholder Conference will be held early in the New Year to consider what recommendations for change should be made.

North West Ambulance Service

At its meeting on 25 October, the Committee noted that the North West Ambulance Trust has agreed, following representations from the Committee, to maintain an office in Cumbria with a Head of Service for Cumbria. The Committee was very concerned that the Trust had not discussed its possible plans to merge ambulance control rooms across the North West, and sent an urgent email to the Trust stating its expectations to be consulted on any proposals. The Trust has since confirmed to the Committee that there will be a consultation (likely to take place early next year).

The Chief Executive of the North West Ambulance Trust has offered to meet the Committee to discuss the position as well as the Trust’s vision for ambulance services in Cumbria, and it was agreed to take up this offer and invite him to the Committee’s next meeting.

NHS Consultation on Acute Medical Services in Morecambe Bay

The Cumbria and Lancashire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee met the NHS on 12 October, to hear that the NHS organizations favoured the option of transferring acute medical services from Westmorland general Hospital to Lancaster and Barrow, but to provide a rehabilitation unit at Westmorland General Hospital. The NHS had not yet responded to the Committee's recommendations, and undertook to do so. They also recognized that the NHS consultation with the Committee were not complete until the Committee could look at this response – i.e. that no service changes can take place until then.

Draft Local Area Agreement

The Committee looked at the Corporate Director of Adult Social Care's response to its comments on the draft Local Area Agreement.

North Cumbria Whole System Review

The Committee asked for a letter to be sent to the Cumbria PCT asking for an update and timetable on what was happening now that the North Cumbria Whole System Review has been completed.

Mental health issues:

1. Penrith Community Beds

The Committee supported the view that the Cumbria Partnership Trust (the new name for the Mental Health and Learning Disabilities Trust) could end its arrangement to rent four community beds in Penrith, as it was now clear that they were not needed. The Committee also asked for information on residential provision for young people with mental health problems, and a letter is being sent to the Cumbria PCT.

2. Incorporation of South Cumbria services into a single Mental Health Trust for Cumbria

The Trust gave the Committee a response to all its recommendations on arrangements for a single mental health trust for Cumbria (to be called the Cumbria Partnership Trust); nearly all of the Committee's recommendation was accepted.

3. Progress Report – Modernization of mental Health and Learning Disability Services in North Cumbria

The Trust gave the Committee a progress report, highlighting the staffing arrangements and the new assessment unit for people with combined mental health and learning disability problems, which is now being built.

4. Foundation Trust Status

The Trust gave the Committee an update, and undertook to respond to each of the comments that the Committee had made.

Annual Health Check

In preparation for the next round of the Healthcare Commission's Annual Health Check, the Committee decided to hold a workshop, to include the NHS, Patient Forum contacts and voluntary bodies, to look at what initial comments should go into the next round. The workshop will take place on the afternoon of the Committee's next meeting (10 January 2007) in Barrow.

Patient and Public involvement Forum (PPIF) Contacts

The PPIFs have been restructured to match the new PCTs and NHS Trusts in Cumbria. The Committee agreed to have 3 advisers from the new Cumbria PCT PPIF, reflecting geographical coverage.

Development and Training

The Committee is to have development sessions on "Improving the health of the Community" on 21 December 2006 and "Substantial Service Change" on 6 March 2007.

The Committee's Next Meeting

The Committee will next meeting on the morning of Wednesday 10 January 2007 in the Town Hall, Barrow.

For further of health scrutiny; please contact:

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