

EXECUTIVE REPORT

FULL 13.12.05

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CULTURAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO**COUNCILLOR ALLAN HOLLIDAY - PORTFOLIO HOLDER****KEITH PARKER - LEAD OFFICER****1 KEY ISSUES - PROGRESS REPORT****1.1 SPORTS DEVELOPMENT****a) Sports Club For Young People With Disabilities**

A sports club for young people with disabilities started on 7th November 2005. The club takes place at Whitehaven Sports Centre 4-5pm on Monday afternoons. The idea for the club came about as a result of 2 successful Access To Sport Festivals.

The club provides multi-sport activities for the young people including Boccia, Football and New Age Curling. Our new Hockey Community Sports Coach also delivers hockey. The club has also attracted young volunteers to help deliver activities from Whitehaven School who are currently doing their Millennium Volunteers award.

b) Coach Education Courses.

November has seen 2 courses delivered locally in Copeland. "Funding & Promoting Your Club" attracted 8 participants from Clubs in Copeland. The course provided information about different funding opportunities, how to obtain sponsorship, what funders look for in applications. The course also advised clubs about how they can promote their club and the activities that they do effectively.

The second course was "Adults Other Than Teachers", 16 adult helpers from schools in Copeland attended. This course introduces the PE National Curriculum to participants and advises about planning sports activities and how to make them safe. The second part of the course gives practical examples of games and adapted activities to do with the children in their school. Delivered by our Sports Development Officer and the Schools Sports Development Officer for Copeland. The course was well received as some comments from evaluations included: "Lively, Energetic, enjoyable, informative, relaxed & covered all abilities". "Very Educational & fun. Learnt a lot about how interesting you can make different sports and what children can learn from it". "Good course, lots of good games and lots of good feedback from the tutors".

1.2 WASTE MANAGEMENT

a) Twin Bin Extension

Colleagues will be aware that we have accepted funding from Cumbria County Council to extend our successful twin bin scheme to a further 3000 homes in Copeland. I am currently working with the Waste Services Manager and her team to ensure the areas that have shown the greatest interest in participating in this scheme are included in this phase. The project will involve a significant amount of rescheduling of rounds and we are being supported in this work by consultants working for WRAP (Waste Resources Action Programme) who have significant experience in this field.

b) Carlisle City Council visit

Members may already be aware from the local media that Carlisle City Council are currently looking the feasibility of alternate week collection systems. The Carlisle team are therefore looking at current "Best Practice" with the aim of learning from the experience of other authorities. As part of this learning from others exercise, the City Council's waste team visited recently to learn how our twin bin scheme was developed and introduced and what the impact has been. The visit was a resounding success, the Carlisle team said afterwards they had found the experience extremely useful and had learned a lot from Copeland. We offered them the opportunity of a follow-up visit may be taken.

1.3 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

a) Former Townhead Pit/Tip, Egremont

This former pit/tip is located just north of Egremont off the A5086 near Woodend.

The land is council owned, having been acquired in 1975. In 1997 it became known to the council that in the past various wastes had been deposited in the pit and that waste products (in the form of a tarry substance) were exposed on the surface. At the time it was considered sufficient to have the area fenced off to restrict access to it. Recently, the situation has been reassessed and it is now known that the contamination is a more serious matter than was previously thought and that, therefore, further detailed investigations are needed. It is anticipated that these further investigations could cost up to £10K and, therefore, a report to the Executive is to be prepared.

b) Appointment Of Flood And Coastal Defence Engineer

Further to my report to the last Council meeting I am pleased to be able to now report that Duncan Fyfe commenced duties with the Council on 21 November. Duncan is part of the Environmental Health Section and is based at the Council's offices at Moresby Parks.

1.4 OPEN SPACES

a) North West Business Excellence Awards 2005

I am delighted to report that the Parks Department received two awards at the North West Business Excellence Awards in Liverpool on the 9 November. I was also delighted to have been one of the Council's representatives at the event since these awards are described as the "Business Oscars of the North West". The awards provide recognition for an organisation that has embraced the concepts of Excellence and which can demonstrate a high level of achievement. They are aimed at organisations with a 3-5 year history of continuous improvement.

The first award presented recognised the achievement of the required high standard to be a finalist. Of which our parks service was one of thirteen organisations across the whole North West region achieve the grade.

The second award presented recognised the excellence in "customers results". Here our team was recognised as the best in the whole North West Region including both the private and public sector entrants.

b) Enforcement Unit

I am pleased to announce that 4 of the officers within the Enforcement Unit have passed their City & Guilds training in Parking Enforcement. Jointly with Allerdale, we have become only the second council in the country to have trained their staff to this level.

c) The Big Lottery Fund - Children's Play Initiative

The Big Lottery Fund have announced that a new £155 million children's play initiative will be launched in March 2006. Of this an allocation of £200,000 has been earmarked for the borough.

The Council has been asked to take the lead role in applying for funds and to work with local partners in the play sector to develop projects that will focus on areas of greatest need.

Full community consultation is expected with the voluntary and community sector to draw up a local play strategy. It is anticipated some projects will be delivered by local authorities, others may be contracted to voluntary and community organisations.

Big Lottery Fund will be providing published guidance about establishing play partnerships and producing play strategies.

An initial expression of interest form has been completed by officers with a detailed final application deadline being November 2006

1.5 THE BEACON & TOURISM SERVICES

Visitor Figures for The Beacon during October were 6849, a considerable increase on last year (5793 in October 2004). November's figures to date are 3247 (2334 in November 2004). The Gallery visitors for October were 3554 (1623 in October 2004). Visitors so far in November have been 1009 (1000 in November 2004). The current exhibition "Titanic – Honour and Glory" has been visited by over 12,000 locals and tourists. Due to its success, this exhibition will be extended until 7th January 2006.

Schools & Groups. 338 children were taught by Beacon staff during October (292 during October 2004), bringing the total number of pupil visits (BV170c) for the year so far to 1044. Bookings have been received for 211 pupils for November (51 during November 2004) and include Victorians, Roman Mosaics and World War 2 sessions.

Family Events. 13 half term workshops for both children and adults were fully booked. Activities in October to promote The Big Draw, a National event to get people of all ages drawing, included Crazy Cartoons and Underwater Odyssey for children and Life Drawing for adults. Bookings are now being taken for Christmas workshops including Christmas Crafts and Colossal Constructions.

Whitehaven Young Archaeologists' Club. On 28 October, the Young Archaeologists investigated "Bone Evidence" with archaeologist Sue Palmer and support from West Cumberland Hospital. On 29 November, the Club will experience a "Time Detectives" adventure at The Beacon.

1.6 LEISURE FACILITIES

a) Quest

The Sports Centre was successful in retaining its Quest quality system Accreditation for the third time recently. Once again the center improved its overall score from 68% to 70%

b) Westhouse

A new work placement has started work at the sports centre one day a week. Paul from disabled organization Westhouse has been working for the last 4 weeks alongside the leisure attendants.

c) Civic Hall

October saw a wide variety of events being staged at the Civic Hall - CAMRA's 3rd annual Beer Festival took place, the Nashville Nights & Dixie Days country show came to town and 80's legendary metal band Dogs D'Amour stopped at the Civic on their latest tour. The Panto Company returned to the hall with their latest production 'Hey Diddle, Diddle' with one of the audience informing us that 'it was the best pantomime I've ever seen'. Wrestling, the annual NCH Charity Show and Mad about the Musicals also appeared at the Civic. The highlight of the month though was yet another sell-out show, this time by popular author & retired schools inspector Gervase Phinn.

In November the Civic saw Simon & Oscar of the band Ocean Colour Scene play as part of a national tour. With the bands numerous hit singles & albums the Civic was packed out, with 555 customers. Yet another wonderful evening in a year that has seen the quality of acts visiting the hall rise to an all time high!!

d) Swimming Pool

Four new swimming teachers have been put through the ASA Assistant Swimming Teacher's course and have qualified to teach swimming at the pool. The teachers will assist in continuing the development of the teaching programme. Five new casual lifeguards have also been added to the staffing to assist in the cover at the pool.

New Aqua natal classes have been organised which run in partnership with West Cumbria Hospital on Wednesdays. This class allows for postnatal mothers to use the pool and get instruction with their new babies, and is proving very popular.

e) Bowls Centre

It's been a busy period for the bowls centre:

The men have reached the fourth round of the Denny Cup against Stanley from the North East. This involves 16 players from each club and 8 play at home and 8 play away. They play at the same time and the scores are accumulated so it can lead to exciting finishes.

One of Copeland's ladies Matty Ritson has reached the champions of champions final to be played at Carlisle Indoor on the 14th December 2005.

Not one but two father and sons have made it to National semi finals in this tournament, they could actually end up playing each other in an all Copeland final. They are Jackie and Johnny Walker and David and David Forster junior.

In the ladies national singles tournament our very own 13 year old Stephanie Moffat beat Sylvia Jeffrey's to reach the third round.

Three sponsorship deals have been secured to sponsor Christmas American tournament, February American tournament and the men's double rink league on a Thursday evening.

1.7 CLEANER GREENER SAFER FUNDING

At very short notice the Head of Leisure and Environmental Services has been asked to pull together a proposal to use the £2 million Cleaner Greener Safer funding allocated to Copeland. Working with a wide range of partners the intention is to have a package of projects that can be submitted to Government Office North West by the end of January. The funding is primarily intended to improve street cleaning, recycling and open space in South Whitehaven. It is hoped some creativity will be acceptable to GONW and a broader range of projects will be acceptable although including the primary targets in the core of the proposal.

2. EXECUTIVE DECISIONS RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

None

3. EXECUTIVE DECISIONS REPORTED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Subject: Whitehaven Regeneration Programme

Date of Decision: 18 October 2005

Decision Reference: EXE/05/0087

Context: The Whitehaven Regeneration Programme has four strands. The master-planning phase is nearing completion on the Town Centre and Pow Beck strands and these are moving toward implementation. Delivery plans must be made, including achieving status in the town planning system. A Regeneration Team is proposed and the acquisition of strategic sites recommended to safeguard delivery of the Programme.

It was note that Appendix A was only "in part" the proposed Delivery Structure Draft from West Lakes Renaissance

Decision

That

1. the reports produced by Broadway Maylan for Whitehaven Town Centre and White Young and Green for Pow Beck be noted and be approved as a basis for development as Action Area Plans within the Local Development Framework and as other guidance as appropriate and necessary to guide development in the Town;
2. a maximum of £20,000 from the capital element of the Planning Delivery Grant, as identified in the report to Executive dated 14th June 2005, be used to fund the additional consultancy undertaken by consultants Broadway Maylan as part of the Whitehaven Development Framework;
3. the principle of a Whitehaven Regeneration Delivery Team, supported by Copeland Borough Council, Cumbria County Council and West Lakes Renaissance (WLR), be supported;
4. subject to agreement in principle on the delivery team that a further report be brought to the Executive with details; and

subject to consideration of Appendix B & C under part 11 of the Agenda

5. the Council acquire and hold key strategic sites which become available in order to safeguard the regeneration of the Town Centre and Pow Beck in particular property know as 123 Newtown;
6. funding bids be submitted to West Lakes Renaissance to acquire the sites identified; and
7. the Council take on the client role in the procurement of construction contracts (details of a particular proposal are noted in the Part 2 to this report.

Subject: Whitehaven Regeneration Programme

Date of Decision: 18 October 2005

Decision Reference: EXE/05/0089

Context: To consider additional information prior to formally approving recommendations 5,6 & 7 EXE/05/0087 refers

Decision

That the decisions made in principle under Agenda Item 14 in part one of the agenda be approved.

Subject: Christmas Lighting

Date of Decision: 18 October 2005

Decision Reference: EXE/05/0093

Context:

This report advises Executive of the provisional award of the Christmas lighting contract to the Council's footway lighting contractor and seeks the allocation of £6,000 from Contingencies to meet a shortfall in the budget

Decision

That

- a) the placing of the order with the Council's footway lighting contractor be noted and approved; and
- b) the shortfall of £6,000, to cover necessary replacements of £6,000 funded from contingencies.

Subject: Twin Bin Funding Opportunity

Date of Decision: 8 November 2005

Decision Reference: EXE/05/0099

Context:

This report advises Member on the latest Waste Management developments in Cumbria and seeks approval to accept funding from Cumbria County Council to extend the twin bin scheme.

Note: Councillor Miss E Woodburn had not rejoined the meeting and it was therefore moved by Councillor H Wormstrup duly seconded that Councillor A Holliday Chair the meeting for this Agenda item

During consideration of this item it was noted that the Councillor A Holliday would be working with J Carrol to extend the scheme further than detailed in the report.

Decision

That a) Councillor A Holliday be appointed Chairman for this item;

b) the Cumbria County Councils offer of £117,468 from their Waste Performance Efficiency Grant be accepted and combined with Copelands £22,182; and

c) the grant to be spent on extending the twin bin refuse system with the Waste Services Manager in consultation Councillor Holliday finalising the definitive list.