

EXECUTIVE REPORT

DEPUTY LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

COUNCILLOR MIKE ASHBROOK – PORTFOLIO HOLDER

1 Key Issues – Progress Report

1.1 **Customer First Project**

As I reported to the last Council meeting we are actively working locally with our customers to ensure we put them at the heart of everything we do. We have set a corporate objective in line with this and are bringing about a range of changes and improvements in line with Customer comments. We are continuing to consult regularly with our customers, some of whom are working with us to be as effective as possible in meeting wider needs.

Nationally the Local Government Association launched their "Local Government Reputation Project" at their annual conference in July, and, as well as us taking action at a local level we intend to be part of the national project. We have set up a project group to help oversee and guide the process and the Improvement Board is monitoring progress. This is however not something that can be left to a project group or board to deliver; it is something in which we all have a part to play. We need to ensure we have a culture of putting the customer first and not damaging what we are trying to achieve by poor service or bad communication, comments or remarks.

We have already held a successful stakeholder meeting in April which helped to formulate our action plans and we will be repeating the event in October to report back and give further challenge to the what we are doing. We are keen to engage as wide a group as possible in this and would welcome any Member who would like to take part and also any member of the public who would like to be involved. Only by working together will we make a real impact.

1.2 **Customer Services**

The Customer Services team has had more success in its training programme. A number of the team have gained Institute of Customer Service qualifications: Samantha Fletcher, Angela Callan, Lesley Sharp and Liz Woodend for Communications and Sue Blair for Innovations. Their hard work has been recognised with national customer service qualifications, and Copeland's customers will be served better as a result.

Members of Corporate Team will be spending time in Copeland Direct during October. Each of them will be sitting at the front desk and in the contact centre shadowing colleagues in Copeland Direct in recognition of Customer Services week 3-7 October. This is part of the Corporate Team's programme

of improving their knowledge of the Council's activities outside their own areas, and to emphasise the importance of customer service.

1.3 **Leisure Trust – Options Development**

I would like to take this opportunity to advise colleagues of recent progress with the development of the Leisure Trust being considered for the management of our sport and recreation facilities. Briefly:

- An advertisement has been placed nationally and via the European Journal (OJEU) seeking expressions of interest. At the time of writing this has had a healthy response from a wide variety of potential trusts.
- The services of Allerdale BC's project manager have been secured.
- The OSC Social Well Being has nominated 2 of its members to sit on a small steering group overseeing the procurement process.

Good progress is now being made on this project, to the extent that I expect a report coming to Executive early next year giving the Council a number of options of how to proceed.

1.4 **Performance Improvement**

The Council is preparing for the next step in the CPA process – the Use of Resources judgement. By the end of September we must have submitted a detailed account of how well we manage and use the resources available to us, and improve value for money. The Audit Commission will be checking our report and coming to inspect the evidence we have given to support what we have said. The results of this assessment will be included in the annual External Auditor's letter at the end of the year.

Although we will be trying to show that we are working hard at improving the efficiency of our operations and give good value for money, we know we have a little way to go. This new assessment is part of the latest CPA, which has become known as "CPA – the Harder Test".

EXECUTIVE DECISIONS RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

None

EXECUTIVE DECISIONS REPORTED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Subject: Statements of Decisions made on 5 & 20 July 2005

Date of Decision: 26 July 2005

Decision Reference: EXE/05/0040

Context: Decisions made at the previous meetings requiring formal approval

Decision

That the Statements of decisions made at the meeting held on the 5 & 20 July 2005 be agreed as a correct record.

Subject: Forward Plan

Date of Decision: 26 July 2005

Decision Reference EXE/05/0041

Context:

To consider the forward plan of Key decisions July - November 2005

Decision

a) That the Forward Plan of Key Decisions July - November 2005 be noted

Subject: Statement of Executive Decisions held on 26 July 2005

Date of Decision: 16 August 2005

Decision Reference: EXE/05/0055

Context: Decisions made at the previous meetings requiring formal approval.

Decision

That the Statements of decisions made at the meeting held on the 26 July 2005 be agreed as a correct record.

Subject: Forward Plan

Date of Decision: 5 July 2005

Decision Reference EXE/05/0056

Context:

To consider the forward plan of Key decisions August - November 2005

Decision

That the Forward Plan of Key Decisions be noted