

EXECUTIVE REPORT**FULL 18.04.06****BUSINESS GROWTH PORTFOLIO****COUNCILLOR JIM HEWITSON - PORTFOLIO HOLDER****MIKE TICHFORD - LEAD OFFICER****1 KEY ISSUES - PROGRESS REPORT****Property Database**

The Economic and Tourism Development Section have purchased the “Evolutive” system currently being used by Carlisle CC, SLDC and Eden District Council. The system will be installed in early April with a training day organised for 27 April. It is hoped that the service will go “live” to the Business Community by 31 May 2006.

Industrial Estate/Review

DTZ were appointed by the Steering Group to undertake a review of priority sites, in West Cumbria, with the potential to attract companies, linked to the Nuclear Decommissioning Programme. The study is due to be completed in early May. The Economic and Tourism Development Manager expects to meet DTZ, in the near future, to put forward the case for sites in Copeland.

Regional Economic Strategy

The North West Regional Development Agency launches the Regional Economic Strategy Review the twenty year period 2006 – 2026 and has been proposed in consultation with hundreds of public and private sector organisations, including Copeland BC. Following the Council's response, it is heartening to see a specific commitment to develop and implement an integrated economic plan for West Cumbria. The Strategy sets out an overall vision of what the Northwest would be like if its potential was realised:

A dynamic, sustainable international economy, which competes on the basis of knowledge, advanced technology and an excellent quality of life for all where:

1. Productivity and enterprise levels are high, driven by innovation, leadership excellence and high skills; and carbon emissions are low
2. Manchester and Liverpool are vibrant European Cities and, with Preston, key drivers of city-regional growth
3. Growth opportunities around Crewe, Chester, Warrington, Lancaster and Carlisle are fully developed
4. Key growth assets are fully utilised, (Priority Sectors, the Higher Education and Science Base, Ports/Airports, Strategic Regional Sites,

the Natural Environment especially the Lake District, and the Rural Economy.)

5. The economies of East Lancashire, Blackpool, Barrow and West Cumbria are regenerated
6. Employment rates are high and concentrations of low employment are eliminated

There are three major drivers to improving the Northwest's economic performance and achieving the overall goals of the vision:

Improving productivity and growing the market – particularly in terms of economic output per person employed. This means both retaining and increasing the number of higher added-value jobs in the region by investing in innovation, R & D, leadership and higher level skills.

Growing the size and capability of the workforce – getting more people into work, especially in our most deprived areas, amongst disadvantaged communities and areas remote from growth. This means ensuring people have the skills to work, linking people to nearby job opportunities and encouraging more new businesses.

Creating the right conditions for sustainable growth and private sector investment – through investing in the region's environment, culture, infrastructure and communities. This underpins everything in the strategy.

To measure the region's progress, the strategy sets eight ambitious short-term targets to be achieved by 2009:

GVA Growth	Achieve growth in economic output above the average for England
Job Creation	Create 150,000 new jobs, 80,000 of which should be in knowledge-based occupations
Company formation	Raise the company formation rate to 21,000 per year
No qualifications	Reduce the number of people with no qualifications by 80,000 and ensure that no district has more than 29% of people with no qualifications
Graduate qualifications	Increase the number of graduates in the workforce by 120,000
Employment rate	Increase the number of people in the workforce by 83,000 and ensure no district has an employment rates lower than 68%
Deprivation	Reduce the number of areas which are categorised in the worst 5% nationally in terms of deprivation
CO2 emissions	Reduce CO2 emissions per £ of economic output

The strategy also identifies longer term ambitions to be achieved by 2026 and these are shown in full in the strategy. Further details of the strategy can be obtained from the NWDA's web site – www.nwda.co.uk/strategy

Regeneration North East Copeland (Previous Cleator Moor Partnership)

Funding has been secured through Westlakes Renaissance/European Region Development Fund, Copeland Borough Council and Home Housing Association to enable a Regeneration officer to be appointed for Cleator Moor and surrounding area.

An advert has been placed and it is hoped that an officer will be in post by early May to help Regeneration North East Copeland drive forward its regeneration plans for the area.

Egremont and Millom Market Town Initiatives

Both Market Towns have completed the first year performance plan in 2005/06 which has enabled a significant number of projects to commence and start regeneration activity.

The performance plans for 2006/07 are currently being developed and will be presented to the Executive in due course.

South Whitehaven Partnership

The SRB programme Manager post is vacant officers of Copeland and Cumbria County Council are working together to develop a funding package to support the closure of the programme and support ongoing development of the Neighbourhood management programme. Decision is required from the West Cumbria Strategic Partnership before being able to advertise the post.

In the interim Brian Kirkbride Community Renewal Manager and Julian Smith Community Team Leader are supporting the partnership and staff until a new manager is in post.

2. EXECUTIVE DECISIONS RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

None

3. EXECUTIVE DECISIONS REPORTED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Subject: Whitehaven Coastal Fringe

Date of Decision: 14 March 2006

Decision Reference: EXE/05/182

Context: This report presents proposals in regard to developing Haig Colliery site and Rhodia site as part of a Regeneration Programme to enhance Whitehaven Coastal Fringe.

Decision

That Members agree to the following recommendations:

- 1) Note the current progress in developing a scheme for the Coastal Fringe and recommended delivery structure.**
- 2) Approve the Memorandum of Agreement as detailed in Appendix 1.**
- 3) To seek in principal agreement to investigate acquisition of Coastal Fringe land and subsequent transfer to the Land Restoration Trust in the form of a lease term following completion of works.**
- 4) The Council seek opt to tax land forming the Coastal Fringe at the relevant time**
- 5) The Council develops proposals to procure a project manager and detailed design team in conjunction with English Partnerships.**