

**ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT ON PLANNING POLICY 2005/6**

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER:** Cllr Geoff Blackwell  
**LEAD OFFICER:** Mike Tichford  
**REPORT AUTHOR:** Vikki Gregg

**Summary:** As part of the new planning regime, all local authorities are required to submit an Annual Monitoring Report to the Secretary of State by 31 December each year. This sets out:  
a) how successfully existing planning policy is being implemented  
b) progress on the production of planning policy documents which make up the Local Development Framework (LDF).

<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>To note the assessments of how well the Local Plan objectives are being met through policy implementation and of progress with the Council's Local Development Framework. To approve the Annual Monitoring Report for submission to the Secretary of State and for posting on the Council's website.</b>
------------------------	---

**Impact on delivering the Corporate Plan:** Up to date planning policies are an essential part of delivering many of the Council's Quality of Life, Economic Prosperity and Nuclear Management objectives. Also, one of the Council's Core Values is to "achieve excellence through continuous improvement" and monitoring performance through such exercises as the AMR assists the improvement process.

**Impact on other statutory objectives (e.g. crime & disorder, LA21):** Assists in the monitoring of policies which aim to deliver a range of statutory objectives under social, economic and environmental banners which are aligned with the requirements of the West Cumbria Community Strategy.

**Financial and human resource implications:** None of this report. Monitoring and production of the document is part of the Section's work programme.

**Project & Risk Management:** This is a statutory requirement, there may be financial implications with possible loss of Planning Delivery Grant if the document is not submitted to the Secretary of State by 31 December.

**Key Decision Status**

- **Financial:** N/A  
- **Ward:** N/A

**Other Ward Implications:** All Wards outside of National Park are affected. The Lake District National Park Authority is the local planning authority for the Park and therefore has responsibility for the production of documents which make up their Local Development Framework, including the Annual Monitoring Report.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 came into effect in September 2004 and replaced the Local Plan system with the Local Development Framework (LDF).
- 1.2 The Council is required to produce and submit to the Secretary of State each year an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). The AMR provides a monitoring framework to annually assess our performance in relation to the implementation of planning policies and the production of the new documents which will make up the Local Development Framework.
- 1.3 This year's AMR is required to be submitted to the Secretary of State no later than the 31 December 2006. The period covered by the report is 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006.

## 2. FORMAT & FINDINGS

- 2.1 The AMR is made up of 4 sections:

**Profile** – A portrait of the Borough, featuring key characteristics, issues etc based on the version written in last year's AMR (which is available on the Council's website). It includes a schedule of headline indicators which can be found in Appendix A to this report.

**Local Plan** – An assessment of the current Local Plan and how the objectives are being implemented.

**Local Development Framework** – An assessment of progress on the production of documents which make up the Local Development Framework.

**Indicators** – A variety of indicators are required at different levels. They are generally grouped under the headings of contextual, core and local output indicators and are organised in the AMR by themes. They are used in the assessment of the Local Plan and will be further developed year on year to assess the new policy documents in the LDF. They include some mandatory requirements like Best Value Performance Indicators and those being developed for monitoring the Regional Spatial Strategy whilst we are working with other Cumbrian authorities to develop joint approaches to monitoring and the development of locally sensitive indicators.

### Local Plan

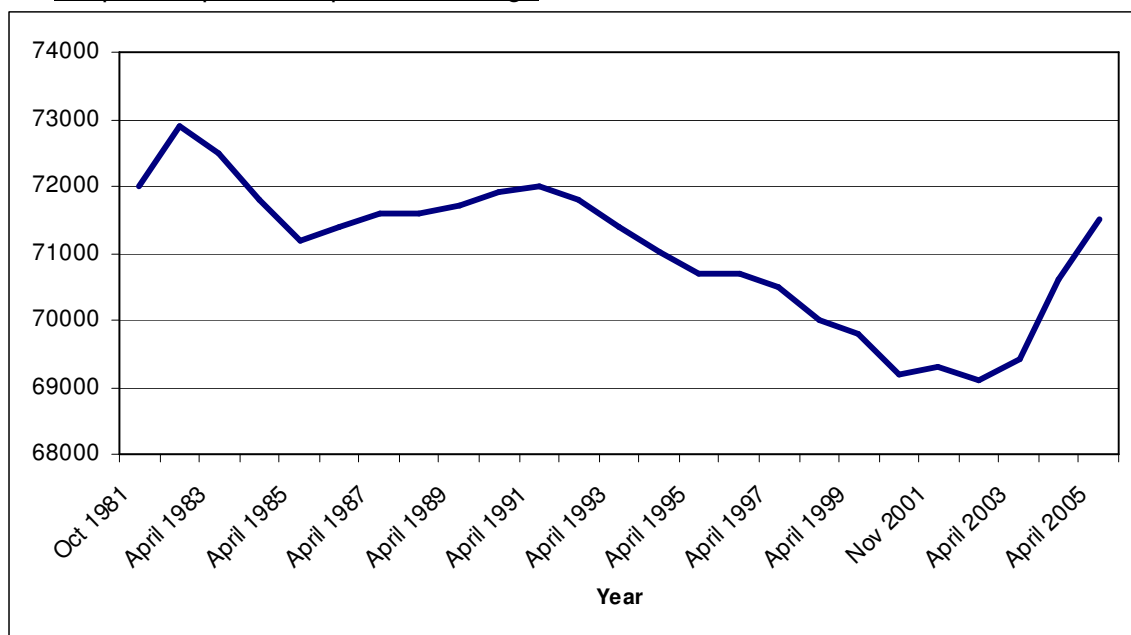
- 2.2 The Copeland Local Plan 2001 – 2016 was adopted by the Council on 6 June 2006. The new planning system allows Local Planning Authorities to "save" policies contained within their Local Plan for a period of at least three years from the date of adoption. The new LDF documents will successively replace policies in the Local Plan over time.
- 2.3 The aim of the AMR is to provide an overview of how change is occurring around the key themes of the Local Plan for instance, Housing and Population, Economic Regeneration and the Environment. The Local Plan policies and proposals were developed from 17 objectives. The AMR provides a monitoring framework to assess how effective Local Plan policies are in achieving these objectives. This report presents an example of objectives in the Local Plan and provides details of the indicators used to assess progress.

2.4 For Housing and Population, the Local Plan objectives include *'to stabilise and maintain population levels within communities'*, to ensure *'housing needs of the community are met, whilst making 'effective use of previously developed land and buildings'* and *'that local facilities are available to everyone'*. Progress can be demonstrated through a number of indicators, presented below:

- **Borough Population:** Progress is evident in recent years terms of population growth. During the 1980s and 90s, the population of Copeland declined – from 72,900 in 1982 (a MYE or Mid Year Estimate) to 69,090 in 2002 (again a MYE). This was due to a decline in fertility and birth rates, which failed to offset continuing loss through out-migration. However, since 2002, MYE figures released by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) show that the population of Copeland has increased from 69,090 to 71,460 in 2005. There was an increase of 330 in 2003 and much larger increases of 1,200 in 2004 and 900 in 2005. Although there was a decrease of 210 through natural change during this period, the figures reveal an increase of 860 through internal migration and 1700 through international migration.

- **Percentage 20-29 year olds:** This age group is a particular concern for the whole county as generally it is in decline. Locally the high levels of out-migration during the 1980s and 90s was very much evident in the declining numbers in the age group however, the Copeland area has seen a positive growth recently with an 8% increase in this age group during the period 2001 – 2005.

Graph1: Copeland Population Change



- **Sustainable housing development:** Government policy is to achieve more new housing on previously developed or “brownfield” land. Table 1 shows the percentage of residential development completed in recent years which involves such sites and Table 2, the percentage of approvals given by the Council for housing developments on previously developed land.

Table 1: Percentage of housing completions on previously developed land

	% of housing completions on previously developed land	Target 70%
2001 – 2002	21.5%	
2002 – 2003	28.3%	
2003 – 2004	17.7%	
2004 – 2005	45.6%	
2005 – 2006	49.3%	

- Table 1 shows clearly that although the percentage of housing completions on previously developed land has been increasing over the last few years, it is still below the 70% target which has been set in the Regional Spatial Strategy / Joint Structure Plan. The problem is that there is a fairly substantial bank of planning permissions which have still to be built out and this involves a high proportion of “greenfield” sites since until 2004 there was no recycling target. The Council cannot control when planning permissions are converted to building on site but it can influence the picture over time as new consents are granted and where previous consents come up for renewal. Progress is being made on this score with The Council’s Planning Panel having achieved 90.3% of permissions granted involving brownfield.

Table 2: Percentage of housing approvals on previously developed land

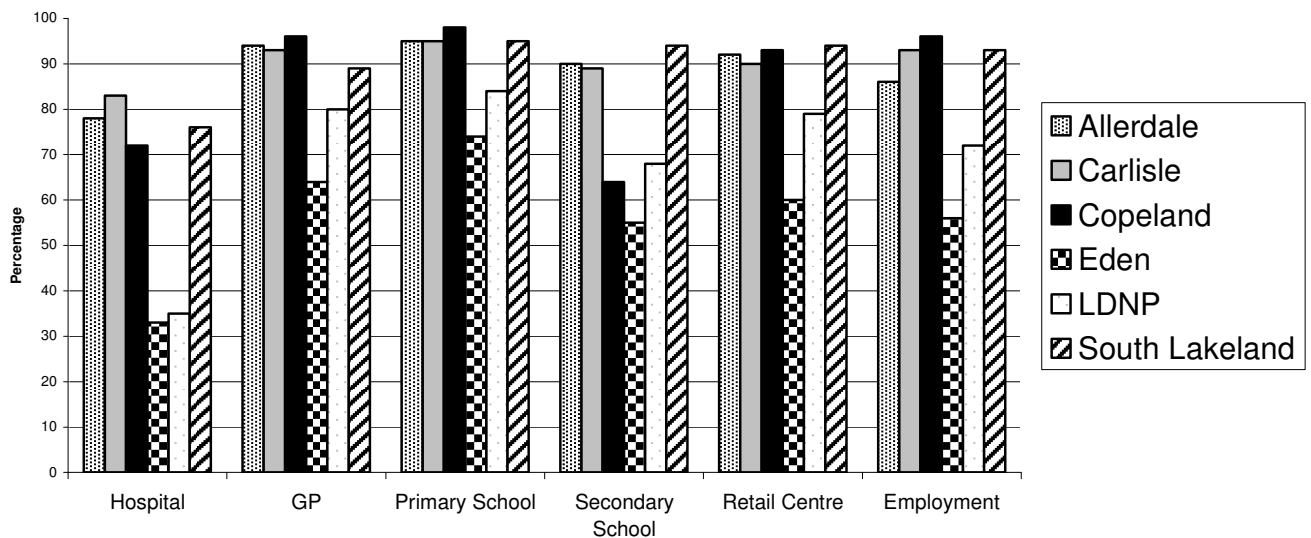
	% of housing approvals on previously developed land
2003 – 2004	51.8%
2004 – 2005	61%
2005 – 2006	90.3%

- Accessibility to services.** In terms of accessible services, the Council performs well in encouraging development which is within 30 minutes public transport time of GP, hospital, school, employment and health care. Table 4 shows findings from a recent accessibility study for the Copeland planning area. Graph 3 shows a comparison for all the Local Planning Authority areas within Cumbria (except Barrow).

Table 4: Accessibility

<u>Copeland</u>	<b>Total % of completed housing sites within 30mins of service by public transport</b>
Hospital	72%
GP	96%
Primary School	98%
Secondary School	64%
Retail Centre	93%
Employment	96%

Graph 3: Accessibility – Local Planning Authority comparisons



2.5 For economic regeneration, the Local Plan aims to '*encourage sustainable growth*', '*diversify the urban and rural economies*' and '*improve access to jobs*'.

- **New Jobs:** The Council target is the creation of 5000 new jobs (rather than backfilled jobs) over the next 10 years. The figures used over the last 4 years to monitor this target show that this is being achieved:

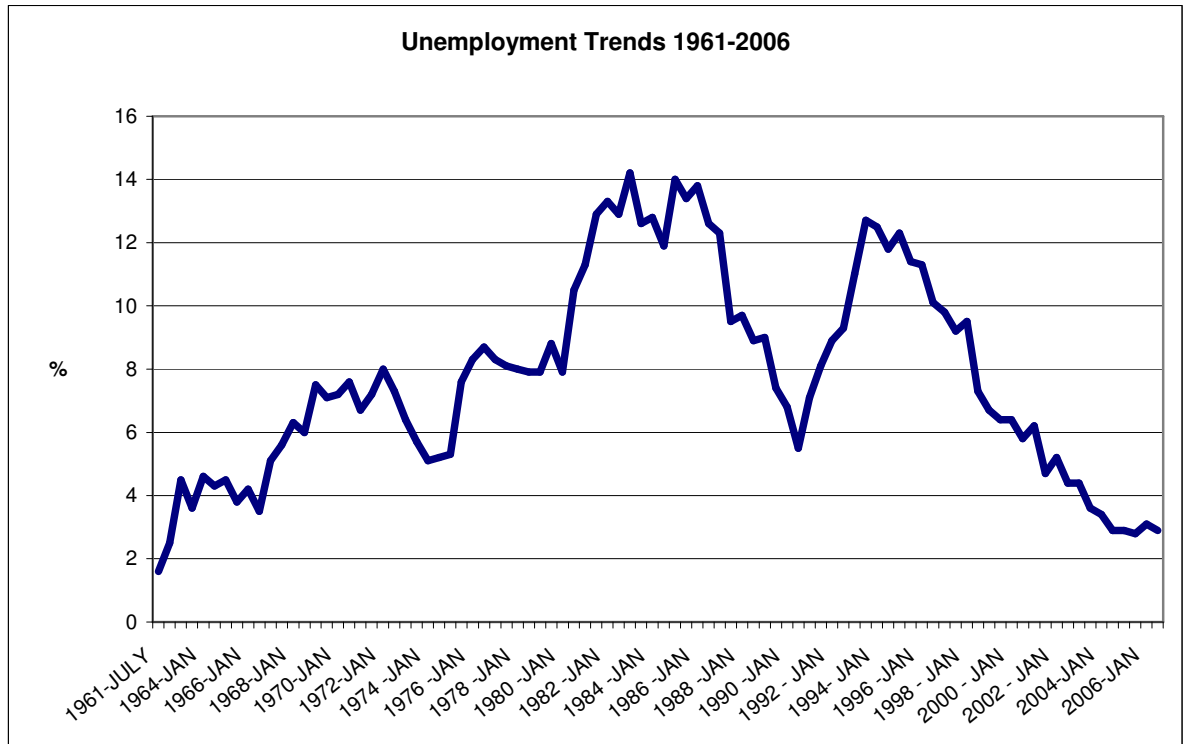
Table 3: New Jobs Created

Year	New jobs
2002/03	689
2003/04	480
2004/05	413
2005/06	466
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2048</b>

Sources: CRED, WCDA, Business Lists & Copeland Records

- **Unemployment:** Graph 2 shows unemployment trends for Copeland from 1961 to 2005. During the period 2000 to 2005, the number of unemployed claiming benefit has decreased significantly from 2,041 in 2000 to 1,305 in 2005. Although the area has experienced positive progress in reducing unemployment, the area's unemployment rate of 3% is still higher than the Cumbrian average (2.1%) and North West average (2.9%).

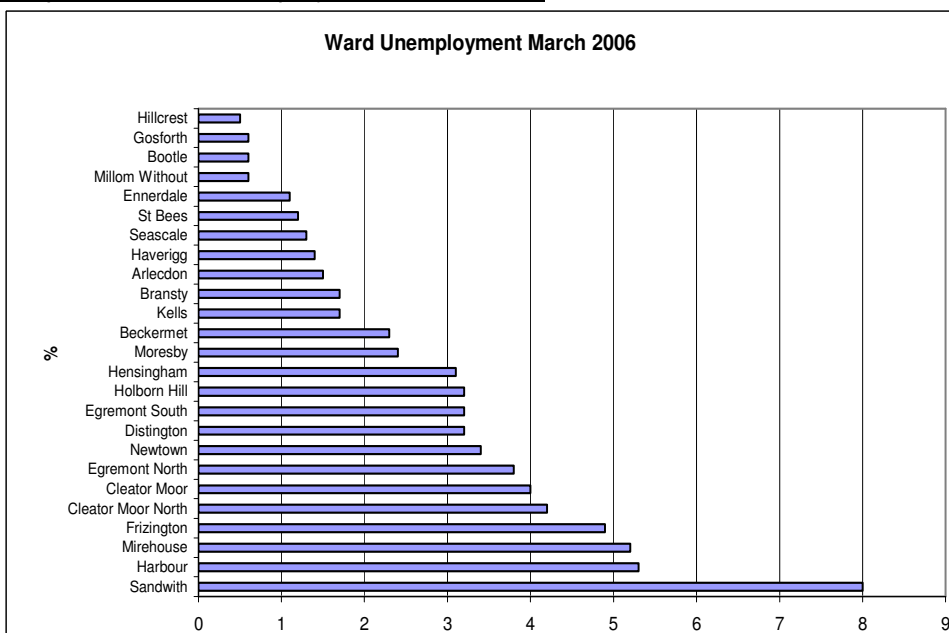
**Graph 2: Unemployment Trends 1961 - 2006**



Source: Office for National Statistics

Graph 3 presents Ward unemployment in March 2006. Despite overall falling unemployment rates, the area has pockets of high unemployment. The top three wards recording the highest unemployment rate in Copeland were Sandwith 8%, Mirehouse 5.3% and Harbour 5.2%.

**Graph 3: Ward Unemployment March 2006**



- **Employment development:** The Local Plan encourages sustainable economic growth, the area saw a positive 26% increase in gross floorspace for industrial and commercial use (from 9,021m<sup>2</sup> in 2004/05 to 11,323m<sup>2</sup> in 2005/06) which reflects particularly good progress at the Westlake Science & Technology Park. Good progress was also made in terms of the use of previously developed land with 69% of industrial / commercial development in this category compared to 11.1% in the previous year.
- **Town centres:** Unfortunately, during the monitoring period, there was a standstill in new development in our town centres. In part this reflects delay whilst decisions are made on large store proposals in Whitehaven and a period of re-adjustment for Millom, Egremont and Cleator Moor as these town centres establish new roles in terms of the West Cumbria retail context (as noted in the Local Plan).

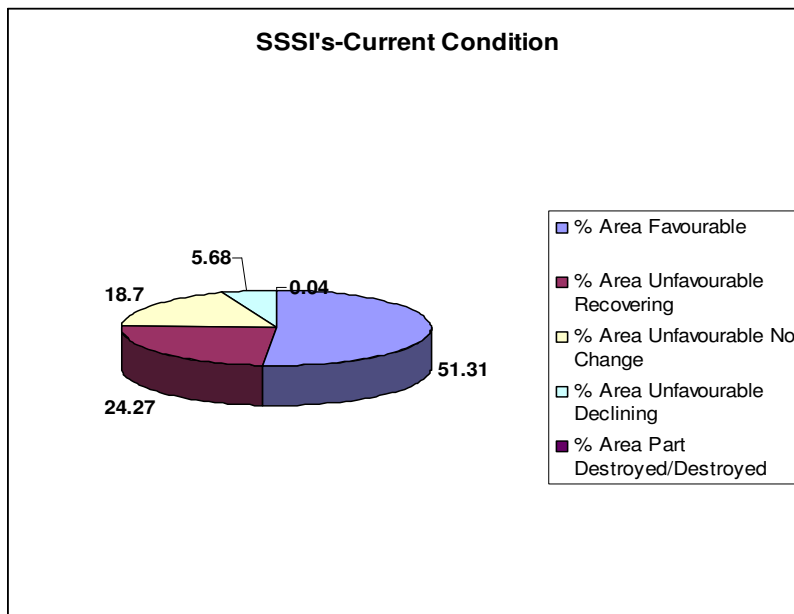
Service	Amount Completed within Town Centres
Retail	0 m <sup>2</sup>
Office	0
Leisure	0
Total	0 m <sup>2</sup>

- **Tourism.** The Western Lake District Tourism Partnership aims to achieve a 5% increase each year for visitor numbers, tourism revenue and tourism employment. Comparing the period 2004 to 2005, unfortunately, performance has not achieved these targets. There was 0% change in visitor numbers from 2004 to 2005, 3.2% increase in tourism revenue and 1.3% increase in full-time equivalents employed in the tourism industry.

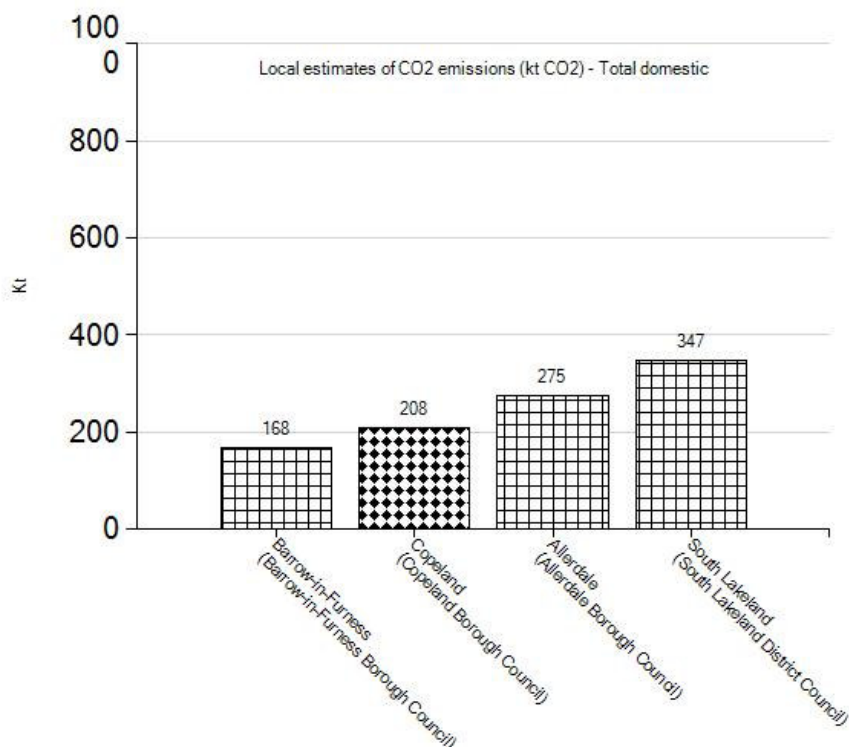
2.6 In terms of the environment, the Local Plan aims to protect the environment through '*protecting and enhancing biodiversity*' and '*ensuring that air quality is not adversely affected by development*'.

- **Biodiversity:** The borough of Copeland has a total of 37 SSSI designated sites encompassing 12,969.33 hectares. There have been no changes to this designated land over the last 12 months. Natural England has assessed the majority of the borough's SSSI land and the pie chart below sets out the current condition of Copeland's SSSI's: Less than 6% of the SSSI's are in an unfavourable declining or destroyed category, with the vast majority being in a favourable, recovering and no change conditions.

Graph 4 – SSSI's Current Condition



- **Air Quality:** When looking at air quality, the graph below provides a comparison of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Copeland, Barrow, Allerdale and South Lakeland. As can be seen from the graph Copeland and Barrow have lower CO<sub>2</sub> emissions when comparing to Allerdale and South Lakeland.



Data supplied by DEFRA, Date saved: 05/12/2006



### Local Development Framework

- 2.7 The AMR must provide an assessment of the Council's progress on the production of documents which make up the Local Development Framework. This is monitored against the timetable and milestones set out in our Local Development Scheme (LDS) which was produced in March 2005.
- 2.8 When the new Act came into force, the Copeland Local Plan had reached a late stage of preparation and was allowed to continue to adoption. The main target during the period May 2005 to April 2006 (this AMR assessment period) was to progress the Local Plan to adoption. The Local Plan targets were successfully achieved, with the Local Plan adopted on 6 June 2006.
- 2.9 Although the Local Plan target was achieved, there has been some slippage in the production of other policy documents identified in the Local Development Scheme since then (April 2006). The AMR evaluates the document production timetable and confirms that the Council will look towards a formal revision of the LDS early in 2007. There may well be other changes made necessary through the West Cumbria Spatial Masterplan and the replacement Regional Spatial Strategy which is likely to be approved in late 2007.
- 2.10 The Local Plan has made reasonable progress in achieving sustainability objectives, but the LDF will provide more co-ordinated, focussed approach to facilitating the needs of regeneration particularly through the scheduled Area Action Plans.
- 2.11 As ever, resources will be a key issue in achieving results. The Planning Policy Section is a small unit and currently running under establishment strength. It is hoped to recruit successfully in the new year and to continue to explore the potential for joint working with other authorities e.g. the current project for a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment is shared with 4 other Cumbrian authorities.

### **Appendix A – Headline Indicators**

#### **List of Background Documents:**

Copeland Local Development Scheme March 2005  
Copy for reference in Members' Room

**Others Consulted:** Corporate Team

## Appendix A

### HEADLINE INDICATORS

COPELAND DISTRICT	Figures 2005/06 (unless stated otherwise)
Population Structure:	
Population	71,500
Population change 1991-2005	0%
Population change 2004-2005	+1.3%
Population forecast (dates)....	72,400 (2010)
	75,500 (2020)
	77,900 (2029)
Age Structure 2005 MYE	
0-15	13,000 18.2%
16-24	7,600 10.7%
25-44	19,400 27.2%
45-59	15,200 21.3%
60+	16,300 22.8%
Household Type and tenure:	2001 Census
Household size:	2.31
Percentage of single adult households	30.1%
Owned outright	30.0%
Purchase with a mortgage	37.5%
Rented (RSL or private landlord)	29.7%
House Price:	Apr 05 – Mar 06
Average:	£120,353
detached:	£198,112
semi-detached:	£105,465
terraced housing:	£80,060
Flat/Maisonette	£97,777
Housing Stock	2001 Census
Total Housing stock:	31401
Percentage detached house or bungalow	21.6%
Percentage semi-detached	37.5%
Percentage Terraced	31.1%
Percentage flat, maisonette or bungalow	8.2%

Percentage of vacant dwellings:	3.1%
Commuting and Car ownership	
percentage of residents commuting by car:	69.8%
percentage of residents travelling over 10 km to work:	34.0%
Percentage households with access to a car	72.1%
Labour Market	
Economically Active	32,400 (77.5%)
Unemployment	3% (Mar 06)
GVA (West Cumbria & Furness)	+5.1% (2002-2003)
Working age population with no qualifications (Jan – Dec 05)	11.6% (UK av 14.3)
NVQ4 & above (Jan – Dec 05)	19.9% (UK av 26.5)