

Executive Report

BUSINESS GROWTH PORTFOLIO

COUNCILLOR JIM HEWITSON – PORTFOLIO HOLDER

FERGUS McMORROW – LEAD OFFICER

1. KEY ISSUES – PROGRESS REPORT

1.1 Cultural Industries

Of the developments I have to report, none is at a conclusion and they highlight how issues can cut across portfolios

Meeting with the Vice-principal of Carlisle Institute of Art.

Mr McMorrow and I met Charles Mitchell on 30 September. Much of that meeting was taken up with Mr Mitchell highlighting the developments in HE which appear on the Leader's report. And as well as issues of business growth we discussed those of culture and tourism. One idea which I hope to pursue might well be entitled Art in Copeland and will involve small businesses whose focus is the visual arts. The aim of this would be to promote creative industries in the area.

We also discussed the possibility of bringing an exhibition to this area – to the Beacon – which would celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Wilberforce Act in 2007.

To this end we have arranged for Peter Tyas, Copeland's Arts Officer and Sue Palmer to visit the Institute and discuss taking these ideas forward.

1.2 Inward Investment

Mr McMorrow and I met with Ralph Howard Director of Community Economy and Environment at Cumbria County Council and John Grainger, Director of Operations at **Cumbria** Inward Investment Agency. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the way forward following the change in arrangements from those we had with the Cumbria Inward Investment Agency. I am not yet in a position to report in detail the results of the meeting because there are others who still need to be consulted, I was happy that we can take things forward for the benefit of Copeland.

1.3 Market Towns

In Egremont Market Town Initiative the Youth Works Project has been approved by the Local Partnership. It will assist young people with skill needs. A scheme to make grants available to improve underused and derelict buildings in the commercial centre has also not been agreed (Town Centre Enhancement Scheme).

Both Millom and Egremont programmes have approved support for business networks to foster best practice and competitiveness.

1.4 Enterprise

On 21st October the launch of 'The Hub', an organisation that will nurture and support Social Enterprises in West Cumbria, will take place. It is funded by West Lake Renaissance's EU funding.

1.5 Regeneration Capacity

Whilst there are still significant staffing shortages in Regeneration some progress has been made with recruitment to the service in the last month. The new Economic Development and Tourism Manager has now been appointed and will take up the post in November. Two new Project Officer positions have been offered to candidates and accepted and an additional Planner has been appointed to the Regeneration Strategy Team. Post holders have not yet taken up these posts and there are still a number of posts to be filled. Discussions are also taking place with partners on the establishment of a joint West Cumbria Regeneration Delivery Team which would allow resources to be pooled to greater effect.

2. **EXECUTIVE DECISIONS RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL**

None

3. **EXECUTIVE DECISIONS REPORTED FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

Subject: Egremont and Millom Market Town Programme

Date of Decision: 27 September 2005

Decision Reference: EXE/05/070

Context:

To inform Members of the approved Performance Plans for Egremont and Millom covering 2005/06 and to outline management procedures agreed with NWDA, each Partnership and the Council.

Note: Councillor J Hewitson Chaired the meeting.

Decision**That**

- a) the approved Performance Plan for Egremont 2005/06 be noted;
- b) the approved Performance Plan for Millom 2005/06 be noted;
- c) the NWDA approved Management System Health Checks for each town be noted; and
- d) systems being implemented to safeguard the Council as accountable body be noted.

