

JOINT AUTHORITY SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP:
WEST CUMBRIA STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP MEETING
THURSDAY, 15TH NOVEMBER 2007
LAKES COLLEGE

Present:

Cllr John Ardron	Allerdale Borough Council
Cllr Yvonne Clarkson	Copeland Borough Council
Cllr Peter Connolly	Copeland Borough Council
Cllr Ray Cole	Cumbria County Council
Cllr Duncan Fairbairn	Cumbria County Council
Cllr Keith Hitchen (Chair)	Copeland Borough Council
Cllr Ron Munby	Allerdale Borough Council
Cllr Martin Wood	Allerdale Borough Council

Staff present:

T Capper (H of Democratic Services)	Copeland Borough Council
J Murray (Scrutiny Officer)	Allerdale Borough Council
N Brooker (Policy Officer)	West Cumbria Strategic Co-ordination Unit

Apologies:

Cllr Bernard Kirk	Cumbria County Council
Cllr Willis Metherell	Copeland Borough Council
Cllr John Hunter	Allerdale Borough Council

1. Declaration of interests

Cllr Ray Cole: personal: due to his Membership of Cumbria Police Authority.

2. Notes of the previous meeting

Members agreed that the notes of the previous meeting were a correct record. They noted that a meeting of the Task and Finish Group had taken place earlier that week, that it had been an extremely helpful meeting and that the Group had felt that Copeland did not currently have the resources to provide enough information on affordable housing which would mean that any further work would not properly cover the whole of West Cumbria. It was crucial for work on affordable housing to be backed up with sufficient evidence before policy decisions could be taken.

In light of this the Group considered that it should not meet again for six months whilst progress on the action plan and the Regional Spatial Strategy was monitored. The opportunity, at that time, could be taken to reassess the resources of the councils and whether it would be appropriate for the group to do further work.

3. Comments on the Cumbria Community Strategy

Members heard the key points for the West Cumbria Strategic Partnership identified by the Co-ordination Unit and concurred with the conclusions reached. In addition, Members commented as follows:

Intro (Pages 4-5)

- Also no mention made in the 'sense of Cumbria' about the diverse geographical nature of the County affecting key services, for example transport, a particular rural issue – the document should be rural-proofed.
- No-one appears to take responsibility for integrated transport, a difficult issue as many providers are private sector. There is no alternative to car in many areas which affects people's ability to reduce their carbon footprint.
- The intro could also make mention of how delivery of the strategy will be realised.
- Agree that the strategy fails to give a sense of Cumbria in the introduction.
- The importance of affordable housing to the future sustainability of rural areas in particular was acknowledged by all present, impacting on services, for example schools.
- The introduction also needs to bring everything together. One heading impacts on others, but there is little in the way of linkages.
- Members questioned whether the 'economy' section was representative. While acknowledging that there had been some improvement in Cumbria as a whole, they had been reliably informed that Gross Value Added (GVA) both in Cumbria and more particularly in West Cumbria, still lagged behind the region, the country and many parts of Europe. If this wasn't detailed it may affect future income. (Members also asked for up-to-date GVA figures).
- Under healthy communities, there was no mention of sport, schools and education and the contribution they played to healthy communities. (Members also asked for more specific information with respect to life expectancy in West Cumbria).

The Vision (Page 6):

- 'There is the best for every child, young person and their families' – doesn't mean anything, standing alone. Should quality of service be added?

- Festivals should be included under the diverse heritage bullet, increasingly important to many parts of Cumbria.

Access (Page 7):

- Under the key actions, Members suggested that some reference should be made to isolation, ensure transport policy is joined up and addresses isolation issues, particularly in the south of the County. Members still feel strongly about the detrunking of the A595

Children & Young People (Page8):

- How will we know we are getting there – reduction in drug and alcohol abuse in young people if this is measurable?
- Key actions exclude leisure opportunities for young people out of school hours.

Economy (Page 9):

- A suggestion was made that perhaps a higher percentage of owner/occupier houses might be measurable?
- Under key actions, there was some concern that it should be specified that outdoor education and recreation across the county would be supported.
- Develop and supply high quality employment sites – and fill the ones we have – Members were keen that it should be stressed that there are a number of high quality units in West Cumbria which are not being used.
- That in addition to the Support the West Cumbria Masterplan, there should be support for regional aspirations contained with the LSP strategies and plans.
- A suggestion was made whether the strategy needs to consider issues arising from immigrant workers, which have risen significantly in the past two years.

Built and Natural Environment (Page 10):

- Reducing fly-tipping should be an outcome.
- With respect to renewable energy generation, Members felt that this statement should be qualified that it doesn't have a visual impact on the countryside or an impact on people's quality of life.

Healthy Communities (Page 11):

- It was suggested 'AND AFFORDABLE' be added to 'Health and social care services are of a high quality and responsive'.

Heritage and Culture (Page 12):

- Members endorsed reference under key actions of a cultural legacy of the 2012 Olympics, noting that there had been little in way of legacy from the Commonwealth Games in Manchester.

Housing and Planning (Page 13):

- Members agreed with the key actions, but added that there should be activity to support ALL people living in their own homes (for example young people too).

Older People (Page 14):

- This was agreed although mention was made of partnership working with the voluntary sector.

Safer Communities (Page 15):

- Members noted that there was no key action to reflect road safety issues and should include mention of possibly increasing road safety cameras or high visibility police patrols.

Stronger Communities (Page 16):

- Members felt that there needed to be clarity between the role of neighbourhood management, community boards under key actions.

AGREED - that Nicola Brooker and Jane Murray should formulate these comments into a response to the West Cumbria Strategic Partnership Board on 19 November 2007.

The meeting closed at 11.15am.