

EXECUTIVE REPORT

FULL 21.06.05

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CULTURAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO**COUNCILLOR ALLAN HOLIDAY - PORTFOLIO HOLDER****KEITH PARKER - LEAD OFFICER****1 KEY ISSUES - PROGRESS REPORT**

Cumbria Youth Games 2005 This years Cumbria Youth Games are to be held in Barrow on Saturday 2nd July. The event attracts over 1000 young people to compete in many different sports from around the County. Festivals have been taking place and are continuing to take place in Copeland in order to find teams / individuals to represent Copeland on the day. The Rugby Union Festival attracted 24 primary school teams to enter, with Moresby School winning the event. The High 5 Netball tournament attracted 6 schools with Jericho School winning the event. Other tournaments, which have taken place, are Rugby League, Girls Football and Orienteering. Others yet to take place are cricket, tennis, athletics and many more.

Next year the Cumbria Youth Games will be held in Copeland, which will prove to be an exciting event for the area.

Copeland Access to Sports Festival The second access to Sports Festival took place on the 11th May at Whitehaven Sports Centre, which attracted around 70 young people with disabilities. Martin Mansell a 5-time Paralympics gold medallist attended the event and was on hand to offer advice and help out on the day. Sports represented this year were rugby, football, table top cricket, trampolining, boccia, new age curling and a visit to the fitness suite. The FA sponsored this year's festival and each young person went home with a rucksack, T-Shirt, football, medals and certificates. This year the event attracted great media coverage from Border Television and the Whitehaven News.

Coach Education Programme Copeland & Allerdale Coach Education Brochure has only been out for 3 months and courses are already full to September. A fundamentals course was run at the end of April and was full. A Child protection Course being run in July is full with around 12 people on the waiting list. The Coach Education Programme shows Sports Development commitment to meeting the demand of coaches from local Sports Clubs. Qualified coaches only help develop the club in making sure they are meeting minimum operating standards. With the courses being in high demand Sports Development is working with Allerdale Sports Development and Cumbria Sport to fund more Coach Education courses in the West.

At the Swimming Pool the number of junior memberships sold in may nearly doubled over the same period last year at 27 vs 15. We hope this shows that

young people are starting to take advantage of the of the discount scheme and build more fitness activities into their day-to-day lives.

Six members of the Pool Lifeguard Team will be in Birmingham on 11 June to take part in the "Lifeguard Challenge". This involves many different aspects of lifeguard training from an army assault course which will test physical fitness, to rope relays testing speed and skill. Our team will be up against stiff competition from around the Country and we wish them well.

I would like to use this opportunity to highlight the change in programming at the pool to enable more swimming lessons for young people to take place. There were 62 swimming classes in the last block which have been increased to 84. This has reduced the number of young people on the waiting list significantly at the same time as raising young peoples ability to swim effectively. In addition the number of adults taking swimming lessons has increased from 9 to 20. Finally three of our Lifeguards successfully renewed their National Pool Lifeguard Qualification in May.

Whitehaven Civic Hall. In April the Civic put on 8 shows in total. These ranged from the Christian worship event by Phil Holbert, a Big Band performance by the Nick Ross Orchestra, the under 18s dance event Temptation and a show from the latest big thing on the Punk Rock scene 'Jesse James', so something for everyone would be an understatement. These shows saw a staggering combined total of 1327 people coming through the doors, which is over double that of April 2004.

May the Civic saw the first sell out show of the financial year in only the second month! This was a visit to the area from the Super Furry Animals who, with their numerous hit singles, albums and headlining slots at all the major UK and international festivals, are surely the biggest act to grace the Civic stage in many years, if not ever. The Civic had 750 people in total attending the 3 events on offer.

On an information note, the town centre manager Ann Cartner moved into her new office at the Civic Hall where she will be based for the foreseeable future.

At the Sports Centre, attendances for April 2005 were 13,084 compared to the same period as last year which was 12,015. This shows an increase of 1,069.

Club Success Limited and Impact Sales are continuing to provide staff training in sales and marketing to help improve the current sales procedures involving the Fitness Suite as well as a sales campaign to improve annual memberships.

Leisure staff had a stand at the recent Youth Council AGM. Staff promoted the Leisure Facilities to all the local school children and helped provide them with Leisure opportunities as a way of helping reduce crime and disorder.

Due to popular demand an extra league has been added to this years 6 a side leagues. There are now two divisions with 24 local teams participating.

A dance festival was organized by Whitehaven School at the Sports Centre, with local schools participating against each other.

Beacon Visitor Figures during April were 3174, slightly short of last year's figure (3849 in April 2004, which included Easter holidays). So far in May visitor figures are 3855 (4027 for full month in May 2004).

Museums Week – as part of the National Museums & Gallery Month celebrations in May, The Beacon offered free entry to everyone during the week beginning 9 May. 1581 people visited the Museum during this week, more than double the number of visitors in the following week (796 visitors). 62% of the visitors during Museums Week were local (i.e. from Copeland).

Harbour Gallery visitors for April were 1455, and so far in May 1373 (1482 April and 1411 May 2004). The current exhibition *Marchon* by In Focus Photographic Group and The Beacon is proving popular with local visitors.

Room hire was arranged for 38 occasions during April and to date for 37 occasions during May (28 in April and 31 in May 2004)

Schools & Groups. 52 children were taught by Beacon staff during April (99 during April 2004), and so far 242 during May (109 during May 2004). Scout and Guides groups are now using The Beacon in order to work for their Heritage badges.

Learning provision for schools and groups will improve even more during 2005/06 due to grant award successes for working with schools in Roman Resource Development (£5K) and the Learning Links Partnerships (£6K), as well as involvement in the Older Learners Network. The Beacon is proud to be the lead organisation in the newly formed Western Lake District Learning & Culture Network, which has attracted funding (£5K + £12K) from the Museums Libraries & Archives Council to work in partnership with schools.

Family Events. Half term children and family workshops are booking up quickly. Activities include Caribbean style crafts in preparation for the Maritime Festival.

Whitehaven Young Archaeologists' Club. On 30 April, the Young Archaeologists investigated Roman mosaics. On 28 May, the group took this one step further by creating their own ceramic mosaics.

Outreach Talks 7 outreach talks were arranged for April including the Millom Local History Group and Flimby Mothers Union (7 talks in April 2004). So far in May 5 talks have been arranged (2 In May 2004).

Harbour Gallery. The photographic group In Focus, in partnership with The Beacon, present the exhibition "*Marchon – From Cottage Industry to Chemicals Giant* which will be on show until 4th June. This will be followed by "*Endeavour Triptych*" which 11 June to 30 July.

TIC. Whitehaven Tourist Information Centre received 2587 enquiries during April (3561 in April 2004, but included Easter holidays).

Rural Touring Scheme this month (May) has seen the externally funded appointment of Raewyn Greggain as Project Assistant. This full time post will see the scheme expand to cover 20 locations in rural communities. The post allows the department to offer a range of outreach programmes to the community members on the back of professional performances by high quality musicians and theatre groups.

Parton The Youth Music Project continues to work with young people aged 12 to 19 on Mondays and the younger children now have their own Musical Sculpture and Drumming Project running on Thursdays. We have a continued commitment to work in Parton and across the newly (Arts Development Inspired) North Copeland Youth Partnership which includes Distington, Lowca, Moresby and Parton. A launch event is planned for July where all our work will be showcased to local young people. The Lowca based event will also continue our drive to fundraise for a permanent post for North Copeland Youth Service...

Millom/Haverigg The project here has secured £30,000 of funding for the summer residency project. The partners involved short listed 3 artists from over 40 applicants this month and contracted artist Del Whitticase to deliver the residency. Del is currently working in Millom School, Haverigg Prison and is about to launch work in Haverigg Primary.

The National Trust Our Arts Development team is developing a project to work with three schools (Montreal, St. Patricks in Cleator Moor and Ennerdale School.) We are being partnered by the Excellence Cluster and The National Trust. We have employed Artist Jane Dudman to deliver the project in the Autumn.

Together with the Beacon our Arts team have delivered a series of outreach sessions with The Beacon and West Walls Art Collective. The programme included opportunities for Valley School, St. Mary's, Monkway, Distington, Euanside and Kells Infants. The actual programme was delivered March/April. West Walls took over the gallery mid March for one month. This programme is to be repeated with Artist Richard Wood taking control of the Gallery in June.

Cleator Moor Civic Hall, as colleagues will be aware the Council will be ceasing to operate the civic hall from December this year. I am pleased to be able to advise that Officers are working with a local group in the Town with the objective of retaining the facility for the Community through some form of local management. I would anticipate a more full report on this issue will be presented to the Executive as matters progress.

ENVIRONMENT ISSUES

Former "Kangol" Site At Frizington colleagues will be aware this site is being redeveloped for housing purposes. Since demolition of the factory commenced there have been various environmental problems associated with the disposal of waste materials. Combustible waste (mainly wood) was burnt

on the site giving rise to smoke nuisance to neighbouring residents and to a breach of the Clean Air Act 1993 concerning the emission of dark smoke. Potential prosecution of the company by the Council in respect of this breach of the Act is being considered. The Environment Agency is also considering separate prosecution for breaches of law regarding the disposal of waste by burning on the site. Also, waste material containing asbestos has been disposed of from the site by allowing persons to take it free of charge. The Environment Agency, as the regulator for such activities, is dealing with this matter. It seems that the asbestos in question is mainly, if not solely, in the form of asbestos-cement and, therefore, the health risks involved are probably minimal. Officers of the Council's Environmental Health Section are working closely with the Environment Agency and the Health and Safety Executive in respect of problems connected with activities at the site.

Rhodia/Huntsman Site At Whitehaven as has been widely reported the Council is dealing with this site under the provisions of the Environmental Protection Act's Contaminated Land provisions. Unfortunately, as I have reported previously, the previous determination exercise was done incorrectly and it was therefore necessary for officers to repeat the exercise. The re-determination exercise has now been completed. In real terms this has had no practical consequences because "Rhodia" have been co-operating fully with both this Council and the Environment Agency.

Gulls In Whitehaven. The annual Gull Nesting Count was carried out by the Council's Environmental Health Section in May. Such exercises have been carried out every year since 1998. The number of counted nests peaked in 2002 at 383 from the figure of 173 in 1998. Since 2002 the number of counted nests has declined to 227. All parts of Whitehaven are subject to the counts and although over the years the trend has been inconsistent (with some areas experiencing an increase in nests and others a decrease) all areas seem to have experienced a decrease over the past 3 years.

Dog Fouling. I am aware the issue of dog fouling although improving remains an issue for people affected by it. In many ways the work of our enforcement unit is 'old news' however I would like to point out our team have already issued 10 enforcement notices in the first two months of this financial year, equivalent to £500. This comes at a time when Barrow Council is receiving local 'bad press' for issuing 8 notices in a full year. Dog owners need to be aware our team is still very active and if caught allowing their dogs to foul will be fined or prosecuted.

Cumbria Waste Composition Study, I have previously reported that this study was being progressed, funded indirectly by DEFRA. As an update I can now advise the first study into what Cumbrian households throw away has been concluded. The objectives of the study were firstly to assess levels of participation in recycling schemes and secondly to collect, weigh and categorise all waste (including waste put out for recycling) arising from the sample 900 properties. The results have recently been published and although the report contains several hundred pages and needs more time for officers to digested, some of the findings are worth highlighting.

Based on the findings of this study waste arisings in Cumbria as a whole are lower than the national average of 24 kg per household per week. Copeland and South Lakeland are stated to be low waste producers while Carlisle and Allerdale dispose of more waste per household than average. This may reflect the benefits of an alternate week collection system as both low districts operate similar services.

The results of the recycling participation study show Cumbrians as a whole demonstrate lower levels of participation than the national average of between 65 and 70%. Allerdale produced the best result of 62% of households participating whilst Copeland's rates were measured at 50%. Schemes elsewhere in the UK have reported participation rates of over 85%.

The study was undertaken during the winter when less waste is thrown away and provides a snapshot of waste at that season. A further study will be undertaking this summer to add to the data available. This information is important since it allows us and the County Council to tailor our recycling and waste treatment activities according to the specific nature of waste produced in the borough and county.

Maritime Festival, as the last item on my report I am pleased to be able to advise colleagues our waste management team will once again be carrying out the cleaning activities associated with the Maritime Festival this year. After a successful operation last time the team won the work in competition again. Not an easy task due to the very high visitor numbers experienced during the festival and very much a behind the scene activity it is none-the-less a critically important one.

2 EXECUTIVE DECISIONS RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

Subject The Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 1998
Copeland Borough Council Scheme Of Charges 2005/6

Date of Decision: 24 May 2005

Decision Reference: EXE/05/009

Context: To consider amending Copeland Borough Council Scheme of Charges under the Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 1998 in accordance with the Local Government Association Model Scheme of Charges.

Decision

That Council be recommended that Copeland Borough Council Scheme of Charges under the Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 1998 be amended in accordance with the Local Government Association Model Scheme of Charges.

Subject: Request for Gas Easement

Date of Decision: 28 April 2005

Decision Reference: EXE/04/0214

Context: To consider a request for an easement to allow gas pipes to be laid through Copeland Borough Council land at Main Street St Bees to provide a gas supply to Stonehouse Cottages.

Decision

That a) Council be recommended to approve the granting of an easement to the applicant on terms as detailed in the report; and

b) Contract Standing Orders be reviewed with a view to delegating authority in similar cases.

3 EXECUTIVE DECISIONS REPORTED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Subject: The Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 1998 Copeland Borough Council Scheme of Charges

Date of Decision: 28 April 2005

Decision Reference: EXE/04/0202

Context: To consider amending Copeland Borough Council Scheme of Charges under the Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 1998 in accordance with the Local Government Association Model Scheme of Charges.

It was noted that a full report on the Council's fees and charges is to be considered at a future meeting therefore Members asked for this report to be considered at the same time.

Decision

That the report be deferred to a future meeting of the Executive

Subject: Footway Lighting and Christmas Lights Contracts

Date of Decision: 28 April 2005

Decision Reference: EXE/04/0204

Context: This report is seeking to combine the Footway Lighting and Christmas Lights Contracts into one; to be let for a period of 3 years with options to extend for a further 2 years and explore a possible partnership arrangement. It also seeks authorisation to advertise for expressions of interest and proceed with the tendering process

**Decision
That**

- 1. all elements of the Christmas Lights contract be included as part of the Council's Footway Lighting contract to be let for a minimum period of 3 years with options to extend and to explore a partnership arrangement; and**
- 2. that approval be given to advertise for prospective contractors and for the contract process to proceed to the invitation of tenders**

Subject: High Hedges

Date of Decision: 24 May 2005

Decision Reference: EXE/05/003

Context: To advise Members of the implementation of legislation relating to high hedges and to deal with procedural issues arising from that legislation

Decision

That Council be recommended to approve that

- (a) the Planning Panel be allocated responsibility for high hedges controls and issues arising from Part 8 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003;**
- (b) that the Head of Leisure and Environmental Services be delegated power with regard to high hedge controls as set out in paragraph 4.2 of the report; and**
- (c) the fee as set out in paragraph 4.1 of the report be approved**

Subject: Sports Development Summer Activities Programme Vacancies

Date of Decision: 24 May 2005

Decision Reference: EXE/05/004

Context: This report seeks approval to vire £5,000 from supplies and services to salaries and wages within the Sports Development budget, to allow funding of 4 Sports leaders posts for the Summer period.

Decision

That the virement of £5,000, to allow funding of 4 Sports Leaders, to be employed over the summer period, from the Sports Development budget

Subject: Urgent Actions

Date of Decision: 24 May 2005

Decision Reference: EXE/05/010

Context: To note actions taken on grounds of urgency under Executive procedure rules.

Decision

That a) action taken by the Head of Leisure and Environmental Services in consultation with the Portfolio holder in replacing the railings at South shore be noted;

b) action taken by the Head of Finance and Business Development in consultation with the Portfolio in seeking Counsel's opinion on procurement law issues surrounding a potential partnership with Cumbria County Council in relation to the provision of ICT services be noted; and

c) action taken by the Head of Contracts & Project Management in consultation with the Portfolio in undertaking remedial works to culverts which were subject to overflowing and disintegration during adverse weather be noted.