

COPELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL MEETING – 24 JUNE 2008

Effective Leadership – Councillor Elaine Woodburn – Leader

Councillor Allan Holliday – Deputy Leader

Nuclear New Build

The Secretary of State in DBERR recently told nuclear investors to build in Britain, something which I am sure we as a Council warmly welcome. At a recent conference he presented the Government's action plan for enabling new nuclear. This includes:

- The creation of a new Office of Nuclear Development, to build more effective cross-Government working on nuclear energy
- The creation of a new John Hutton chaired Nuclear Development Forum, which will bring together Government and the Industry to discuss key issues.
- Publish the draft criteria for deciding on the siting of new nuclear power stations

This announcement will further the need to ensure we as an area have the skills to meet the expected high levels of demand for trained staff. This will include working with the Nuclear Skills Academy, our local existing workforce and the NDA. The NDA are expected to launch their new Skills Strategy shortly.

The Council is a leading member of the Nuclear New Build Steering Group reporting to the Energy Coast Leaders' Group. The Steering Group is developing a business case for building two or potentially three nuclear reactors at Sellafield. Work was commissioned on the issues likely to affect private sector operators' views on the viability of a Copeland location. The report concluded that Sellafield had several strengths – a strong and willing nuclear community with the skills for new build – but also weaknesses – notably the need to strengthen the grid connections to at least 400Kv. Further work is now taking place on the options for strengthening the grid capacity. Meetings are being held with the National Grid and generating companies to explore the best way forward.

Low Level Waste Repository

The new PBO is now firmly 'at the helm' and there have been some major management changes, including the new Managing Director Mr. Dick Raaz. Other changes are; Scott Anderson (Site Operations Manager), Paul Pointon (Project Delivery Manager) and Richard Cummings (Post Closure Safety Case Project Manager).

Other changes at the site include the relocation of the Site Main Office from the LLWR to Greengarth, which is part of further work to look at aligning the workforce office distribution to accommodate construction projects, including the commencement of construction of the new waste vault (Vault 9).

Other projects at the site include the Plutonium Contaminated Material project which finishes this summer, new security arrangements which will be effective from the 1st October 2008 and the Post Closure Safety Case outline report that has now been submitted to the Environment Agency. The latter should facilitate the early public consultation on key issues including coastal erosion and approach to the long untouched trenches.

Finally, the LLWR are building a socio-economic plan to match the NDA guidelines and community needs including the first ever ability (within the NDA) to offer 'Services-in-Kind' from the workforce, which is still somewhat experimental but should be successful in providing additional support to community and voluntary projects e.g. Writing business cases for accessing community funding.

Social Well Being Strategy

Discussions are being held with the Cumbria Community Foundation, NDA, Sellafield Ltd, Low Level Waste Repository and others about drafting a social well being strategy for West Cumbria that would sit alongside the Energy Coast Masterplan and other emerging strategies. There has for a long time been confusion over what organisation is funding what and it has become evident that social investment is lacking both a vision and coordination. There is a significant amount of funding coming out of the Sellafield site and this would be an opportunity for the Council to influence and ensure it is spent in a complementary manner and help address the social needs of our local community. Some initiatives that would be supported would be to:

- Raise aspirations and build confidence
- Improve the quality of life
- Increase volunteering

EXECUTIVE DECISIONS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

Date of Decision: 27 May 2008

Decision Reference: EXE/08/004

Context: To consider proposals from the County Joint Overview Group for establishment of a new joint committee on scrutiny from the county and district councils in Cumbria together with support posts jointly funded

Decision

That Council be recommended that the proposals for the new committee and the funding arrangements set out in the report be approved in principle.

Achieving Transformation- Councillor Cath Giel - Deputy Leader

Councillor Tim Knowles - Portfolio Holder

Councillor Norman Williams - Portfolio Holder

Planning

The Council has jointly commissioned two new studies in association with Allerdale Borough Council. These are a new West Cumbria Retail and Town Centres Report and a West Cumbria Employment Land and Premises Study. Both involve a detailed assessment of the demand and supply issues concerned with the areas of study and are an essential part of the "evidence base" feeding into the Council's Local Development Frameworks. There will be some new survey work involved and a workshop for Whitehaven town centre businesses, probably in early August, when early results will be available for discussion.

Training on Local Development Frameworks has been arranged for all elected Members on 30th June between 2.00 and 4.30pm. It is an introductory session which covers the reasons for this new approach to planning policy work and the various processes involved - particularly the role of local councillors. It is hoped that all Members will be able to attend.

The Council has produced a Housing Position Statement which was recently submitted to Government. It outlines where we are with residential land allocations, planning consents and completions, looking at the picture up until 2012. A copy is available on the Council's web site.

Regeneration

Business Summit

The Council, together with Partners, staged a "Business Summit" at Whitehaven Civic Hall on Thursday 12th June. The event comprised a busy afternoon exhibition showcasing the activities and programmes of organisations including Cumbria Vision, The University of Cumbria, Westlakes Renaissance, The South Whitehaven Partnership, Invest in Cumbria, The Whitehaven News, the Federation of Small Businesses and several others.

An evening session opened and introduced by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Elaine Woodburn, with a keynote speech by Jamie Reed MP, was well attended and was focussed on the key activities comprising the approx. £100 million Whitehaven Regeneration programme. A presentation was made by the Editor of the Whitehaven News, Colin Edgar, on that publication's "ShopFront" campaign and underlined its support for efforts to make the town a better place to live, work and invest.

This was followed by a series of presentations on plans for the Town Centre, the Pow Beck area, the Kells/Sandwith coastal area and Transport /Infrastructure and Parking.

A question and answer session completed the evening, chaired by the Council's Chief Executive, it was lively and constructive, overrunning the allotted time by over 30 minutes.

Overall the event was well received and commitments were made to increase the dialogue with local business throughout Copeland, to publicly respond to questions posed and to work with the Whitehaven News and the Chamber of Trade to improve communications.

Pow Beck

An outline agreement on Heads of Terms has been agreed between the Whitehaven Rugby League Club and its landlord, the Miners Social Welfare Charity, relating to the terms of a long term lease. Council officers and Westlakes Renaissance management are working to ensure that this welcome development can provide the long awaited basis for the development of new spectator facilities at the Recreation Ground and trigger the other Sports and Leisure investments planned for the area.

Borough Wide Regeneration

Work is continuing to finalise a Regeneration Delivery Plan for the Borough which will dovetail with the "Energy Coast Masterplan". This will connect to proposals for Community Development activity related to use of Working Neighbourhood funding and better coordination of regeneration activity across Copeland. Proposals to provide enhanced support for local regeneration partnerships in the Millom, Egremont and Cleator Moor areas are under discussion as are considerations to ensure that all other areas of the Borough can be appropriately supported.

Promoting Prosperity – Councillor George Clements Deputy Leader

Councillor Geoff Blackwell - Portfolio Holder

Councillor Hugh Branney - Portfolio Holder

Housing Services

- a) A Member Housing Strategic Panel has been established and meets for the first time on 17 June. Amongst items it will start to consider are:
- (i) The draft new Homelessness Strategy
 - (ii) A presentation on work on revising the Private Sector Housing Strategy
 - (iii) An update on the Action Plan to improve the Housing service following the Audit Commission report.
- b) Recruitment is underway to the increased staffing structure approved by Members to the Housing Team. An additional officer to work on homelessness has been appointed as has an Admin Assistant. Adverts for four more senior posts including a permanent Housing Services Manager have been placed and close on the 18 June.
- c) Discussions are underway with West Lakes Renaissance about future funding for the Housing Market Renewal Programme for 2008 to 2011 and the Home HA/Copeland Homes about their regeneration proposals for South Whitehaven and other areas for the next five years.

Waste Management

As everyone will be aware the T&G members of our waste management team went on strike on 27 May for two weeks. This strike had the potential to seriously damage the Council's reputation and lead to significant litter and refuse problems on the streets of the borough. While 31 employees were on strike no other Moresby based services suffered anything other than minor disruption. Added to this a small band of the waste supervisory and management team put in place arrangements that kept refuse on the streets to a minimum. These people together with a few colleagues from around the County managed to pick up 50% of the refuse collected in a normal week. By the time this report comes to Council it is anticipated that services will be fully restored to normal.

I would like to thank all those involved in maintaining services over the strike period for the magnificent job they did under extremely demanding circumstances. That the Queen's visit was not marred by littered streets and black sacks is testament to the hard work and dedication of the team

National Green Flag and Green Heritage Awards

One of the Council's top priorities is to provide high quality green spaces. It is also the government's vision for the renaissance of England's green spaces for the majority of local areas in England to have at least one with a National Green Flag. Last year 4 of Copeland's green spaces achieved the National Green Flag and 3 of these green spaces achieved National Green Heritage Awards.

This year and in partnership with the green space friends' groups we are building on the wonderful achievement of 2007, entering a total of 8 green spaces for the National Green Flag Award and 4 green spaces for the National Green Heritage Award. Judging of all the green spaces has now been completed and we now waiting for the result. The results will be announced at the National Green Flag Award Ceremony to be held in Liverpool this August.

The 8 green spaces entered this year for the Green Flag award are:

Egremont Castle & Grounds
 Trinity Garden
 St Nicholas Garden
 Distington Crematorium
 Distington Millennium Green
 Mirehouse Ponds, Whitehaven
 Big Hill, Cleator Moor
 Millom Park

The 4 green spaces entered for the Green Heritage award are:

Egremont Castle & Grounds
 Trinity Garden
 St Nicholas Garden
 Distington Crematorium

Cumbria in Bloom

Cumbria in Bloom is an organisation which promotes community care and pride in the environment. One way it promotes this message is through the annual Cumbria in Bloom Competition where Towns and Villages compete against each other for the title of "Best in Cumbria". We work in close partnership with many local "In Bloom" communities supporting their efforts in the Cumbria in Bloom Competition.

Judging of the Copeland towns and villages is to take place in the second and third weeks of July. While our parks and waste teams will continue to support the "in bloom" communities we need local residents to help by doing their bit. The Cumbria in Bloom competition it is not all about pretty flowers! It is also

about keeping our environment litter free, being sustainable through recycling and encouraging nature conservation.

Copeland Schools in Bloom Competition

Copeland Schools in Bloom competition is organised by our parks department to encourage the wonderful environmental work undertaken by our local schools. Its aim is to mark improvements in school grounds to support nature conservation, the development of understanding of the nature of plants and to promote environmental care. There are linkages to the school curriculum so educational opportunity is enhanced.

Entry forms are currently being distributed to all the schools in Copeland. Those schools that do enter the competition will be visited and judged by the Mayor and Mayoress of Copeland in the week commencing the 7 July. The overall winner and two runners-up will be presented with trophies and prizes at the Council meeting in August.

Joint Scrutiny – The Proposed Way Forward

LEAD OFFICER: Tim Capper, Head of Democratic Services
REPORT AUTHOR: Neil White, Scrutiny Officer

Recommendation: that the Council supports the proposals to take Joint scrutiny forward across Cumbria.

1. Background

The Cumbria Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 19 March 2008 considered the way forward for Joint Scrutiny the light of the proposed changes in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

A paper was written by the Cumbria Scrutiny Practitioners Network entitled 'Effective Scrutiny in light of the Local Area Agreement (LAA). The paper summarised the legislation and the importance of the role of non executive Members in the corporate governance arrangements.

The paper set out a business case for a 'strategic and co-ordinated approach to joint scrutiny working in Cumbria'. The paper also made a case for an 'appropriate level of resource to underpin and support the new joint arrangements'. This would be in line with the additional responsibility that the new legislation gives scrutiny.

The proposal is for a new, refocused strategic County Joint Overview Scrutiny Committee to be formed to replace the existing joint arrangements. The Local Government and Involvement in Health Act has made provision for the (formal) establishment of a joint scrutiny panel to address LAA matters. This would be clearly positioned within the CSP/LAA corporate governance framework and be established along similar lines to the County's (joint) Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.

The proposed remit for the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be to:

- a) Provide strategic scrutiny challenge of the Local Area Agreement and the mechanisms in place to lead and deliver it, including the Cumbria Strategic Partnership, associated bodies and partner authorities.

- b) To receive performance monitoring data for the LAA, by linking into the CSP performance reporting cycle and identifying issues for joint review or alerting Districts to local pockets of under-performance.
- c) To monitor *Councillor Calls for Action* at each authority and/or identify joint pieces of scrutiny work arising from the CCfA process.
- d) To continue to consider the management and co-ordination of 'joint' scrutiny across the County.
- e) To receive 'concerns' from any of the authorities' scrutiny committees on areas of under-performance locally.
- f) To provide a co-ordination forum for reports on the LAA (responding to the new powers of Districts to submit reports to the County on LAA matters). This would avoid the risk of duplication of scrutiny work between authorities. *(It is proposed that the support officer would take an active role in identifying such matters).*

Experience has shown that joint scrutiny is productive and can achieve valuable outcomes if resourced properly. There is little dedicated resource in the Cumbrian authorities at District level to scrutinise the LAA in any sort of depth.

The creation of a greater role for the Joint Committee with officer support would enable a better examination of the effectiveness of the LAA and would be a cheaper option and better value for money than each of the separate councils paying for officer support.

Accordingly, it is proposed that the new joint scrutiny committee is properly resourced and managed by a full-time dedicated officer and (part time) administrative support. The post would be jointly managed and led in partnership by all of the authorities. With the County Council being the ultimate accountable body for the LAA it might make sense to have the post co-located within the County's scrutiny unit and therefore readily accessible to the CSP support unit.

It was proposed that the new joint committee should be chaired by a District representative and that a strong member development programme be drawn up to support members (and some officers) in the transition of their new role of monitoring and influencing as well as representing their communities.

It was also recommended that the new joint scrutiny framework is 'road tested' pending final government guidance which is expected in the Autumn of 2008.

At the meeting the Joint Scrutiny Members agreed to take the above proposals back to their respective councils for approval and final implementation through the Cumbria Local Authorities Strategic Board (CLASB). A copy of the minutes of the meeting is at Appendix "A".

It was also agreed that the member authorities of CLASB be asked to consider jointly funding this initiative using the CLASB partnership funding protocol.

So far Allerdale, Carlisle and Eden Councils have considered this and have agreed, in principle, to fund their part of the joint posts subject to CLASB funding.

Financial Implications

The total cost of a full-time dedicated officer and (part-time) administrative support has been calculated at £55k. The CLASB funding rules are that 50% of the cost is paid for by the County Council with the other 50% being paid proportionately by the six District/Borough Councils.

If all the authorities sign up to the proposal it would cost Copeland £4,580.

It is anticipated that the post will not be filled until at least December and by that time there may be sufficient underspend in the Members Services budget to cover the cost for this financial year. However for future years the full cost will need to be added to the base budget and be met from compensatory savings in the council's budget.

Conclusion

The Committee is invited to approve as appropriate, the recommendations at the head of this report to enable the progress of joint scrutiny across Cumbria.

List of Appendices

Appendix "A" – Notes of meeting of the Cumbria Joint Overview Scrutiny Committee held on 19 March 2008

List of Background Documents:

None

**CUMBRIA COUNTY JOINT SCRUTINY OVERVIEW GROUP
WEDNESDAY 19 MARCH 2008 AT 10.30 AM
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL PENRITH**

PRESENT: Councillor Major Henry Sawrey-Cookson (Chairman)
Councillor T Heslop – Allerdale Borough Council
Councillor S Brown – Allerdale Borough Council
Councillor Rory McClure – Barrow Borough Council
Councillor Mrs Dorothy Dawes – Barrow Borough Council
Councillor Barry Earp – Carlisle City Council
Councillor Michael Boaden – Carlisle City Council
Councillor Mrs Y R T Clarkson – Copeland Borough Council
Councillor Peter C Connolly – Copeland Borough Council
Councillor Mrs Patricia Bell – Eden District Council

**ALSO
PRESENT:** Jane Murray – Allerdale Borough Council
Sheila Brown – Allerdale Borough Council
John Penfold – Barrow Borough Council
Jane Holden – Barrow Borough Council
Rebecca Tibbs – Carlisle City Council
David Taylor – Carlisle City Council
Neil White – Copeland Borough Council
Doug Scott – Cumbria County Council
Ruth Atkinson – Eden District Council
Gillian Kartach – Eden District Council
Steve Richards – South Lakeland District Council

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Nic Hardy, Allerdale Borough Council
Councillor Rees, South Lakeland District Council
Alan Gunston, Cumbria County Council

2. NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Notes of the meeting held on 9 October 2007 were submitted and agreed.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE NOTES

There were no matters arising that were not a subject of the current agenda.

4. JOINT CAR PARKING REVIEW

The joint review was completed in December with the intention of bringing the final report to the January meeting of this Committee but the meeting was delayed.

There were three main issues:

1. Potential for on-street parking charges
2. Potential for charging for residential parking permits
3. Exceptions to charging policies

The recommendations submitted were that charging policies should only be implemented after full consultation with the district councils and their agreement to the proposals.

The exceptions to the policies should be for 'blue light' services only.

A report was to be submitted to the County Council Cabinet in January 2008 but this was withdrawn. The report will now be submitted to the County Council Cabinet on 8 April 2008. The only recommendation from the review included in the report is item 3, the exceptions policy.

There was a discussion concerning disc parking and Members agreed that disc parking should be consistent across the county.

A question was raised inquiring whether the joint review report would be included in the Cabinet report for the April meeting. It was thought that Joint Scrutiny had been acknowledged but it was understood that the joint final report would not be attached to the Cabinet papers.

RESOLVED – that a letter to be sent to the County Council requesting that the Joint Scrutiny Final Report on Car Parking Policies be attached to the Cabinet papers for the 8 April 2008 meeting. Eden agreed to send the letter on behalf of the Joint Committee.

5. SCRUTINY AND THE LAA

A paper was written by the Cumbria Scrutiny Practitioners Network entitled 'Effective Scrutiny in light of the Local Area Agreement'. The paper summarised the legislation and the importance of the role of non executive Members in the corporate governance arrangements.

The paper sets out a business case for a 'strategic and co-ordinated approach to joint scrutiny working in Cumbria. The paper also makes a case for an 'appropriate level of resource to underpin and support the new joint arrangements'. This would be in line with the additional responsibility that the new legislation gives scrutiny.

The proposal is for a new, refocused strategic Cumbria Joint Overview Scrutiny Committee to be formed to replace the existing joint arrangements. The Local Government and Involvement in Health Act has made provision for the (formal) establishment of a joint scrutiny panel to address LAA matters. This would be clearly positioned within the CSP/LAA corporate governance framework and be established along similar lines to the County's (joint) Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.

The proposed remit for the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee would be to:

- a) Provide strategic scrutiny challenge of the Local Area Agreement and the mechanisms in place to lead and deliver it, including the Cumbria Strategic Partnership, associated bodies and partner authorities.
- b) To receive performance monitoring data for the LAA, by linking into the CSP performance reporting cycle and identifying issues for joint review or alerting Districts to local pockets of under-performance.
- c) To monitor *Councillor Calls for Action* at each authority and/or identify joint pieces of scrutiny work arising from the CCfA process.
- d) To continue to consider the management and co-ordination of 'joint' scrutiny across the county.
- e) To receive 'concerns' from any of the authorities' scrutiny committees on areas of under-performance locally.
- f) To provide a co-ordination forum for reports on the LAA (responding to the new powers of Districts to submit reports to the County on LAA matters). This would avoid the risk of duplication of scrutiny work between authorities. *(It is proposed that the support officer would take an active role in identifying such matters).*

It is proposed that the new joint scrutiny committee is properly resourced and managed by a full-time dedicated officer and (part time) administrative support. The post would be jointly managed and led in partnership by all authorities. With the County Council being the ultimate accountable body for the LAA it might make sense to have the post co-located within the County's scrutiny unit and therefore readily accessible to the CSP support unit.

It is proposed that the new joint committee should be chaired by a District representative and that a strong member development programme be

drawn up to support Members (and some officers) in the transition of their new role of monitoring and influencing as well as representing their communities.

It is proposed that the new joint scrutiny framework is 'road tested' pending final government guidance which is expected in the autumn of 2008.

It is also proposed that CLASB be asked to consider jointly funding this initiative using the CLASB partnership funding protocol.

Questions were raised and alterations to the wording of the first proposal of the joint remit was approved before Members

RESOLVED – to discuss the roles of audit and assurance and scrutiny at the next joint meeting to ensure there is no duplication of work.

b) To hold a training session before the next meeting; this should be held as soon as convenient. The date to be left to the Practitioners Network.

c) To endorse the bid for a joint scrutiny officer and admin support to be located within the County Scrutiny Team, and to receive the job description for Joint Committee approval.

d) To request CLASB consider jointly funding the post using the CLASB partnership funding protocol

e) To take the above proposals back to the individual authorities for their approval before proceeding

f) That the Chairman of the proposed new group be a district councillor; that the Chairman and vice Chairman hold office for one year but still move the meetings around the county as current practice

6. COUNCILLOR CALLS FOR ACTION – JOINT WORKING

The Councillor Call for Action allows any Member to refer a local government matter or a crime and disorder matter in their ward to the appropriate scrutiny committee.

While further guidance is still awaited, provision has been made in legislation for Members to refer a matter to a committee of a local authority of which they are not members. Therefore, a Call for Action could well be

made by a County Councillor to a District Council scrutiny committee or from a District Councillor to the County Council's scrutiny committee where it is relevant to that Member's ward.

It was proposed by the Scrutiny Practitioners Network that a form common to all authorities in Cumbria be adopted to assist Members to submit a call for action. The form would be accompanied by common guidance and contact details for all the authorities. The guidance would be finalised when the Government guidance is available.

Practitioners are working with the Connected Cumbria Partnership to establish a reliable method of logging Calls for Action and ensuring that they are visible to the public and those who need to view them.

There is scope for a joint training package once Government guidance has been received.

The draft form was discussed and it was requested an additional box be added to capture equality information.

RESOLVED – that an additional box be added to the draft form to capture equality information for monitoring purposes.

b) That Members endorse the joint approach proposed

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED – that the date be left to the Practitioners Network to decide bearing in mind that Members training needs to be arranged at the same time.