

EXECUTIVE REPORT**LEADER'S REPORT****COUNCILLOR MISS E WOODBURN – PORTFOLIO HOLDER****Customer Services****Reputation Project**

As colleagues will know the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) launched a Local Government Reputations project late last year and Copeland was one of the first councils to commit to the project. This is seen as a long term project to improve Council's reputations and is based on the fact that while public satisfaction with council services is improving public approval of local government is not keeping pace. The LGA and Copeland feels Local Government should get the credit that it deserves for improving people's lives so councils can have the confidence to be even more ambitious for their communities.

The project has two strands: -

- To get councils to commit to implementing a set of core actions that their research tells them will increase customer satisfaction and improve their reputation. These core actions are around **communications** and providing a **clean, safe and green environment**. MORI research shows that these are what local people really care about and are what impacts most on their feeling of satisfaction with their council
- To make sure the good things councils do are reported in the national media so that key decision makers have a balanced picture of local government. Too often the press only publicise the bad news about councils work and the LGA and ourselves are determined to redress this balance.

The LGA and IDeA issued a list of cleaner, safer, greener and communication core actions that will have a positive impact on council's reputations. When we signed up to this of which we were the first in Cumbria we completed the scoring matrix, now we have carried out an update of this. As you can read we have reached the bronze standard in all categories, have progressed to the silver in some and gold in the green flag category. As said this is seen as a long term project but I am happy to report we are demonstrating excellent progress.

	PLANNING (BRONZE)	IMPLEMENTATION (SILVER)	EVALUATION (GOLD)
Cleaner – Safer-Greener			
Branded cleaning operation	Plan in place	<u>Implementation plan</u>	
No gaps in cleaning contract	Plan in place	<u>New contracts prepared</u>	
One environmental contact number	Plan in place	<u>Implementation of technology</u>	
Deal with grot spots	Plan in place	<u>Implementation plan</u>	
Abandoned cars / fly tipping	Plan in place	<u>>70% removed</u>	
Green flag award	Preparations underway	Application submitted	<u>Green flag</u>
Educate and enforce	Plan in place	<u>Application submitted</u>	
Communications			
Manage the media	Effective media plan	<u>Implementation plan</u>	
A-Z Guide	Budget/issue date agreed	<u>Production stage</u>	
Magazine/newspaper	Budget/issue date agreed	Production stage	<u>Distributed</u>
Council branding	<u>Corporate identity guidelines exist</u>		
Internal communications	Plan in place	<u>Implementation plan</u>	

Nuclear Issues

Low Level Waste consultation

We have agreed a joint response with Allerdale and Cumbria County Council to the Public Consultation on the Policy for the Long Term Management of Solid LLW in the United Kingdom.

We specifically raised concerns regarding the assumption that the existing LLW site at Drigg has a greater capacity (800,000 cubic metres) than it has (20,000 cubic metres) and in reality it will be full by mid 2008. By making this assumption other options have not been considered so alternative further uses is left unquestioned. It also assumes that the LLW site is a national asset whereas, considering its limited capacity/sea levels/coastal erosion issues and the considerable amounts of LLW accruing in Copeland alone, the site should not be used to accommodate waste from other nuclear sites.

The report pays very little recognition to Copeland's strategic and national role and does not acknowledge the concept that it is inequitable for our community to host all LLW generated in the UK merely because we have received benefits from previous nuclear operations. The facilities were installed to meet a national need, not a local need; the benefits have therefore been national whilst most of the detriment has been local. It was also very disappointing that the consultation virtually omits the subject of community benefit and right of withdrawal included within the CoWRM recommendations.

We also commented on our feelings with regard to the historic disposal (trenches) at the LLWR and serious consideration needs to be given as to whether these historic disposals are removed, repackaged and stored in a way that is consistent with current standards.

We have made a full and constructive response to this consultation which is available to all on the Council's website.

CoRWM

In our response to the recommendations to CoRWM we welcomed the approach adopted of consultation and engagement demonstrated throughout their work. The process has been sound and transparent and should be held up as an example of good practice. The most important issue remains the need to make rapid but considered progress on developing an approach to radioactive waste management based on sound science and taking account of community values by means of an open and transparent process. We have worked hard, over a prolonged period of time, giving a consistent message of how important it is for the siting process to be one of partnership, community acceptance and right of withdrawal, coupled with processes and community packages that can lead to local acceptability. It is therefore pleasing that we have been listened to and that these will be included in the recommendations going forward to Government.

Again there is a lot more detail within our response which is also available on the Council's website.

Energy Review

The council has submitted its response to the Energy Review which stressed the historical role the area has played in the Nations energy needs, through its history as a coal mining area, its leading role in the nuclear industry and the current provision of renewables through wind energy. We emphasised our belief that nuclear power generation should play an important role in the Country's power generating capacity in the future. We believe it should be part of a mixed portfolio alongside the continued development of other clean sources of energy and how Copeland has the potential to develop as a Centre of Excellence in energy diversity.

We have made more detailed comments on Energy Efficiency, Renewables, Wind Energy, Hydropower, Tidal and Wave Energy and Energy Recovery from Waste.

We concluded by stating that Government must encourage home grown energy supplies rather than relying on energy importation, more investment is needed in the development of nuclear power and that an energy mix is favoured over reliance on one energy source.

Low Level Waste Repository

At the Councils regular meeting with BNG it was previously reported on the work they have been carrying out with regard to the site separation they are going thorough to allow for the site to be put up for contracterisation early 2007. This has meant a lot of work has had to be gone thorough to create a new site licence, including close co-operation with the regulators.

A new top team will be formed which includes:

Danny Nichols - Managing Director
James Fisher - Head of Engineering / Technical Needs
James Millington- Head of Delivery
Legal rep
Financial rep

18 new people will be employed to help run the site, which will take the total number to approx.110 employees. For the 18 new office based staff new accommodation will be needed of which options are being considered. There will still be some central services that will be provided direct from the Sellafield site including HR services. The Shadow Period is predicted to start early August and will run for a period of 3 months with a new company starting from 1st December if everything has operated successfully in the shadow format.

As an aside it was good to hear from the NDA that if any of their employees refer to the LLWR as D**** they are fined £5-00.

Community Prospectus

A NDA industry day was held of which the invited audience was any firm interested in the running of the LLWR. We are drawing up a community prospectus to set out the communities expectations of any new site operator/s. This document will be supplementary to the invitation to tender and will be available to all tenderers. This will include our expectations of communications, liaisons, good neighbour responsibilities, economic benefits (not a shopping list) etc... We have spoken to Drigg Parish Council and will be securing their particular views as the host locality.

This document will be fully consulted on as more information becomes available. I will keep colleagues informed.

Drigg Parish Council

We have held some very positive meetings with the parish and progress is being made to help the parish achieve some of its objectives. They are progressing with their Parish plan which will identify the local communities aspirations with regards to the village itself and we have agreed to jointly look at ways this can be funded.

West Cumbria Strategic Forum

The work on the masterplanning process is moving forward and an outline report will be presented to the Secretary of State DTI at the next meeting to be held on the 14th July here in Copeland. There is only one item on the agenda and that is to inform the minister how the masterplanning process is progressing, to give him assurances we can deliver and to further confirm our partnership working. This will not be the first time Alistair Darling MP has visited Copeland and I am sure he will be confirming his attention to continue with the commitment given to the area by previous Ministers.

Calder Hall Towers

As I have previously reported these long standing towers are due for demolition some time in the near future, though for safety reasons the exact timing will only be released nearer the time. This demolition will have a major impact on a skyline that has remained constant for over 40 years and as such should be seen as one of the first of many changes and the first real sign of the decommissioning of an historical legacy Copeland has borne for a long time. We have been given reassurances that safety is as always the prime motivator but as we can imagine the interest in this happening will be high. The CE and myself will be meeting with BNG and the police to ensure that the road management plan is sufficiently robust.

Thorpe

As colleagues know Thorpe has been out of action for a long period of time after the leak, but BNG is gearing up to get it operational again and the plant will re-start once all the necessary permissions have been obtained. The NDA has stated that they expect to restart Thorp subject to approval from the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate (NII) and the NDA Board.

BNG have submitted the safety case for the Feed Clarification Cell to the NII in April for their approval. This details their preferred option for operating the plant and the necessary safety improvements. The preferred option for returning the plant to service will involve isolating the affected accountancy tank and pipework associated with the failure of primary containment and using the other unaffected tank, subject to a revised operating regime, details of which were provided to a previous BNG quarterly meeting.

The daily throughput of Thorpe is expected to be reduced by using only the unaffected accountancy tank. However, they remain confident that the plant will still hit the throughput rates which are necessary to complete all work identified in the Lifecycle Baseline to the schedule and to fulfil customers' reprocessing contracts.

The entire workforce who was deployed to other areas on site is now back in their positions and a considerable amount of technical and behavioural training has been completed.

The plant remains in a safe condition with the event having resulted in no harm to employees, members of the public or the environment.

With regards to the Thorpe prosecution BNG were charged on three counts of which they pleaded guilty to all.

- Failure to ensure that safety mechanisms were in good working order (Licence condition 27);
- Failure to ensure that pipework did not leak and failed to ensure that no such leak could occur without being detected (Licence condition 34);
- Failure to comply with operating instructions (Licence condition 24).

The case was passed onto Crown Court with an appearance date of the 7th July.

National Stakeholder Group – Waste Issues Group

The next meeting of the Waste Issues Group will be held here in Copeland at the beginning of July. It will give a lot of the attendees the opportunity to see first hand the facilities and issues that have been raised by me at the previous meetings. The meeting will include a tour of the Sellafield and LLW site followed by the meeting. I will let colleagues know how it went after the event.

2. EXECUTIVE DECISIONS RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

Subject: Financial Regulations

Date of Decision: 25 April 2006

Decision Reference: EXE/05/209

Context:

This report presents the revised financial regulations for consideration and recommendation to Council

Decision

That Council be recommended to a) approve the revised Financial Regulations; and

b) full training be given to all members of the Executive

3. EXECUTIVE DECISIONS REPORTED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Subject: Risk Management Strategy – Revised 2006

Date of Decision: 25 April 2006

Decision Reference: EXE/05/208

Context:

This report presents the revised Risk Management Strategy for approval

Decision

That a) the revised Risk Management Strategy be approved; and

b) full training be given to Members of the Executive

Subject: The Governments Consultation on Policy for the Long Term Management of Solid Low Level Waste

Date of Decision: 23 May 2006

Decision Reference: EXE/06/011

Context:

To report back on the consultation with a draft response in order to provide Members with information upon which to come to a view on the Government's LLW Policy Review published on the 28th February.

Decision

That authority be delegated to the Head of Sustainability and Nuclear Policy in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to amend the response to take account of comments made by members and that the recommendations of the Council be forwarded to DEFRA by 31st May, the consultation end date.

Subject: Committee For Radioactive Waste Management (Corwm) - Draft Recommendations

Date of Decision: 23 May 2006

Decision Reference: EXE/06/012

Context:

To inform members of the Executive of the draft recommendations for the storage of nuclear waste arising from the deliberations of the Committee for Radioactive Waste Management.

Decision

**That a) the draft response to the recommendations of CoRWM as outlined in the Appendix of this report be supported; and
b) authority be delegated to the Head of Nuclear Sustainability in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to amend the document prior to submission if necessary.**

Subject: Capital Programme 2005-06 Draft Outturn

Date of Decision: 23 May 2006

Decision Reference: EXE/06/012

Context:

This report informs Members of the pre-audit outturn position of the capital programme, for the financial year 1st April 2005 to 31st March 2006

Decision

That

- a. the changes as detailed in Appendix A be approved;**
- b. the carry forward of £2,079,564 (£1,340,596 CBC and £738,968 external funding), Appendix B be approved;**
- c. the transfer of the net CBC under spend of £17,472 to the Major projects Fund Appendix C and D,(paragraph 3.10) be approved; and**
- d. the position at the year-end be noted.**

Subject: Draft Revenue Outturn 2005/06

Date of Decision: 23 May 2006

Decision Reference: EXE/06/013

Context:

This report informs Members of the draft, unaudited revenue outturns of both General Fund and HRA for 2005/06. The report also makes recommendations on carry forwards and transfers.

Decision

That a) the outturn position be noted

- a) the carry forwards to 2006/07 totalling £777,864 for General Fund be approved;**
- b) the £139,747 available be utilised on the L&ES Strategic Reserve Account for L&ES revenue purposes, resulting in a nil balance on the L&ES Strategic Reserve Account;**
- c) the transfer of £809,557 to earmarked reserves as detailed in the report be approved; and**
- d) the transfer of the balance on Contingencies as at 31st March 2006 of £127,624 (uncommitted £58,817) to 2006/07 Contingencies be approved.**