

EXECUTIVE REPORT**RESOURCES AND LOCAL DEMOCRACY PORTFOLIO****COUNCILLOR NORMAN WILLIAMS - PORTFOLIO HOLDER****SUE BORWICK - LEAD OFFICER****1 KEY ISSUES - PROGRESS REPORT****Information Computer technology**

Members Broadband – at the time of writing 20 Members have signed up for the Council Atlas Service, 12 have been installed along with the Council remote access facility. Other members are encouraged to also apply and to check with their colleagues to find out the benefits. Another 5 and we will be up to 50%!

Interviews have been held for the posts of IT Section Leader and Project Manager/IT Officer, (Systems), and appointments have now successfully been made for these posts. Applicants are expected to take up employment in July.

Corporate team has agreed in principle to the final draft of the new IT strategy which has been further considered by the IT sub group. Following a final check an implementation programme will be followed to obtain approvals, consult and communicate.

Property maintenance/management

The estates management tender exercise has been completed. Three consultants expressed an interest in tendering. Only one tender was received from capita Symonds. As there were no other bids to compare with a comparison was made against the previous tender levels from two years earlier. Comparing between June 2004 and June 2008 for the lump sum element there is an increase of 4%, and for the hourly rates an increase of 6%. There is a small reduction in some of the percentage charges and lower minimum charge level (varies between 17% and 50%). The package is considered very good value and the tender has now been accepted, to commence on 21 June 2006 to June 2008, with provision for continuation up to 2011.

Members will recall that approvals for property disposals have been given by Full Council on a confidential basis, pending completion of contracts. A number of the contracts have now been completed and the cost information is now available.

Members who wish to view further details of both these items are asked to call into Finance and Business Development.

An urgent action has been taken to deal with a cliff slippage at William Pitt, just above the Cumbria Steelstock building, creating a risk of damage to the building. Consultants have been appointed and are about to engage a contractor to undertake short term remedial and protective measures.

Procurement

A number of developments are proposed through the Cumbria procurement initiative, details will be put forward through Corporate Team, OSC and Executive.

Pay and Workforce Strategy

A couple of months ago, the Executive considered a report on Pay and Workforce Strategy (PWS) - a framework for delivering improved services, greater efficiency, and better customer focus, all of which are key priorities for the Council. It was agreed that additional resources were required to help the H.R. Team tackle what is a huge agenda. This week, Tracey Emerson has joined the team as a temporary H. R. Officer to allow Len Glead, H.R. Manager, to give full-time attention to the PWS project. There are 5 Key Priorities within PWS:

- Developing the Organisation (including updating processes and improving productive time by reducing sickness etc)
- Developing the Leadership of members and officers
- Developing the Skills of the Workforce (including management development)
- Ensuring resources meet requirements (by having a longer term Workforce Plan, and tackling issues of recruitment and retention)
- Pay and Rewards (including Job Evaluation, Equal Pay, Single Status, flexible working)

A project plan will shortly be the subject of consultation prior to the Executive agreeing the priorities, timescale and resourcing for this major people-management improvement programme.

Communications

The Council's new Communication Strategy was agreed by Executive on 23 May. This sets a framework for improvements in the way the Council communicates with people outside the organisation, inside and in consultation - particularly with our communities.

Having a communication strategy is one step towards improvement in this important aspect of the Council's performance. We need to learn to do better and change what we do. A plan of actions is being developed to ensure that we know what we will have to do differently. Members, managers and other staff are included in this. Training in various aspects of communications will be offered over the next year or so and key people will be invited to participate.

In the meantime there have been a number of changes in the way that we operate, for example in handling requests for information from the press, and using more channels to get our messages across.

Good communications are really important in ensuring that the public appreciates what the Council does and what it does well.

Councillor Training And Development

Members will be aware of a number of new initiatives recently on Councillor training and development.

We are now issuing a two weekly training and development newsletter, either electronically or in paper copy, to all Councillors. It is also accessible on the Intranet. The newsletter includes details of all training and development opportunities available to Members, internally and externally. There are both traditional training courses and events, and opportunities for open learning and networking. A number of events are being delivered as part of the current round of the ACE (Achieving Cumbrian Excellence) programme, which is the subject of a separate item on this report.

On the local delivery front we are currently concentrating on the training and development needs which emerged most frequently in Members' PDP interviews late last year. IT was the most common theme, and there will be a number of IT training workshops for Members in late June, repeated in July and again later in the year if needed. Details have been circulated in the newsletter. We are also making available to Members the opportunity to obtain the European Computer Driving Licence IT qualification, by home-based on-line learning through a local provider.

During the summer there will be opportunities for media and communications training for leading Members; finance and budget training; scrutiny training, a partnerships seminar, and an organisational change workshop, all as part of the ACE programme; further training and a risk management workshop for Audit Committee members; and a partnership scrutiny event being planned jointly with colleagues at Allerdale.

The Member Training and Development Panel is now meeting every 2 weeks as we prepare for assessment in autumn 2006 for accreditation to the North West Employers' Organisation (NWEO) Member Development Charter. NWEO will be visiting us for a final pre-assessment "health check" in late July, with the formal assessment itself following as an all day event in early September. I am confident that we are currently on target for achieving accreditation, although a great deal of work remains to be done. I am sure the Panel will continue to receive the enthusiastic support of all Councillors as we work towards this important and prestigious objective.

A copy of the Statement of Intent committing the Council to achieving accreditation is attached for Members' information.

Achieving Cumbrian Excellence (ACE) 2

In order to make sure that Councillors and officers of Copeland Borough Council are able to manage and deliver improvements, a range of internal and external training and development opportunities are available.

One of the most accessible is that organised under the ACE2 programme. In 2006 the ACE2 programme comprises four themes :

1. Customer Services
2. Shared Services
3. Community Leadership and Political Governance
4. Organisational Transformation

Forthcoming events include:

1. Action Learning Set Launch Day for Officers - HR; Customer Contact and Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act - Monday, 3rd July - Westmorland Hotel , Tebay -

2. Community Leadership & Political Governance events - delivered by NWE0 and IDeA - 'Making a difference through partnership working' for members

Event 1 - Saturday 1st July, Castle Green Hotel, Kendal

Event 2 - Thursday 6th July, Tullie House , Carlisle

3. IDeA Overview & Scrutiny Chairs Programme for Overview & Scrutiny Members - Thurs 22nd and Fri 23rd June ,Westmorland Hotel, Tebay

4. Organisation Transformation Visioning Event - Thursday, 13th July - Westmorland Hotel, Tebay - for Officers and Members

2 EXECUTIVE DECISIONS RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

Subject: Childrens And Young Peoples Board – Framework Document

Date of Decision: 13 June 2006

Decision Reference: EXE/06/0027

Context:

This report asks Members to confirm whether they approve of the overarching Framework Document for the Children and Young Peoples Board as prepared by Cumbria County Council

Decision

That Council be recommended to approve the Framework Document for the Children and Young Peoples Board relating to Information Sharing as supplied by Cumbria County Council.

3 EXECUTIVE DECISIONS REPORTED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Subject: AD HOC Tender List – Valuation and Estate Management Services

Date of Decision: 4 April 2006

Decision Reference: EXE/05/199

Context:

This report seeks Members approval under Contract Standing Order 8.4.2 to an Ad Hoc list of Contractors for Term Contract for provision of Valuation and Estate Management Services, and seeks delegation of acceptance of a tender. During consideration of this item it was noted that not all financial appraisals had been completed and it was recommended that any decision should be subject to this being completed.

Decision

That subject to satisfactory financial appraisals the list of three Contractors be approved , and to delegate authority for acceptance of a Tender to the Heads of Legal and Democratic Services and Finance and Business Development, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder and Chairperson of the Policy and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Subject: Implementing Electronic Government Return

Date of Decision: 4 April 2006

Decision Reference: EXE/05/200

Context:

To present the final position on the Implementing Electronic Government Programme

Decision

That the attached IEG 6 return be noted and submitted to Council for approval

Subject: Proposals for Public Building Revenue and Capital Schemes

Date of Decision: 25 April 2006

Decision Reference: EXE/05/207

Context:

This report set out detailed proposals for expenditure of these budgets for the financial year

Decision

That the proposed programmes of work and allocation of costs for public buildings as detailed in the report be approved.

Subject: Urgent Action

Date of Decision: 25 April 2006

Decision Reference: EXE/05/210

Context:

To note action taken on grounds of urgency by the Head of Leisure and Environmental Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder in allocating funds to keep Cleator Moor Civic hall operational for a further two months.

Decision

That the action taken be noted.

Subject: Urgent Action Ref 10/06

Date of Decision: 25 April 2006
 Decision Reference: EXE/05/213
 Portfolio Holder: Councillor N Williams
 Context:

To note actions taken on grounds of urgency ref: 10/06

Decision

That action taken by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder – Resources and Local Democracy be noted.

Subject: Restructure – Freedom of Information Officer Post

Date of Decision: 25 April 2006
 Decision Reference: EXE/05/214
 Context:

Presents a report on the creation of an Information Officer post in Democratic Services for 12 months. During consideration of this Item Members referred to their decision made in October 2005 EXE/05/0094 refers

“the interim arrangements regarding the Freedom of Information post continue for up to a further six months; and then subject of a further report detailing how the duties could be rolled up into another post”

and asked that this should still be considered.

Decision

**That a) this item be deferred; and
 b) a further report be submitted looking into how the FOI duties could be amalgamated into an existing post within the Council.**

Subject: Reference from Personnel Panel

Date of Decision: 25 April 2006
 Decision Reference: EXE/05/215
 Context:

This report informs Members of the decisions of Personnel Panel on 2 equal pay claims

Decision

**That a) the decisions of the Personnel Panel be noted; and
 b) the resource implications be noted and approved**

Subject: Communications Strategy

Date of Decision: 23 May 2006
 Decision Reference: EXE/06/003
 Context:

This report presents Copeland Borough Council’s Communications Strategy, which outlines how and why Copeland Borough Council will communicate, and what role officers and Members are expected to play.

Decision

That the Communications Strategy be noted and approved

Subject: Community Legal Services and Citizens Advice Bureau SLA’s

Date of Decision: 23 May 2006

Decision Reference: EXE/06/008

Context:

This report recommends approval to the terms of SLA's with Community Law Centre and Copeland Citizens Advice Bureau.

During consideration of this item it was noted that in previous years the community Law Centre and The Citizens Advice Bureau had been asked to progress the use of a single telephone number as point of contact and, to date this had not been done. Members therefore stated that prior to payment next year clear evidence that this has been progressed must be submitted.

Decision

**That a) the service level agreements for 2006-07 be approved; and
b) both the community law centre and the citizens advice bureau be asked to progress the single line as point of contact and submit clear evidence of this prior to payment for 2007-08.**

Subject: Grading Recommendation

Date of Decision: 23 May 2006

Decision Reference: EXE/06/015

Context:

To consider the funding option following a recommendation from Personnel Panel to approve a regarding application.

During consideration of this item Members asked for clarification as to whether the report to the personnel panel stated a commencement date. It was noted that the recommendation put before Members asked the regarding commence from June 2005 (date of restructure) however, if the report put to personnel panel did not state a commencement date then the date of the personnel panels decision would stand would stand.

Decision

That subject to clarification of the commencement date the regrading decision be noted funded up to the end of 2006/07 from under spend on the Regeneration Department budget in 2005/06 and from then on from the Base Budget.