

EXECUTIVE REPORT**RESOURCES AND LOCAL DEMOCRACY PORTFOLIO****COUNCILLOR NORMAN WILLIAMS - PORTFOLIO HOLDER****SUE BORWICK - LEAD OFFICER****1 KEY ISSUES - PROGRESS REPORT****Property maintenance/management**

Disposal of land and property. – A reminder that confirmation of income from agreed sales of properties as promised to full Council will be commenced shortly. I will report after sales are completed. Every effort is being made to complete the sales including the use of outside solicitors.

Information Computer technology

The IT Subgroup has approved in principle a new ICT Strategy to be produced in initial draft by end of March 2006. This will then be widely consulted upon prior to seeking Executive approval. The document is based on the National e-Service Delivery Standards template. Implementation will provide a framework within which all Service Units will need to work, so there will be substantial changes to the way in which IT is used within Copeland which will require training and recognition.

ODPM Commends Copeland's IT Section

We received a letter of thanks from the ODPM for the contribution by Copeland's IT Section to the local Directgov Programme. Special thanks go to Dale Wright and Peter Crone.

Procurement

A representative of HEDRA, a consultant working with the Government is visiting all the Cumbria authorities, met members of Corporate Team on 9th February to discuss opportunities for promotion of procurement and joint working within the Cumbria area. He is to provide a report to the Chief Executive summarising his views and making recommendations.

Annual meeting with Parishes

Can I remind all members that the annual joint meeting with parishes is to be held on Monday 13th March at 6.30 in the Bainbridge room and all are invited to attend.

ACE2

The Cumbria-wide programme ACE (Achieving Cumbrian Excellence) has received another year's funding and is about to start running events for 2006. This time the ACE programme will focus on:

- Customer Services
- Shared Services
- Organisation Transformation
- Community Leadership and Political Governance.

The services area is to explore improvements in the way that customers can receive services from Councils; however they contact them, across service boundaries or even authority boundaries.

The shared services programme will look at opportunities to join up services in authorities to improve services and increase efficiency.

Organisation transformation will support local authorities' work in developing organisation wide plans for increasing capacity, leadership, and performance. Pay and Workforce Strategies will be a key component of the work in this theme.

The Community Leadership and Political Governance theme will offer opportunities for elected members to develop understanding and skills in a number of developing areas, including working in partnerships. It will also offer further sponsorship for the participation in the IDEA Leadership programme.

The initial programmes in ACE2 are already set up and invitations are being sent out.

Employee Code of Conduct

At the end of January all Copeland Borough Council employees were sent a revised Code of Conduct, with an acknowledgment which they have to sign and return. The status of this document is a slight change to the contract of employment, and supplements some of the existing requirements.

Areas covered in the employee Code of Conduct include:

- Honesty, integrity, impartiality and objectivity
- Accountability
- Respect for others
- Personal interests
- Reporting procedures

A copy of the new Code of Conduct will be placed on the Council's intranet.

Implementing Electronic Government

The IEG programme is nearing its end, in that the funding provided by the Government and the Council is committed for the purchase and implementation of a number of systems. The Council has met most of its targets for implementation and will be making a report to the Government on its progress (IEG6). As yet the format and deadline for this return to be made is not known.

However there is now a need for ensuring that the Council's investment of money and time are sustainable and produce the benefits that we anticipated. Acquiring the equipment and systems are only the first steps and to ensure that customers receive better service and that we are as efficient as possible, a follow-up to IEG is needed.

This will not focus on investment, but on change – changing work practices, changing employee and customer behaviour, changing the way we manage projects to ensure we get what we intend.

The Council will therefore be following guidance from the Government and other expert sources to plan for the future use of technology in achieving our objectives.

2 EXECUTIVE DECISIONS RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

None

3 EXECUTIVE DECISIONS REPORTED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Subject: Change of Use for Reserve Budget

Date of Decision: 17 January 2006

Decision Reference: EXE/05/0125

Context: This report asks for Executive agreement that a balance in a reserve budget be used for another purpose.

During consideration of this item the Portfolio Holder reported that a further £2,500 may have been identified and asked the Head of Finance and Business Development to look at this, and if possible include this in the transfer.

Decision

That

- a) the unused balance of £9,958 in the Clerical Trainee's trading account be added to the Council's Training Budget for 2005/06 and
- b) subject to the Head of Finance and Business Development confirming the availability, the proposed £2,500 be added to the Council's Training Budget for 2005/06.

Subject: Open Cell Ceiling to the Copeland Centre Atrium

Date of Decision: 2 February

Decision Reference: EXE/05/135

Context:

Note this item was withdrawn from the Agenda for further consultation with staff.

Decision

That this item be withdrawn from the Agenda

Subject: Urgent Action

Date of Decision: 2 February 2006

Decision Reference: EXE/05/138

Context:

To note action taken on grounds of urgency

Decision

That action taken by the Head of Legal Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, Resources and Local Democracy to settle the costs of court action as detailed in the report be noted.



Office of the
Deputy Prime Minister

Creating sustainable communities

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Monday 13th February 2006

Dear Dr Stanforth

Local Directgov

I am writing to you to thank you for your contribution to the Local Directgov Programme. In particular I would like to thank Peter Crone for their efforts in selecting and uploading your Local Authority URLs into the esd-toolkit. Their efforts and participation in the programme are much appreciated. To date, councils have collected 80% of the required URL links, which enabled the system to go-live on the 9th of January 2006 and for the public launch on the 17th of January 2006.

The Local Directgov Programme aims to improve the quality of public services by providing a direct link between Directgov and council websites, we believe linking local and central government web-services in this way is unique. This programme is led by the London Borough of Brent and London Connects, engaging with councils to increase citizen take-up of their online services.

We understand how important it is for citizens to recognise, identify and interact with Local Authorities. The Local Directgov Programme will not replace the need for individual websites or regional portals, but will complement them, extending the reach of existing online access to both Local Authority and Central Government services.

Your Council's involvement is essential to the success of the Local Directgov Programme, and as a team we are committed to supporting you. We will be engaging with all English Local Authorities again from January 2006 – March 2006 to collect a further set of URL data and look forward to working with you again.

If you require further information on the Local Directgov Programme, please do not hesitate to contact your designated Engagement Support Officer Paul Cooke on (07985 892301) or email: paul.cooke@londonconnects.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

Julian Bowrey

