

EXECUTIVE REPORT

RESOURCES AND LOCAL DEMOCRACY

COUNCILLOR NORMAN WILLIAMS – PORTFOLIO HOLDER

1 Key Issues – Progress Report

1.1 **PUTTING THE STRUCTURE IN PLACE**

Since the new structure went live on 1 June, beside their everyday work, the Human Resources team has been working on filling the numerous vacancies in the new structure. Some of these are new posts; some are vacancies that arose for other reasons during the restructure. It was preferable to leave these vacant to ensure that people who needed redeployment had some options.

To date 37 posts have been filled, either by redeployment or by internal advertisement and selection. At present there are 20 vacancies, of which 13 are being actively worked on. These include the Health and Safety Officer, Communications Manager, Revenues and Benefits Manager, Customer Services Manager, Community Development Manager and Process Improvement Team Leader.

This level of activity represents a significant additional burden on a team that is taking the lead on a number of other activities which will ensure that the new structure delivers what we hoped for. All employees will meet their managers for discussions about future targets and performance standards, and to identify training needs. It is these discussions that will contribute to formulating the Council's next training and development plan.

1.2 **COUNCILLOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

The Member Training and Development Panel have agreed a package of proposals for production of individual training and development profiles for all Councillors. The proposals have been developed with help from the North West Employers' Organisation (NWEO) who have extensive experience in training and development work with elected Members elsewhere in the North West region.

The proposals will involve NWEO conducting personal development interviews with all Councillors, based on a template which will be agreed in advance with the Panel. This will ensure that the Council's priorities are reflected throughout the process. Personal Development Plans will form the basis of a corporate development programme for Councillors for future years.

NWEO will also provide training on conducting PDP interviews for a small group of Councillors and officers to enable some of this work to be done in-house in future.

I very much hope that this work will be complete or substantially complete by the end of the 2006 calendar year, as I expect member development to be a key factor in the next round of CPA which will start in 2007.

1.3 **IMPLEMENTING ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT**

Our mid-year IEG return (IEG4.5) to the ODPM was submitted by the deadline of 18th July. This shows that we are on track to meet the Government's e-government requirements, though there remains a lot of work to be done. Some of the requirements involve partnership working and are being addressed through the Connected Cumbria partnership.

The Connected Cumbria partnership has recently agreed new governance arrangements which provide for a steering group at Member / Chief Executive level and emphasise the future role of the partnership in leading change, both to improve customer service and to reduce costs. This will replace the Cumbria Information Hub Board when that project ends in September.

We have delayed the launch of our new Web site by two weeks - to 8th August - to allow late content to be included. However, the new site is looking good and will be a big improvement over the existing one.

Governance of our e-government programme is being changed. There is increasing overlap between the existing four projects and the four Project Boards are now tending to duplicate effort. It has therefore been decided to run the work as a single project through a one Project Board. This should also make it easier for officers and Members to keep up to date because progress will be monitored via one set of reports instead of four.

1.4 **STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER**

The Council has recently reviewed and updated its register of strategic risks. This is not a new document, nor a new activity, but for the first time councilors are being asked to agree the register in its final form. This is recognised as good practice in private and public sector organisations which we are encouraged to carry out to meet new standards in our corporate governance.

The Strategic Risk Register is a register of risks that the Council may meet in delivering the Corporate Plan, which was published on 30 June 2005. The risks are not expected to happen, but they are an

assessment of the sorts of things that could prevent us achieving all that we want to achieve. The register also contains actions we have taken to prevent the risk happening and to reduce the impact.

Operational risk registers have been developed for the plans in services, and similar means to control those risks are being taken.

We will need to review the Strategic Risk Register periodically to assess whether the risks are reducing, being prevented or whether further action is required. Portfolio-holders and senior managers will keep these issues under review.

2 EXECUTIVE REPORTS RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

3 EXECUTIVE REPORTS REPORTED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Subject: Parish Review Working Party

Date of Decision: 5 July 2005

Decision Reference: EXE/05/0029

Context: To consider recommendations from the Parish Review Working Party.

Decision

RESOLVED – That

- (a) assistance be provided to Lamplugh Parish Council towards increased election costs in connection with achieving the Electoral Mandate for QP status, on the basis of meeting up to 75% of costs of contested seats and 50% of uncontested seats;
- (b) whenever possible and appropriate, training opportunities provided for Borough Council members and officers be extended to representatives of Parish Councils;
- (c) wherever possible space be provided in Copeland Matters and the Copeland Web Site for Parishes;
- (d) the Democratic Services Manager and the Member Services Officer be designated as named officer and deputy, of the Borough Council, to act as liaison officer for parishes; and
- (e) a report be submitted to the Executive on the outcome of the pilot scheme.