ECONOMIC IMPACT REPORT – MID YEAR 2011/12

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Councillor Phil Greatorex

LEAD OFFICER: Julie Betteridge, Head of Regeneration and Community

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WHAT BENEFITS WILL THESE PROPOSALS BRING TO COPELAND RESIDENTS?

Monitoring and analysing our half year economic indicators provides an update and understanding of the local context for our services, residents and local businesses. It enables the council to assess the impact of its current activity and identify additional activity it may be able to undertake through existing service delivery and through joint activity with our partners. Specifically the Council aims to ensure its services are supporting local residents and a regular update on key local indicators supports us in delivering to this aim.

WHY HAS THIS REPORT COME TO THE EXECUTIVE?

The information in this report keeps the Executive informed of economic impact and trends in Copeland in order to inform its decision making.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Executive is requested to:

- a) Note the report,
- b) Consider the existing activity the Council is undertaking to assist residents, and
- c) Agree to take this context into account when taking decisions that could help to offset the impact of changes in our local economy.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Executive have requested regular updates on the key economic indicators to assess the changes and trends in Copeland's local economy. The report sets out an analysis from the indicator information and highlights how existing work and partnership activity is assisting or could assist in addressing the impact on our residents. This report updates the Executive report of 31 May 2011.
- **1.2** The report is set out to provide two core tables of information:

Table A Copeland Economic Indicators

2. COPELAND'S ECONOMY

Table B

2.1 This report focuses on a number of detailed indicators where data is more frequently made available and a set of indicators has been provided to best illustrate a picture of the Copeland economy. These indicators follow the core themes of the Copeland Sustainable Community Strategy and the Council's Corporate Implementation Plan. Table A details the 2011 local economic indicator against the same period for 2010. The exact timings of the data sets provided vary in line with the data availability and this is highlighted in the data detail column.

TABLE A: COPELAND ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Indicator	2010	2011	Comment	Data Detail	
Unemployment					
Nos. of JSA claimants	1,398 (3.1%)	1,648 (3.8%)	As expected we have had an increase in the number of JSA claimants in Copeland. This is in line with the National and North West percentage change in claimants.	Sept. figures for both years	
Nos. of long term unemployment (12 mths)	420	650	Long term unemployment is a key concern for Copeland which as the formal figures highlight has increased by 50% in the past year.	Sept. figures for both years	
Claimant to live unfulfilled vacancies	6.81	12.77	This has been highlighted in past reports as Copeland job seekers are significantly affected by the cost of travelling to work outside of the immediate area specifically where vacancies outside Sellafield are generally below the national average wage rates.	Sept. figures for both years	
Young JSA claimants 16-24 yr olds Long term young	465	640	Across Cumbria, Copeland is worst for young persons' unemployment rates. This accounts for 9% young people unemployed in our borough. The increase is roughly in line with our increase in adult JSA claimants. This is a three fold increase	Sept. figures for both years	

ICA -1-1	145	4.40		Carl Carlotte
JSA claimants (12	45	140	over the past year and	Sept. figures for both
mths) 16-24 yr olds			reflects the national trend	years
			in a number of hot spots for	
	2222	2222	youth worklessness.	
Incapacity benefit	3380	3020	This decrease in incapacity	Obtained from OS
claimant rates			benefit claimant rates is to	website Nomis.
			some extent offset by the	February figures
			increase in JSA claimants.	(excludes
			Further information is being	Employment Support
			sought to fully understand	Allowance [ESA])
IMD Danking	102 (2007)	150	the Copeland context.	Out of 406 district
IMD Ranking	192 (2007)	158	Our position has worsened	
		(2010)	nationally.	councils Copeland is 78 th .
Fuel Poverty				78 .
Fuel Poverty % of houses in fuel	16.5%	22.2%	Our existing statistical profile	This is the most
poverty	(2006)	(2008)	shows an upward trend in	recent data we have
ρυνειτή	(2000)	(2000)	the percentage of houses in	available.
			Copeland in fuel poverty.	avaliable.
			This figure will be updated	
			through our private sector	
			stock condition survey in	
			2012.	
Child Poverty			2012.	2007 19%, 2009
Cilia i overty				16.5%
Indicator	2010	2011	Comment	Data Detail
Crime				
Cillie				
All crime recorded	1,797	1,726	Our crime statistics show an	Annual monitoring
	1,797 84	1,726 90	<u>-</u>	Annual monitoring report info from
All crime recorded		1	Our crime statistics show an ongoing monthly fluctuation but the general trend is that	Annual monitoring report info from Police HQ on a
All crime recorded All vehicle crime		1	ongoing monthly fluctuation	report info from
All crime recorded All vehicle crime All robbery	84	90	ongoing monthly fluctuation but the general trend is that	report info from Police HQ on a
All crime recorded All vehicle crime All robbery Nos. of burglary to	2	90	ongoing monthly fluctuation but the general trend is that over a number of months	report info from Police HQ on a
All crime recorded All vehicle crime All robbery Nos. of burglary to dwellings	2	90	ongoing monthly fluctuation but the general trend is that over a number of months and year to year the figures	report info from Police HQ on a
All crime recorded All vehicle crime All robbery Nos. of burglary to	2 40	90 3 41	ongoing monthly fluctuation but the general trend is that over a number of months and year to year the figures	report info from Police HQ on a
All crime recorded All vehicle crime All robbery Nos. of burglary to dwellings Nos. of shoplifting	2 40	90 3 41	ongoing monthly fluctuation but the general trend is that over a number of months and year to year the figures	report info from Police HQ on a
All crime recorded All vehicle crime All robbery Nos. of burglary to dwellings Nos. of shoplifting incidents Theft from a	2 40 105	90 3 41 114	ongoing monthly fluctuation but the general trend is that over a number of months and year to year the figures	report info from Police HQ on a
All crime recorded All vehicle crime All robbery Nos. of burglary to dwellings Nos. of shoplifting incidents	2 40 105	90 3 41 114	ongoing monthly fluctuation but the general trend is that over a number of months and year to year the figures	report info from Police HQ on a
All crime recorded All vehicle crime All robbery Nos. of burglary to dwellings Nos. of shoplifting incidents Theft from a dwelling Theft from a	2 40 105 26	90 3 41 114 20	ongoing monthly fluctuation but the general trend is that over a number of months and year to year the figures	report info from Police HQ on a
All crime recorded All vehicle crime All robbery Nos. of burglary to dwellings Nos. of shoplifting incidents Theft from a dwelling Theft from a person	2 40 105 26	90 3 41 114 20	ongoing monthly fluctuation but the general trend is that over a number of months and year to year the figures	report info from Police HQ on a
All crime recorded All vehicle crime All robbery Nos. of burglary to dwellings Nos. of shoplifting incidents Theft from a dwelling Theft from a person Housing	2 40 105 26	90 3 41 114 20 7	ongoing monthly fluctuation but the general trend is that over a number of months and year to year the figures	report info from Police HQ on a monthly basis.
All crime recorded All vehicle crime All robbery Nos. of burglary to dwellings Nos. of shoplifting incidents Theft from a dwelling Theft from a person Housing Average house	2 40 105 26	90 3 41 114 20	ongoing monthly fluctuation but the general trend is that over a number of months and year to year the figures are relatively stable. This increase of 4.8% since	report info from Police HQ on a monthly basis. (Apr-June 2011) Land
All crime recorded All vehicle crime All robbery Nos. of burglary to dwellings Nos. of shoplifting incidents Theft from a dwelling Theft from a person Housing	2 40 105 26	90 3 41 114 20 7	ongoing monthly fluctuation but the general trend is that over a number of months and year to year the figures are relatively stable. This increase of 4.8% since this time last last year	report info from Police HQ on a monthly basis.
All crime recorded All vehicle crime All robbery Nos. of burglary to dwellings Nos. of shoplifting incidents Theft from a dwelling Theft from a person Housing Average house	2 40 105 26	90 3 41 114 20 7	ongoing monthly fluctuation but the general trend is that over a number of months and year to year the figures are relatively stable. This increase of 4.8% since this time last last year highlights an improvement	report info from Police HQ on a monthly basis. (Apr-June 2011) Land
All crime recorded All vehicle crime All robbery Nos. of burglary to dwellings Nos. of shoplifting incidents Theft from a dwelling Theft from a person Housing Average house	2 40 105 26	90 3 41 114 20 7	ongoing monthly fluctuation but the general trend is that over a number of months and year to year the figures are relatively stable. This increase of 4.8% since this time last last year highlights an improvement but is less than the average	report info from Police HQ on a monthly basis. (Apr-June 2011) Land
All crime recorded All vehicle crime All robbery Nos. of burglary to dwellings Nos. of shoplifting incidents Theft from a dwelling Theft from a person Housing Average house	2 40 105 26	90 3 41 114 20 7	ongoing monthly fluctuation but the general trend is that over a number of months and year to year the figures are relatively stable. This increase of 4.8% since this time last last year highlights an improvement but is less than the average house price of March 2011	report info from Police HQ on a monthly basis. (Apr-June 2011) Land
All crime recorded All vehicle crime All robbery Nos. of burglary to dwellings Nos. of shoplifting incidents Theft from a dwelling Theft from a person Housing Average house	2 40 105 26	90 3 41 114 20 7	ongoing monthly fluctuation but the general trend is that over a number of months and year to year the figures are relatively stable. This increase of 4.8% since this time last last year highlights an improvement but is less than the average house price of March 2011 reported last time at	report info from Police HQ on a monthly basis. (Apr-June 2011) Land
All crime recorded All vehicle crime All robbery Nos. of burglary to dwellings Nos. of shoplifting incidents Theft from a dwelling Theft from a person Housing Average house	2 40 105 26	90 3 41 114 20 7	ongoing monthly fluctuation but the general trend is that over a number of months and year to year the figures are relatively stable. This increase of 4.8% since this time last last year highlights an improvement but is less than the average house price of March 2011 reported last time at £138,000.	report info from Police HQ on a monthly basis. (Apr-June 2011) Land
All crime recorded All vehicle crime All robbery Nos. of burglary to dwellings Nos. of shoplifting incidents Theft from a dwelling Theft from a person Housing Average house	2 40 105 26	90 3 41 114 20 7	ongoing monthly fluctuation but the general trend is that over a number of months and year to year the figures are relatively stable. This increase of 4.8% since this time last last year highlights an improvement but is less than the average house price of March 2011 reported last time at £138,000. Copeland remains an area of	report info from Police HQ on a monthly basis. (Apr-June 2011) Land
All crime recorded All vehicle crime All robbery Nos. of burglary to dwellings Nos. of shoplifting incidents Theft from a dwelling Theft from a person Housing Average house	2 40 105 26	90 3 41 114 20 7	ongoing monthly fluctuation but the general trend is that over a number of months and year to year the figures are relatively stable. This increase of 4.8% since this time last last year highlights an improvement but is less than the average house price of March 2011 reported last time at £138,000. Copeland remains an area of low house prices compared	report info from Police HQ on a monthly basis. (Apr-June 2011) Land
All crime recorded All vehicle crime All robbery Nos. of burglary to dwellings Nos. of shoplifting incidents Theft from a dwelling Theft from a person Housing Average house	2 40 105 26	90 3 41 114 20 7	ongoing monthly fluctuation but the general trend is that over a number of months and year to year the figures are relatively stable. This increase of 4.8% since this time last last year highlights an improvement but is less than the average house price of March 2011 reported last time at £138,000. Copeland remains an area of	report info from Police HQ on a monthly basis. (Apr-June 2011) Land

in Copeland	1		dropped since 2007 but	quarter one of both
in Coperatio			continue to fluctuate	years.
			quarterly between a low	years.
			point of 140 to a maximum	
			of 222. This is a similar	
			performance to 2009 Spring.	
Nos. of affordable			Our affordable homes	
homes delivered	28	93	programme has provided an	Significant nos. of
(gross)	20	93	important contribution to	demolitions in both
(g1033)			the requirement for	years
			affordable homes across the	years
			borough as detailed in our	
			recent Housing Needs	
			Survey analysis and Strategic	
			Housing Market Assessment.	
Nos. of new homes	88 net		Housing Market Assessment.	Based on Housing
built (net	additions			Flows Reconciliation,
additional	auditions			no return for 2011 as
provided) PROSPERITY				yet.
Economy				
Nos. of jobs	28,834	28,516		AES data excludes
-	20,034	20,510		self- employed and
(employees)				agricultural
Nos. of job	119	133	The increase in vacancy	Sept. figures for both
vacancies	119	133	numbers is positive news but	years
vacancies			has to be taken in the	years
			context of numbers of	
			relevant applicants per job	
			detailed in People above.	
			The use of agencies by	
			Sellafield also compounds	
			this situation.	
Nos. of 16-18 yr	6.9% (123)	7% (120)	There is a range of work	Mike Priestley,
olds NEET	0.570 (125)	, , , (120)	being undertaken by	Connexions
0.0011221			agencies co-ordinated by	Connections
			Connexions which has	
			ensured that our NEET	
			position has not worsened	
			during the year when our	
			long term and JSA youth	
			claimants have increased	
			significantly.	
Nos. of businesses	2332a	2336b	This data highlights our low	Obtained from
1403. 01 DUSINESSES	2332a	23300	rate of new business but our	National Non-
			high survival rates.	Domestic Rates
			Anecdotal evidence suggests	database a
			that our small businesses are	@31.3.2011 and
			tenacious in holding on to	b@30.9.11
			their business and will	JU.J.11
			reduce their wage take from	
	<u> </u>		reduce their wage take HUIII	

			the business thereby	
			impacting on depressing	
			existing low income levels of	
			residents not employed in	
			our major employment	
Description of the last			sector.	NA - + + - + - +
Business survival			265 businesses were	Most recent stats are
rates			registered in 2009 and 255 survived (96.2%).	from 2009, 2010 figures will be
			Surviveu (96.2%).	released in
				December.
Nos. of vacant			Our current understanding	Vacancy rates have
commercial			of empty shop units is via	maintained at a level
premises			regular monitoring of the	during the summer
premises			town centres. The	however there is an
			anecdotal picture is one	expectation that this
			where new shop uses are	may change during
			seen to be mitigating against	the winter months.
			any increase in numbers of	A survey is to be
			empty shops in our main	carried out in the
			towns.	next few months.
Tourism	,	_		,
Nos. of day visitors	2,676,000		We saw a small decrease in	From STEAM data,
			day visitors from 2009 to	latest figures 2010,
			2010. Until the 2011 figures	2009 2,731,000
			are available we are unable	
			to investigate if this is the	
			beginning of a trend. In Whitehaven we know from	
			our local statistics that there	
			has been a significant	
			increase in visitors to the	
			Beacon during this summer	
			period.	
Nos. of overnight	398,000		This is our Destination	From STEAM data,
stays	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,		Management focus area –	latest figures 2010
			increasing the number of	
			overnight stays in Copeland.	
Nos. of people	280,000	250,000	The smaller events, eg	Indicator figures -
attending events	(WF)	(WF)	Kitefest saw an increase in	using actual visits
			people attending in 2011 to	including repeat
			2010. Events attendance is	visits at Whitehaven
			being monitored by the	Festival [WF]
			West Cumbria Tourism	
			Partnership.	

3. COPELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL DELIVERY IN SUPPORT OF THE ECONOMY

3.1 Throughout our regular reports to Executive on economic impact we have highlighted a number of key internal performance indicators which serve to understand our focused activity impact on the local economy, local business and our residents. Table B sets out the latest data on these indicators of council delivery aimed at reducing local impact where possible.

TABLE B: INDICATORS OF COUNCIL DELIVERY

Indicator	2010	2011	Comments	Data Detail
TOURISM				
Nos. of enquiries to Whitehaven TIC	36,789	34,023	This decline links to the increase in web activity with Go Lakes and other sites enabling visitor information for West Cumbria.	Beacon figures
Nos. of visits to museums and galleries per 1000 population	740	1077		
Nos. of visits/usages to The Beacon including free entry	51,315	75,679	The Beacon has had a successful year to date with its large national exhibition, Dinosaurs. The	
Total income received at The Beacon	42,131	91,687	exhibition programming has to be matched with customer research and capacity of the facility to deliver large popular exhibitions.	
PLANNING & BUILDII	NG CONTROL			
Nos. of planning applications	499	389	These indicators are subject to seasonal factors. Taking into account these factors there is an expectation that the 2011 final figures	2011 figures are up to end Sept. Top quartile performance for speed of determination of planning applications.
Nos. of building control applications	558	577	will be comparable if slightly above the 2010	2011 figures are up to
Fees from charges – Planning	£330,270	£213,526	figures. What has been noticeable is the level of	end Sept.
Fees from charges – Building Control	£193,000	£215,000	variance between the seasons. There have been a number of significant large regeneration project appliations in the past six months.	
HOUSING		ı		
Nos. of homeless applications taken	111	137	These figures set out clearly the increase in this	Apr. to Sept. figures

	1	T	T	
			current year of people presenting as homeless in Copeland. We anticipate double the number of applications in 2011/12 as in 2010/11.	
Nos. of people accepted as homeless	54 (48%)	47 (34%)	Our housing options team are more actively involved in prevention activity	Apr. to Sept. figures
Nos. of homeless cases prevented	7	22	which is benefitting our outputs against these two indicators. One strong initiative is the rent deposit scheme which is reducing our need to use temporary accommodation. This initiative is funded by government and uses no council funding.	Q2 figures
Nos. of disabled facilities grants	62	40	We are experiencing an increase in DFG applications of a third. However the trend for requirements is to smaller price jobs which enables our existing budget to meet this current increase in demand.	Apr. to Oct. figures
BENEFITS			in demand.	
No. of new claims for housing benefits	3,202	2,112	The data suggests an upturn in new claims which we will continue to monitor as the impact of public sector job losses and the government's changes to social housing affect local residents.	2011 data @30 th Sept 2011
Indicator	2010	2011		Comments
% of Council tax collected	58.85%	58.17%	Comparable to previous years.	Sept. figures
% of non-domestic rates collected	99.14%	59.99%		Collection rate for 2011 as @ 30 th Sept 2011, 60.07% this time last year
FINANCE				,
% of payment of suppliers within 10 days	95.81%	98.61%	Stronger performance in current year. This is in line with our	Q1 figures for both years
% of payment of suppliers within 30	43%	64.86%	commitments to local suppliers.	

days				
LICENSING				
Nos. of alcohol		269		This is the first time
premises licence				this information has
Nos. of members		54		been reported.
clubs				Trends will be
Nos. of takeaways		19		established in future
Nos. of betting		15		reports.
shops				
Nos. of bingo halls		2		
Nos. of taxi vehicle		225		
licenses				
Nos. of driver taxi		357		
licenses				
WORKLESSNESS				
Nos. of jobs created	48	45	Future jobs fund in	30 Apprenticeships
– council			2010/11 offering one year	starts between June
partnership			jobs of which over 25%	and November as part
initiatives			continued in employment.	of the Copeland
			The 18 month	Apprenticeship
			apprenticeship initiative is	Initiative. This is the
			recruiting in waves and is	first time this
			achieving targets and a	information has been
			waiting list.	reported.
ADVICE AND GUIDAN		T		
Nos of enquiries to	12,166	13,750		Annual SLA
Citizen's Advice				arrangement in place
Bureau				

4. **CONCLUSIONS**

- 4.1 This report sets out the half year picture for Copeland against key economic indicators. These highlight:
 - All age unemployment increases in Copeland are in line with national and regional trends;
 - Copeland is experiencing significant increases in long term unemployment and youth unemployment levels compared to national, regional and other Cumbrian authorities apart from Barrow and in contrast to our report six months ago. Our number of long term under 25 year old job seekers has tripled since last year and demands our local skills and work partnership re-assess its targeted activity at both early and longer term interventions;

- Our claimant to live unfilled vacancies continues to be significantly higher than other Cumbrian areas or national figures. This has worsened since our last report in May where this had not translated into an increase in our benefit workload. These figures highlight that we are now experiencing a significant increase in housing benefit take up.;
- The cost of travelling to work outside of the immediate area specifically to get access to a wider choice of employment is challenging to Copeland job seekers;
- Our reduction in incapacity benefit rates of around 10% needs further investigation to understand the Copeland context. The drop in numbers matches the statistical increase in job seekers;
- Affordable warmth is an indicator used to assess poverty levels. In Copeland we have one third more households in fuel poverty according to our latest figures than five years ago;
- We are maintaining an increase on last year's level of major and minor planning applications including a number of major regeneration schemes in and around Whitehaven.
- People presenting as homeless continues to rise;
- The council's homelessness prevention activity is benefiting local residents with significantly less people needing to be put in emergency bed and breakfast;
- Our average house price continues to be lower than Cumbria or national averages;
- The Council continues to support local business and suppliers through a range of initiatives and links with partner agencies and in particular through maintaining prompt payment of invoices.
- 4.2 As detailed in our last reported on economic indicators in May 2011, we are continuing to see the impact of public sector cuts on our communities. A number of the indicators in Tables 1 and 2 highlight concerns for our residents. The recorded increase in numbers of people presenting as homeless alongside the known increase in numbers of enquiries to the Citizen Advice Bureau and the increase during the first half of the year in new claims for housing benefit highlight the trend from last year is continuing. The potential of national housing policy impacting on our local residents

and economy is a concern that has been highlighted within the borough over the past six months. We will continue to use the indicators in both tables to understand how this is impacting locally. What the figures do illustrate is that active prevention activity is reducing the numbers of people needing to be housed in emergency temporary accommodation and the partnership work to assist people obtain and retain private rental accommodation is resulting in increased successful private sector rentals.

- 4.3 As highlighted by Experian over a year ago, Copeland has a low resilience to the impact of national economic trends in line with its public sector contract reliance. As highlighted in Table A, 9% of Copeland's young people are officially without work. This is 1.5 times higher than Cumbria and the national picture. Positively the partnership work on young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) led by Connexions is impacting. Our NEET numbers have not worsened in line with the increase in young people's unemployment levels. This is compounded by the continuing picture of a higher than national or Cumbria ratio of Copeland jobseekers to available vacancies. This is against a slight improvement year on year of number of total vacancies.
- 4.4 We continue to deliver a range of services and service level agreements offering targeted support to local people and have been able to meet the increase in demand from local residents in the past six months. This is becoming more challenging as our planned use of our area based grant to underpin our economic development activity completes over the next year. As lead partner in the work and skills partnership we have over the past year enabled and sharing delivery of projects to provide apprenticeship opportunities to build on our previous targeted assistance to young job seekers and respond to the needs of local employers. Local business engagement and support remain a core part of our economic development delivery and we are working within Britain's Energy Coast to ensure future delivery is able to provide the range of support needed by Copeland businesses.
- 4.5 In summary, we continue to use our influence with partners and in partnerships to enable and protect our economy. Our regeneration aspirations are core to maintaining and building sustainable towns and settlements offering both transformational projects and opportunities and ensuring local services and access to support are targeted to local residents and business needs.

5. STATUTORY OFFICER COMMENTS

- 5.1 The Monitoring Officer's comments are:
- 5.2 The Section 151 Officer's comments are:

- 5.3 EIA Comments: Service delivery and council initiatives are assessed within the service plan framework to ensure targeting and customer engagement enables effective access from all residents or relevant stakeholders. Analysis of economic indicators and impacts relates to our understanding of our communities.
- 5.4 Other consultee comments, if any: Partner agencies have contributed detail which has been incorporated into the report.

6. HOW WILL THE PROPOSALS BE PROJECT MANAGED AND HOW ARE THE RISKS GOING TO BE MANAGED?

6.1 The Council's Regeneration and Community Service continue to monitor economic indicators. Interventions and services provided by the Council are directed and managed by the corporate service and performance management processes.

7. WHAT MEASURABLE OUTCOMES OR OUTPUTS WILL ARISE FROM THIS REPORT?

7.1 Services will take note of the economic indicator detail and changes in this report and use this to inform continuous service delivery and planning for 2012/13 delivery priorities. In particular, the work and skills partnership will maintain their priorities on youth unemployment and employability initiatives.

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Council Activities to Assist in last six months (April to September 2011)

List of Background Documents:

The report has drawn on internal and partner data and reports and the Cumbria Observatory.

APPENDIX 1: COUNCIL ACTIVITIES TO ASSIST IN LAST 6 MONTHS (APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2011) WORKLESSNESS

The Council, through its Working Neighbourhood Fund (WNF) has approved projects that provide opportunities for workless people to access employment and training. They include:-

a) Copeland Apprenticeship Initiative

The Copeland Apprenticeship Initiative is having a positive effect in contributing towards addressing the high NEET (not in employment, education or training) figures as recorded in

previous Recession reports. The scheme commenced in May 2011 and has created 30 apprenticeship starts to date against a target of 45. It is attracting employers from a range of sectors including: retail; care; engineering; leisure; animal welfare; construction and; hair & beauty. Apprenticeships are for a maximum period of 18 months. The scheme also supports those learners that do not meet the criteria to commence an apprenticeship by providing basic skills training.

Employers and Apprenticeship Frameworks to the end of Sept 2011 are as follows:

Employer	Framework	Employer	Framework
Bleasdale Solicitors	Business Administration	Mitie	Electrical
North Country Leisure	Customer Service	Works 4 You	Horticulture
Whitehaven Community Trust	Catering	Gosforth Nursery	Childcare
Westlakes Engineering Ltd	Business Administration	New Image	Hairdressing
Lydgate Trading Post Ltd	Customer Service	Treasure chest	Retail
Howgill Family Centre	Business Administration	Déjà Vue	Hairdressing
Rosehill House	Care	Galemire vets	Business Administration
PHX Training	Customer service	Coach Road garage	Motor vehicle
Acorn pre-school	Childcare x 2	A C Reid	Electrical
St Thomas Cross	Motor Vehicle	Rosehill House	Care x 2
Amec	Business administration x 2	Hertel	Welding x 2
Brickwork Solutions	Brickwork x 2	Tyson Burridge	Motor Vehicle
Mitie	Business administration	St Thomas Cross Hydraulics	Hydraulics

The scheme has gained national recognition and is to be highlighted at the National Apprenticeship Service Conference in November in London.

b) Wheels 2 Work

The Wheels 2 Work initiative delivered by Connexions is helping people who cannot access employment or training because of a lack of public or private transport. Clients accepted onto the Wheels to Work Programme are able to take up work and training opportunities which would otherwise not be available. This type of project underpins other WNF related activity that Copeland Borough Council is currently supporting. Figures for 2011/12 are as follows:

- 12 people issued scooters
- 3 supported into accessing other transport solutions
- 6 accessing employment

The Copeland Work & Skills Partnership, led by Copeland Borough Council, is supporting initiatives that deliver against outputs in the Copeland Access into Employment & Training Action Plan. The key Strategic Priorities in this plan are: 14 – 19 Employment & Skills Agenda; Greater Customer Reach; Job Creation Interventions; and Investment in Workforce Skills. An example of a project that is delivering against the Greater Customer Reach Strategic Priority is the Digital Exclusion Project. This project supports local people who don't have access to a computer or who don't have the relevant skills to make on-line applications. During the period 1 June to 30 September the scheme had supported the following:

- No of people engaged 176
- 117 on-line applications against an overall target of 150
- 30 job outcomes against a target of 50

The challenge for the Copeland Work & Skills Partnership continues to be increasing skill levels, work opportunities and addressing our high NEET rates in hotspot areas such as Whitehaven, Cleator Moor and Frizington.

BUSINESS

a) Backing Business in Copeland

The Backing Business Initiative from the West Cumbria Development Agency provides support to existing businesses who have been trading for more than 12 months, with fewer than 250 employees, which are not covered by the Nuclear Supply Chain Project. It also covers the retail and sole trader sectors which are often ignored by other national/regional programmes. A programme for Copeland, which is funded from LABGI, was launched in November 2009 specially designed to offer real support, advice, information and funding to existing businesses in Copeland. It aims to help businesses to survive the downturn, maximise the potential within the business, increase sales and profitability and identify areas for growth.

The Backing Business Copeland programme also funds a Copeland Advisor role to review what Whitehaven and the surrounding areas of Copeland really need, pulling together communication between various groups, networks and organisations.

Funding from Copeland towards the WCDA backing business project came to end in September 2011 but WCDA was successful in gaining additional funding to continue the project to the end of March 2012. Copeland businesses are still able to access this support and the Copeland Advisor role will also continue.

Activity in Wards since the project began in June 2009 to end September 2011 is as follows:

	No Of Assists	Grants £	Consultancy
Beckermet	3	£ 3,000	1
Cleator	1	£ -	0
Cleator Moor	17	f 11,324	9
Egremont	19	£ 11,371	11
Frizington	11	£ 6,082	3
Gosforth	3	£ 3,300	1
Millom	38	£ 20,734	20
Seascale	11	£ 11,000	7
St Bees	4	£ 4,000	3
Whitehaven	45	£ 32,651	19
TOTALS	152	£ 103,462	78

b) Ways into Successful Enterprise (WISE)

This project has helped increase business start-ups, volunteering and training in the most deprived communities in Copeland. Since the last report a reshuffle of Enterprise Coaches has improved outputs in the Whitehaven area and WISE clients in Copeland who complete the ISUS programme are now able to be referred to WCDA to access the Linkstart business grant. WISE are also now working with the Chamber of Commerce to help deliver the New Enterprise Allowance Scheme which aligns closely with their existing activities, giving access to potential new clients. Funding is currently being sought to continue the project after March 2012 and there is real scope for a county wide WISE programme.

The project continues to exceed all targets and core Copeland statistics since the project began in April 2009 are as follows:

	Oct 2010	Oct 2011
Total people assisted	299	526

JSA claimants assisted	165	231
IB people assisted	17	26

Areas of most activity are in Cleator Moor, Millom, Egremont, Mirehouse and Harbour.

c) Intensive Start up Support (ISUS)

Cumbria Chamber of Commerce currently holds the contract for the delivery of the ISUS programme, which will finish in December 2011. Meetings are currently being held with all District Councils in Cumbria to look a business start-up successor programme to ISUS.

	2010	2011 to Sept.
New businesses created in Copeland	35 (4 of which are social enterprises)	25 (2 of which are social enterprises)
Intensive supports	34 (5 of which are social enterprises)	27 (3 of which are social enterprises)
Total businesses engaged (currently taking part in the programme but have not set up their business)	136	72

d) Retail Support

Funding was allocated this year from LABGI and the DCLG Empty Shops budgets for retail sector support in the four main towns of the borough to provide an incentive for local businesses to engage in improving the retail sector.

In Whitehaven the Council offered a shop front improvement grant scheme targeted at independent retail properties on King Street, Lowther Street, Duke Street, Tangier Street, Roper Street and Whitehaven Market Place and has funded external enhancements such as new shop fronts, reinstatement of original architectural features, repair and replacement of guttering and downpipes, replacement of external stonework, brickwork and rendering and signage and also covered planning application costs. Assistance of up to 60% of the proposed works up to a maximum of £2,000 from a pot of £20,000 was available and the budget is now fully committed.

In Millom the 'Kerb Appeal' scheme aimed to improve the external appearance of the retail areas has proved very successful. Working in partnership with South Copeland Locality Partnership, the fund was launched at a Shop Doctor Masterclass, presented by Bill Smith. The fund has encouraged the creation of a new Millom and District Business Forum, a united voice for traders of South Copeland locality, which now meets monthly in Millom Network Centre to act upon various topics of common interest. The scheme will also be launched in Seascale soon.

Cleator Moor and Egremont Partnerships have successfully run shop front facelift programmes previously and the funding has provided the opportunity to reintroduce these scheme to local businesses. After the initial flurry of interest in Cleator Moor and Egremont, the scheme has been extended out to the whole of North East Copeland and enquiries are starting to come in from outlying areas.

e) Low Carbon Initiatives

As part of the allocation of the LABGI funding, the Council offered a grant to help small local businesses (SMEs) in the borough who were interested in improving their energy efficiency or adopting renewable energy systems.

The budget available was £25k with no more than £4k awarded to one business and was available for a feasibility study, capital equipment purchased specifically for the project and costs incurred specifically for installing the purchased equipment specified in the project application. The grant was linked to Cumbria Business Environment Network's (CBEN) environmental audit.

Since the launch of the grant in April 2011, activity in Copeland dramatically increased with over 32 new business engagements with CBEN in or the equivalent to 2 a week which was a 400% increase. All of the businesses visited received a full resource efficiency visit carried out for free under the Enworks Programme, with support on identifying and quantifying savings opportunities, in both energy water and waste, as well as support with legislative compliance and business sustainability.

The grant has been well received by businesses and the funding is now fully allocated, with 9 Copeland businesses taking advantage of the scheme. A number of those involved have said that they would be happy to do a case study once equipment has been installed, this would further add to the value of the support that Copeland have put into the scheme and also widen awareness of the free support package that is available from the Cumbria Rural Enterprise Agency and the Enworks programme