

CHOOSING TO CHANGE

LEAD OFFICER: Paul Walker, Chief Executive

REPORT AUTHOR: Hilary Mitchell

Summary: Reports progress of the Choosing to Change Programme against each of its workstream aims.

Recommendation: That the report is noted

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Choosing to Change programme has made notable progress since the last meeting of the Council.

2 CORPORATE PLAN

2.1 Following consultation with a wide range of stakeholders the Council Plan 2011-14 was approved by the Council on 22 February 2011. The new Council Plan focusses on four key priorities of people, place, prosperity and performance and sets out clear objectives for each.

2.2 A one year implementation plan containing targets and transformation projects to deliver the Council Plan has been developed to inform service and other planning, and Members will receive a copy of that shortly.

3. SERVICE REVIEWS

3.1 The first round of self-assessment service review work has been completed. The results were be considered by Executive at their meeting in December to inform budget-setting.

3.2 Work has also started on the full service review process. Service reviews have been undertaken for Performance Improvement, Legal and Democratic Services and Housing Options. Resulting restructures have been approved as required and appointments are being made to new roles.

- 3.3 Initially, mainly internal services are under consideration, but all services will be considered by the end of 2011/12. These reviews are more fundamental in their outlook, and will consider different options for service provision in the future.

4 BUDGET

- 4.1 The Council agreed the budget for 2011/12 and a new Medium Term Financial Strategy at the special meeting on 22 February 2011. The Council was able to meet the requirement to make £2million savings following reduction in central Government grants and other budgetary constraints. It will be necessary to undertake similar exercises for following years, in light of the continuing requirement to make budget reductions.

5 REVIEW OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 The review of senior management has now been agreed by Personnel Panel and is also moving forward. Four new Head of Service posts will be advertised internally shortly. The new structure will re-shape our management arrangements, and will help the organisation meet the budget challenges we face and ensure we're able to deliver our ambitious transformation programme as well as our new Council Plan.

6. OTHER AREAS

- 6.1 To raise the Council's performance in delivering its improvements, a new project management framework has been introduced, supported by an initial training workshop for project managers. Key and capital projects for 2011/12 have been identified and meetings are being arranged with Heads of Service to ensure relevant project plans will be in place before projects start.
- 6.2 Amended Human Resource policies were agreed by Personnel Panel on 24 January 2011 for implementation 1 April 2011. These cover attendance management, disciplinary and capability, grievance and change management.
- 6.3 A revised Workforce Strategy was agreed by Executive on 8 March 2011.
- 6.4 The Choosing to Change Reference Group, comprising representatives of the Audit Commission, Local Government Improvement and Development, North West Employers Organisation, Government Office North West and North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnership has continued to meet and provide support and examples of good practice. The Group's feedback to Copeland was of continuing improvement and developing capacity.
- 6.5 The Communication and Engagement Plan was being delivered according to the timetable. Since the last report this included electronic briefings for employees

and Members on the progress of Choosing to Change, particularly the budget announcements, Meet the Chief sessions and meetings of the staff forum.

7 FUTURE ACTIVITIES

7.1 Work is also on-going to complete our constitutional review. The Scheme of Delegation will be reviewed once the review of senior management is in place. A new working group for nuclear issues will be proposed as part of this last part of the review of the Constitution.

7.2 The first Copeland Partnership conference took place on 3 December and was a significant and important milestone for our new locality based working arrangements. A sustainable communities strategy for Copeland is being developed, to be approved by July 2011, to ensure that the whole partnership is working together for the future of the communities in Copeland.

8 CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Members are asked to note the progress on the Choosing to Change programme and to note the work that will be taking place during the coming months..