

COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL COMMITTEE FOR COPELAND

Minutes of a Meeting of the County Council Local Committee for Copeland held on Monday, 16 January 2023 at Cleator Moor Civic Hall, Cleator Moor at 10.15 am

PRESENT:

Mr K Hitchen (Chair)

Mr MS Barbour

Mr M Hawkins

Mr FI Morgan

Mr GRPM Roberts

Mr DE Southward

Mr CJ Whiteside

Mr AW Wonnacott

Also in Attendance:-

- | | | |
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| Ms V Ayre | - | Public Health Locality Manager (Allerdale) |
| Mr D Barton | - | Assistant Director - Education and Skills |
| Mr B Carter | - | Traffic Management Officer |
| Mrs L Davis | - | Democratic Services Officer |
| Ms E Routledge | - | Adult Learning Manager, Copeland |
| Ms L Sanczuk | - | Senior Manager |
| Ms L Shaw | - | Area Manager - Allerdale/Copeland |
| Ms P Stanyon-Carr | - | Senior Manager - Children and Young People |
| Mr M Taylor | - | Local Area Network Manager (Copeland) |
| Ms L Thorburn | - | Area Planning Manager - Allerdale/Copeland |

PART 1 – ITEMS CONSIDERED IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

59 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr A Lamb, Mr P Turner, Ms E Williamson and Mr D Wilson.

60 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr M Hawkins declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item No 9 – Invest in Our Communities – as a member of Beckbottom Community Garden Group.

Mr G Roberts declared a non-pecuniary interest – as a member of Whitehaven Town Council.

61 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED, that the press and public be not excluded from the meeting during consideration of any item on the agenda.

62 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation received for this meeting.

63 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2022 be agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

64 CHILDREN'S SERVICES UPDATE

Members received a report that set out how the work of the People Directorate impacted in the Copeland area. The report appraised the Committee of the work undertaken and developments within Children and families, including early help, education and children's social care.

The Senior Manager went through the first section of the report highlighting early help, part of complex arrangements to ensure children, young people and their families receive the right help by the right people at the right time. It was noted, that with funding provided by the Committee, the Pause Programme had been a great success, supporting women who have had, or at risk of, repeat removals of children from their care. Members noted designated safeguarding leads and that Cumbria had been part of a national research project which had seen social workers based in schools. The Holiday and Food Activity programme had been very successful which had resulted in Copeland receiving £201,201 to provide a wide range of activities for children and young people receiving free school meals during the holiday periods. The Local Committee's influence and direct benefit to children and young people was noted and commended.

The Assistant Director - Education & Skills continued by giving an education update and advised members that all the education systems worked closely together in Cumbria. Listed in the report were the results across all age ranges in education. Members were informed that early indications were that headline GCSE results in Cumbria were up from 2019 for all pupils, and in some cases have increased more significantly for disadvantaged pupils. However, the Early Years results remained below the national average. The impact of the pandemic was explained with the actual impact on academic outcomes and wellbeing expected to be crystallised over time. The officer highlighted the Council's good relationships with schools, wraparound support offered to schools and outlined the SEND green paper and the Schools White Paper – Opportunities for all (now being rewritten) and the impact of these. The officer touched upon Elective Home Education, the risks associated with this and the hope that monitoring powers through legislation would materialise for this in future.

Members questioned the good Ofsted ratings against the disappointing academic results. The Assistant Director explained that Ofsted ratings were not solely determined by results. The discussion centred around SEN needs, specifically autism, and the enormous challenges faced both nationally and in Cumbria for services. It was recognised that demand for places outstripped supply. Apprenticeship participation versus continued education was commented on. The infrastructure and the work done for LGR to ensure minimal disruption to the system was discussed.

To conclude the report, the Senior Manager - Children and Young People (Allerdale and Copeland) gave a short presentation on their services and who they were responsible for. The officer highlighted open cases and the changes in trends in Copeland, as well as highlighting some recent developments that were taking place. Members noted the developments included the setting up of a pilot scheme for domestic abuse, child exploitation intervention workers, increased numbers of family resilience workers and a reunification project. The rise in domestic abuse and the impacts of the Cost of Living crisis were discussed. The officers and the Area Manager outlined measures that were being taken to provide support for residents with the cost of living. Members were assured that the support being given to households was not duplicating other work on this issue.

The officers were thanked for their attendance and very informative report.

RESOLVED, that

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) the report be shared with members of the Cumberland Shadow Authority to raise awareness what had been achieved across the Copeland district as part of the new Cumberland footprint.

65 COPELAND HIGHWAYS WORKING GROUP

Members received a report detailing the discussions and recommendations from the meeting of the Copeland Highways Working Group held on 16 December. The minutes from the meeting were appended to the report.

The Local Area Network Manager gave an update on the start date of the Moresby Embankment work and informed members that collaborative work was taking place with National Highways to prepare for this. The Local Member for Howgate reiterated his serious concerns raised at the Working Group for pedestrian safety around Howgate/Gallows Lonning and, that this would be exacerbated with the planned weekend closures of the A595 and the increase in traffic using the route.

The Local Member for Egremont North and St Bees thanked officers for their hard work dealing with district flooding. The Local Member for Egremont thanked the team for the reopening of Beckermeth Bridge following refurbishment and requested assistance on localised flooding in Egremont. An update on the timescale for the Whitehaven TRO was given.

In answer to a member's question, the Local Area Network Manager reported that investigations were ongoing to the placement of traffic tubes in the Bransty area to ascertain if the correct procedure/approval had been followed.

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meeting of the meeting of the Copeland Highways Working Group held on 16 December 2022 be noted.

66 AREA PLANNING REPORT

Members received a report that provided an update on the activity undertaken by the Community Development Team since the last meeting of the Committee.

The Area Manager reported on the Borderlands Place Programme in Egremont and members noted that a report on prioritisations would be submitted to the Local Committee in March. The Area Manager agreed to provide the costings of the prioritisation work to the Local Member for Mirehouse. Members were informed of the celebratory launch of the Millom Community Hub that took place on Saturday 3 December to mark the official opening of the redesigned Hub. The event was attended by over 120 people and showcased the new hub which brings together public and community services in a fit for purpose setting.

The Area Manager gave a Library service update which included book loan boxes delivered to settings throughout the area and the 'Treasure Packs' initiative focusing on the distribution of books to children under 4 years old. The Public Health Locality Manager advised on the latest covid/flu figures, the stretched health services, funding that had been secured for more pop up vaccine clinics and encouraged the take up of the vaccines. The public health update also included work being undertaken to support mental health, suicide prevention, alcohol abuse and activities in Warm Hubs. Members noted the update from Adult Learning. It was noted that a mental health conference would take place on 2 February and details would be emailed to members following the meeting.

To conclude, the Area Manager informed members of Copeland wide issues. It was noted that additional funding had been secured to assist with the Cost of Living Crisis and that the team had been working with partner organisations on distribution. The funds were being used to support food pantries/warm hubs, vouchers to support those in financial crisis and the purchase of practical items such as hot water bottles and blankets.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

67 INVEST IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Members received a report that presented grant applications in excess of £5,000 for consideration and approval from the 2022-23 budget and were also asked to note grant applications under £5,000 where funding had previously been awarded to the applying organisation which took the full amount applied for over £5,000. The report also presented any proposals from the Environment Fund, regardless of the amount and contained the current budget position as of 30 November 2022 at Appendix 1.

The Local Member for Mirehouse welcomed and gave thanks for the grant awarded to Beck Bottom Community Garden Group.

RESOLVED, that

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) a grant of £8,000 from General Provision (£1,500 from Virtual Dementia Tour Bus, £6,426 from Dementia Enabling and £74 from Dementia Education Workshops) to Age UK West Cumbria to provide funding to local organisations to support dementia enabling events and activities be approved;
- (3) a grant of up to £15,000 to Farm Life West Cumbria CIC from the 0-19 Universal Services budget to support a new venture to set up facilities to offer farm education experience based at Moresby farm be approved;
- (4) a grant of up to £15,000 from 0–19 Universal Services to Howgill Family Centre to carry out necessary works to the former Kells Library building to enable them to relocate the Kabin Nursery into the building be approved;
- (5) the reallocation of £4,810 (the remaining balance of the 0-19 Universal budget allocation for the Youth Consultation to support using these as enabling funds) towards additional Youth Health Champion Training be approved;
- (6) from the Environment Fund allocation, the following projects be agreed:-
 - Up to £15,000 to Egremont and Area Regeneration Partnership for garden improvements, pathway and access improvements at Florence Arts Centre;
 - £5,000 to Beck Bottom Community Garden, Hensingham for provision of garden equipment storage with “living roof” and additional planting;
 - Up to £19,350 to Adams Recreation Ground Trust, St Bees to facilitate an access pathway and install interpretation boards and benches at the Adams Recreation Ground, St Bees
 - £5,000 additional funds to the Planting to Pollinators Scheme operated by the Cumbria Wildlife Trust for delivery of the scheme at nominated Copeland Sites.

68 COPELAND CHAMPIONS UPDATE

Autism Champion

The Autism Champion expressed the hope that Champion Roles continue in the new Cumberland Authority.

Health Champion

The Health Champion outlined work being undertaken for mental health support, warm hubs and bereavement.

Dementia Champion

The Dementia Champion reported on the transition of dementia work to Age UK and supported the Autism Champion's hope on the continuation of the roles.

69 VERBAL UPDATE FROM MEMBERS ON OUTSIDE BODIES/EXTERNAL COMMITTEES

There were no verbal updates given at the meeting.

70 NUCLEAR ISSUES

Mr D Southward, the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Property updated the Committee on nuclear issues. The Cabinet Member expressed disappointment that Cumbria not been chosen for the siting of the production of small modular reactors (SMRs) or the STEP project.

71 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Local Committee was scheduled for 15 March 2023 at 10.15 am at Cleator Moor Civic Hall, Cleator Moor.

The meeting ended at 12.20 pm