

IMPLEMENTING THE ANNUAL DELIVERY PLAN 2023/24

1. ISSUE

1.1 Updating the Cumberland Scrutiny and Overview Committee on the implementation of the Annual Delivery Plan for 2023/24.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the Cumberland Scrutiny and Overview Committee note progress on implementing the CLEP Delivery Plan (Annex A) in 2023/24.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Cumberland Scrutiny and Overview Committee considered the Cumbria LEP's (CLEP's) Annual Delivery Plan at its previous meeting. CLEP was asked to provide an update on the implementation of the Annual Delivery Plan at this meeting. This report outlines some of the areas of CLEP's business that has been the focus of activity.

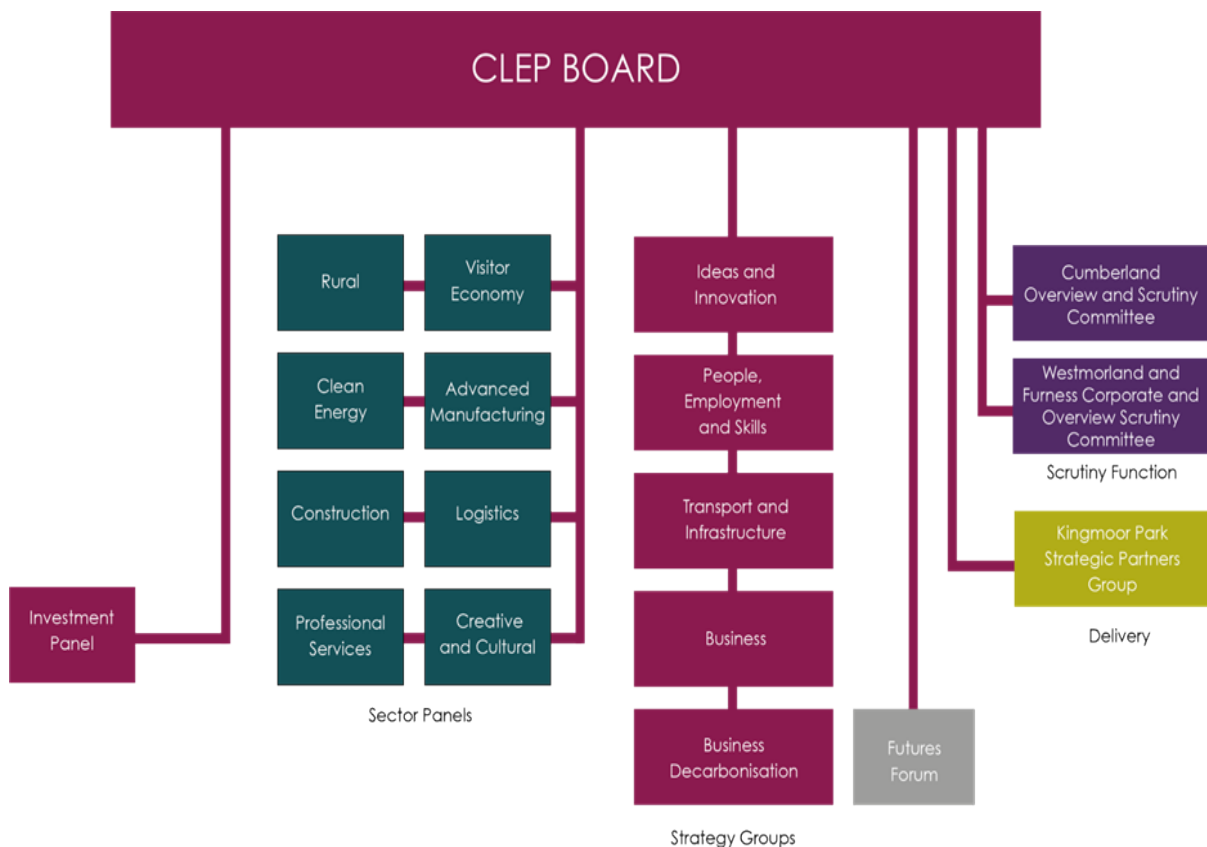
3.2 The Annual Delivery Plan is structured around the themes on which LEPs are assessed by Government – governance, strategy and delivery and this report is structured in line with this.

GOVERNANCE

3.3 Governance activity has focused on maintaining and managing the existing governance structure, given the pending transfer of functions.

3.4 During the period since the last Scrutiny and Overview Committee, CLEP has secured one new Board Member, Sarah McGrath as the FE College representative, with Professor Andrew Wren remaining on the Board as a representative of secondary education. The appointments of John Coughlan and Nigel Wilkinson, MBE were also extended until at least end of March 2024.

3.5 The remainder of CLEP's governance structure, as outlined overleaf, has continued operating and delivering their respective work programmes.



STRATEGY

Consultations

3.6 CLEP regularly responds to national consultations to ensure that Cumbria's business voice influences national policy. In recent months the CLEP has responded to the following consultations.

Implementation of Plan-Making Reforms

3.7 In summary, CLEP confirmed that it was supportive of the aims and objectives of DLUHC to speed up the preparation and adoption of local plans, which in turn will help to boost both local and national housing delivery and will support sustainable economic growth at all levels. However, there were a number of concerns which DLUHC was asked to take into account before implementing the plan-making amendments to the Levelling Up Regeneration Bill.

Education and Careers in Land-based Sectors

3.8 A response was submitted to the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee's Call for Evidence, for its Inquiry to explore the relationship between education and the land-based industries and the effectiveness of current primary, secondary, further and higher education in embedding awareness and equipping students with the skills and knowledge necessary.

Regulation Call for Evidence

3.9 ChamberWalker Economics (CWE) was commissioned to develop a composite business response to Government's Regulation Call for Evidence, which closed on 17 January 2024. Lord Inglewood, Mark Brook, Jennifer Cormack, John Coughlan and Nigel Wilkinson, MBE attended on behalf of the Board to provide input into the response. CLEP also made an offer for a CLEP representative to provide input to any future oral hearings.

3.10 CLEP is currently in the process of developing responses to two consultations related to the Nuclear Roadmap - Siting Selection and Alternative Routes to Market, as outlined in the Net Zero report.

Strategy Development and Research Activity

Cumbria Transport Infrastructure Plan (CTIP) Synthesis

3.11 CLEP is leading on the development of a synthesis piece to draw together the headline priorities from the Cumbria Transport Infrastructure Plan (CTIP) and to update this with the emerging priorities of Cumberland and Westmorland and Furness Councils. This is being completed on behalf of the Transport and Infrastructure Strategy Group (TISG). The first draft of the synthesis was presented to TISG at its meeting on 29 January 2024 and is now being refined in line with the feedback provided.

Rural Sector Transformation Workstreams

3.12 Work is underway to mobilise three transformation workstreams, which will help future proof Cumbria's rural economy and increase GVA, which currently stands at 3% of total GVA, for a sector, which has far greater concentration of activity than most other economies. The future focus considers issues including decarbonisation, changing weather patterns, behavioural change and the policy and investment context.

3.13 Due to the Transfer of Functions, the focus is currently on identifying, one or two projects that can be taking forward for each workstream. The latest project proposals being worked up for each of the workstreams are as follows:

- ***Workstream 1: Increasing land-use resilience and biodiversity*** – High level meeting for rural advisers to explore the opportunities to increase impact, alongside looking to sponsor places on the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EiT) programme.
- ***Workstream 2: Incentivising beef and dairy farming practices optimisation and emissions reduction*** – developing a bid to SRUC's Dairy Chain Innovation Programme on animal genetics and exploring the opportunities related to feedstock.
- ***Workstream 3: Developing Cumbria's high quality, distinctive markets*** – exploring opportunities around mycology, venison and the potential for abattoir facilities.

Creative and Cultural Work Programme

3.14 The Work Programme continues to be progressed with the Creative Residency programme now launched. CLEP is funding this programme, which is being delivered by a Consortium consisting of the University of Cumbria, CACN and ArtGene, which will recruit and host the residencies. The competition for the three residencies has been launched both regionally and nationally to attract significant interest. The intention is that this will be a showcase for both Cumbria and its cultural activity.

Nutrient Neutrality

3.15 Lichfields is developing a submission for the Construction Sector Panel, which outlines the impact that nutrient neutrality is having on house building, quantifies this and proposes potential solutions. This will; be submitted to the relevant Ministers in both DLUHC and Defra to highlight how badly affected Cumbria is by this issue.

Decarbonising the Logistics Sector

3.16 CWE is undertaking a commission to identify opportunities to decarbonise the logistics sector, which currently creates about 11% of global greenhouse gas emissions, of which 8% comes from freight transportation and 3% from warehousing operations.

3.17 The biggest contributor to CO2 emissions within logistics is road freight – mainly medium-duty and heavy-duty trucks - which accounts for 53% of CO2 emissions within global trade-related transport. Currently, nearly 80% of goods in the UK are moved by road, with road freight generating around 10% of emissions the UK. Heavy duty trucks alone account for 4% of emissions, with this expected to increase by a half by 2050.

3.18 The first draft report has been produced and will be developed further by incorporating information on sea and air freight, warehousing, grid connectivity and the results of a survey from Logistics Sector Panel members.

Labour Supply

3.19 Cumbria's declining working age population is one of Cumbria's economic 'trilemmas' and if not addressed it will further inhibit growth. CLEP has therefore put significant time and energy into addressing this issue, with positive shoots appearing in the last two population estimates, which demonstrate small increases in population growth. However, this is a long term project that requires continued effort. Recent activity includes:

- ***Increasing the impact of the Futures Campaign*** - The refreshed design of both the Our Future and Your Future campaigns are being rolled out on a weekly basis across CLEP's social channels, alternating between Our and Your Future each Tuesday or Thursday. The latest filming has focused on the Logistics, Construction and Professional Services sectors and to help to promote The Pears Cumbria School of Medicine.

- **Modern Workplace Charter** – this has been further refined with work to prepare for the launch of the programme, post Transfer of Functions. In order to mobilise the Charter exemplar businesses have been sought to lead the way in completing the assessment process.
- **Resilience and Employability Action Plan** – this was developed in response to increased feedback from both employers and the skills system, regarding the resilience and employability of younger people, with the pandemic exacerbating some already growing concerns around these issues. The Plan has now been fully developed with delivery partners including members of the CLEP team, Cumbria Youth Alliance, Cumbria Careers Hub, Lakes College, Sellafield, Inspira and Local Authorities.
- **Over 50s Employment Events** - Flexible Working Recruitment events took place in Barrow, Carlisle, Kendal and Whitehaven during September 2023. These were aimed at attracting over 50s, who may have retired, back into the workplace as well as attracting other job seekers. Across all for events, approximately 1,200 people attended. Employers that attended on the day and DWP colleagues have confirmed that there have been 50 individuals, who were offered a role on the day, with other leads being followed up.

DELIVERY

3.20 CLEP has been responsible for the delivery of both capital and revenue programmes on behalf of Government, alongside delivery of contracts for Government agencies and Local Government. The latest position on each of these is outlined within the report, with a separate report provided on the Skills Bootcamp programme.

Capital Programmes

Getting Building Fund

3.21 The £10.5million Getting Building Fund resulted in investment in two projects, which are both now practically complete, as follows:

- **Marina Village** – this project was practically and financially complete in November 2023 with a Project Team photo and video shoot taking place on 8 January 2024. Ongoing monitoring will continue to report the relevant outputs.
- **A595 Bothel** – this project practically completed in May 2023. Final claims have been submitted to the Accountable Body, and relevant outputs reported on the Monitoring Return.

Local Growth Fund

3.22 The focus of the programme activity has been full and final closure of remaining projects, with only A595 Grizebeck now to be completed, as outlined below:

- **A595 Grizebeck** – this project completed the necessary activities to support the development of the Full Business Case (FBC), which was submitted in October 2023. The final claim evidencing defrayment of the full Growth Deal grant has now been processed. However, the practical completion of the full scheme is not expected until 2025. The Accountable Body will continue to ensure the delivery of the full scheme. Currently, Westmorland and Furness Council are awaiting approval of the FBC.

3.23 The Growth Deal expenditure that was paid to projects as advance payments in accordance with Government timescales has now been fully evidenced and the focus has been on monitoring the delivery of outputs. The output monitoring is focused on jobs and homes created, as all other outputs have been achieved. The homes target will be increasingly challenging due to the challenges currently facing housebuilding in Cumbria. The latest position reported to the CLEP Board is outlined below:

Programme Outputs	Jobs		Investment (Public & Private Match / Follow-on Investment)	Learning Opportunities	Housing	Sq. Metres Premises (Created / Refurbished)	Premises with access to superfast broadband
	Created	Safeguarded					
Output Target	3,000		£60,000,000	1,700	3,000	62,000	5,000
Allocations/ Commitments	3,642	1,493	£128,817,186	5,207	4,162	211,213	11,220
	5,135						
Forecast	5,147		£150,284,843	6,886	1,987	211,354	11,243
Achieved	2,350		£109,125,053	6,071	1,107	124,266	11,223
Achieved (% of BEIS Target)	78.3%		181.9%	357.1%	36.9%	200.4%	224.5%
Remaining Target	650		EXCEEDED	EXCEEDED	1,893	EXCEEDED	EXCEEDED

3.24 Progress towards outputs continues although reporting in interim periods is limited, as most projects are now on an annual reporting cycle. This means that further achievements will be noted in the return following the end of financial year.

Cumberland Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF)

3.25 CLEP was invited to deliver this programme on behalf of Cumberland Council. The programme was split into two strands Enterprise Grants and Visitor economy Grants, with funding of £222,710 and £88,000 available for these, respectively, with an expectation that approximately 11 and 4 grants, respectively, of up to £20,000 would be issued.

3.26 The timescales for delivery are extremely tight and as such CLEP delivered an accelerated appraisal and decision making process with grant awards agreed at its Investment Panel on 2 February. This resulted in 14 grant offers being agreed for the Enterprise strand and 4 for the Visitor Economy. In order to de-risk delivery CLEP also agreed to provide additional funding to fund 2 further Enterprise Grants and 1 Visitor economy grants. All projects funded by the grants must be delivered by 31 May 2024, to allow full programme closure by 30 June 2024, in line with CLEP's Grant Funding Agreement with Cumberland Council.

Westmorland and Furness Shared Prosperity Fund

3.27 Following a competitive process, the LEP was selected to deliver the Business Support element of the Shared Prosperity Fund for Westmorland and Furness Council. This included two grant programmes, the capital Investing in Growth and the revenue Catalysing Growth Programmes. The launch of these grant programmes resulted in the submission of 171 Expressions of Interests, with eligibility checks completed on these. Following appraisal by independent economists, recommendations were presented to the Investment Panel meeting held on 15 December 2023 for approval.

3.28 This resulted in the agreement to provide grant support to 69 businesses with CLEP agreeing to fund a further two projects to de-risk the Programme. Grant Funding Agreements have been both issued and accepted.

Innovating for Success Programme

3.29 The Innovating for Success programme, which is funded from CLEP's own sources, is making good progress, with Quarter 3 2023/24 claims now processed. Currently, 29 businesses have or are being supported by the programme, following 6 businesses withdrawing for a range of reasons.

3.30 The table overleaf outlines which businesses have been supported, which have completed and which have participated in media activity to promote the outcomes from the programme.

Business Name	PR/Case Study	Strand	Completed
Accurite Industries Ltd.	Requested	Innovation	Yes
Ackerley Milton Mains	Yes	Decarbonisation	Yes

Business Name	PR/Case Study	Strand	Completed
Barrnon Media	Yes	Innovation	Yes
Blencow Partnership Limited	Yes	Decarbonisation	Yes
Burlington Slate Limited	Yes	Decarbonisation	Yes
Casterton Golf Course Ltd	Yes	Decarbonisation	Yes
Crown Hotel (Wetheral)	Yes	Decarbonisation	Yes
Delkia		Innovation	
Furness Fish & Game	Yes	Innovation	Yes
Grosvenor House Papers Limited (GHP)	Yes	Innovation	Yes
Harbourside Products Limited		Innovation	
Ian Cleasby Agricultural and Industrial Limited	Yes	Innovation	Yes
Jacksons Timber	Yes	Innovation	Yes
Just R Ltd	No	Innovation	Yes
Lakes Speciality Foods Limited	Yes	Innovation	Yes
Muncaster Visitor Management Limited	Awaited	Decarbonisation	Yes
Ratio Technology Limited		Innovation	
Revolutionary Concepts Ltd		Innovation	
Stone Harrison		Decarbonisation	
Storth Ltd CB	Yes	Decarbonisation	Yes
The Creators Cortex Ltd.		Decarbonisation	
The Lakes Free Range Egg Company Ltd	Yes	Decarbonisation	Yes
The Lakes Free Range Egg Company Ltd		Innovation	
The Wordsworth Trust		Decarbonisation	
The Yan at Broadrayne		Innovation	

Business Name	PR/Case Study	Strand	Completed
Transaction 360 Degrees Ltd		Innovation	
Kombineer Ltd	Yes	Innovation	
Brathay Trust	Yes	Decarbonisation	
DGTLOnline Ltd	Yes	Innovation	

3.31 The cumulative grant expenditure position for Quarters 1 and 2 was £564,789, with claims of £114,079 processed for Quarter 3, with only 1 claim of £4,200 outstanding. A further £178,104 remains to be claimed in Quarter 4 of 2023/24 and 2024/25.

Revenue Programmes

3.32 The latest position on each revenue programme is summarised below.

Growth Hub Business Support Programme

3.33 CLEP is receiving £261,000 to deliver business support advice to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) through the Department for Business and Trade (DBT) Growth Hub programme in 2023/24. This is being delivered via a series of low, medium and high intensity interventions, alongside a programme of workshops. All activity is to be delivered by 31 March 2024.

3.34 For 2023/24 CLEP has agreed to support 220 business with light touch support, 550 businesses with medium intensity support and 55 businesses with High level support.

3.35 As of 6 February delivery performance was as below:

Support level	Completed	In process	In pipeline	Target	% Completed/In process
Signposting / Low level assist	205	0	0	220	93%
3 hrs support / Medium assist	467	63	20	550	96%
12 hrs support / High level assist	26	20	9	55	83%

DBT KAM Foreign-owned Business Support

3.36 The Department for Business and Trade (DBT) provides funding to deliver a Key Account Management function in Cumbria to support Foreign Direct Investment (FDI's). This programme enables CLEP to maintain close relationships with around 40 international

businesses and ensure that they have the necessary support to further grow and develop their business.

3.37 The benefits of FDI are often typified by investment in new premises, plant and machinery, increasing turnover, improved exporting, skills development, technology enhancements/energy reduction/decarbonisation and management practices.

3.38 CLEP supports a wide portfolio of businesses and a few examples of recent or pending interactions directly or via partners are, Anord Mardix, Acrastyle, Bender UK, CCL Secure, Crown Packaging, Enesco, Enkev UK, Hollingsworth & Vose, Kimberly Clark, Komatsu Forest UK, Pac Tec, Tata Shapfell, Crown Hotel Wetheral, New Balance.

Barrow Town Deal Business & Enterprise Support

3.39 The Barrow Town Deal revenue programme is a Business & Enterprise Support project, which provides tailored assistance to individuals and SMEs in Barrow to support resilience and business growth. The programme will increase business start-ups; those becoming self-employed, or people who wish to create community businesses.

3.40 The programme aims to support a combined total of 541 enterprises and individuals, with CLEP sub-contracting delivery to the Cumbria Chamber of Commerce in partnership with Cumbria Social Enterprise Partnership to deliver the project for the 2022/23 and 2023/24 financial years. Progress reported as at 15 January 2024 was as follows:

Output	Profile to end of Dec 23	Submitted on CRM	In progress
3hrs enterprise ready	Chamber - 29 CSEP - 18	Chamber - 1 CSEP - 3	Chamber – 1 CSEP - 11
12hrs enterprise ready	Chamber - 56 CSEP - 5	Chamber – 1 CSEP - 0	Chamber – 11 CSEP - 4
3hrs enterprise	Chamber - 37 CSEP - 5	Chamber – 30 CSEP - 1	Chamber – 22 CSEP - 3
12hrs enterprise	Chamber –27 CSEP - 5	Chamber – 10 CSEP - 0	Chamber – 4 CSEP - 3

3.41 This project has proved particularly challenging to deliver as there is an ongoing struggle to engage individuals who may be interested in starting a business, which was the primary focus of the delivery when originally contracted. Despite concerted efforts the pipeline of participants has not developed as was hoped. This is partly attributable to the abundance of well-paid jobs available in the area, and partly due to historically low levels of

entrepreneurialism in the local area. CLEP is working with the Accountable Body to identify mechanisms to address these ongoing challenges.

Careers and Enterprise Activity

Overall Contract

3.42 Each academic year the Careers and Enterprise Company set targets for the Cumbria Careers Hub to achieve as part of the Grant Offer Letter. In order to ensure that all targets are achieved by 31 August 2024 the team has prioritised the Institutions that need additional support to achieve at least 3 Gatsby Benchmarks (3 out of 53 schools), Gatsby Benchmark 1 (14 out of 53 schools). In addition, all schools are being encouraged to complete the Future Skills Questionnaire (FSQ) with their students.

3.43 Schools in West Cumbria have received additional funding from the WELL project to deliver 1:1 careers guidance to Year 9 pupils and will complete the FSQ with this year group to help measure impact.

Cumbria Careers Day

3.44 Cumbria Careers Day will be celebrated on 6 March 2024. It is a celebration of careers in Cumbria and will be a focal point during National Careers Week. The intention is to get everybody talking about the fabulous career opportunities in Cumbria. The Careers Hub will engage with all levels of education from Primary through to HE and encourage employers and partners to take part in one or more of the suggested activities taking place that day. Schools and colleges will be provided with resources that can be used in school highlighting careers in Cumbria.

3.45 Organisations are being encouraged to get involved and will be provided with suggestions on how to get involved including engaging with a local school or college delivering projects, competitions, open door visits, bring your child to work etc. There will be a “Did you know?” social media campaign on that day and Employers and Partners are being encouraged to engage in this by sharing quirky facts about their organisation.

Cumbria Talent Force

3.46 The aim of the Cumbria Talent Force is to link Cumbria’s young professionals and talent in the workforce with young people in school and colleges to raise their aspirations about the breadth of career opportunities available to them in Cumbria. It is also designed to address employers significant skills shortages, which is as a result of our declining working age population. Retaining our young people and encouraging them to stay in Cumbria is therefore really important.

3.47 The objectives of the Cumbria Talent Force are to:

- To raise awareness of ALL the career pathways and opportunities in Cumbria.

- To support schools and colleges to develop their alumni by building a bank of ex-students that will be more relatable to current students and act as positive role models.
- To nurture and develop the talent of young people in Cumbria retaining them in our workforce. (This could be part of their early careers CPD to help build their skills and link to Futures Forum Leadership model.)
- To create a sustainable employer engagement programme that can be managed by schools in the future.

Hub Innovation Project

3.48 The Careers Hub completed delivery of the Hub Innovation Project on 31 December 2023. The project was designed to explore whether targeted interventions with young people (aged 16-18) studying at Furness College would help improve their aspirations and employability skills. It was designed to help to respond to Barrow's high level of unemployment in aged 18-24, which is the highest in Cumbria. Impact Data will be available in February 2024, based on evaluation research, which is being completed by the Careers and Enterprise Company.

Teacher Encounter Project Extension

3.49 Following the successful delivery of the National Highways Teacher Encounter Project, the CEC has approved funding for an extension to the project to deliver a similar event for the Health and Social Care Sector. Partners include Cumberland and Westmorland & Furness Councils, NHS representatives (North and South), Skills for Care, University of Cumbria and the 4 FE Colleges.

3.50 The project will deliver an Employer/Teacher Conference in April 2024 followed by teachers spending time out in the health and social care sector. A minimum of 25 teachers will be involved in the programme and teaching resources will be created that will be shared across the County and nationally.

3.51 A video was produced on the Teacher Encounter Project with National Highways, which can be accessed at [video](#).