



Report to Council

Meeting Date: 6 March 2024

Public/Private*: Public

Title: **Deputy Leader (Statutory), Governance and Thriving Communities
Portfolio Holder**

Report of: Councillor Lisa Brown

This is the first of my reports in this new portfolio role, and I'd like to thank all the officers who have taken the time out to say hello, to do me introductory briefings, and to show me round some of our facilities.

We are lucky to have Cumberland Care – it is clear to me already how much of a loved brand it is. I have been so impressed with the staff, they do an amazing job caring for some of our most vulnerable people – and off the back of what must have been an incredibly hard time during the pandemic.

I am sure the Moot Lodge consultation is at the forefront of minds, but I want to reassure Council today that any steps we take in the development of Cumberland Care will only be to future proof the service so that we can ensure it is there, providing the care that is needed and that the people of Cumberland deserve, well into the future and beyond any of our tenures on this Council.

This is the budget meeting so I want to discuss the Government's plan to end the Household Support Fund. This fund has been a lifeline to many people in Cumberland in recent years during the cost of living crisis, so any plan to end it is in my view cruel. Of the many things we use the Household Support Fund for, one thing close to my heart is how we use it to ensure that free school meal children continue to get meals during school holidays, and additional provision for school breakfast clubs. I am keen to hear from anyone today with ideas for how we press Government not to end this lifeline funding for our communities.

The Community Panels continue to go from strength to strength, with thriving networks that are expanding. We are going through the co-opted member process which is further demonstration of this Council's commitment to genuine engagement – and I hope you all get involved in securing fantastic local representation on your own panels.

This report although published in advance, will follow our first Economic Summit at which I took part in the panel discussion on putting health and wellbeing at the heart of all we do, facilitated by Tom Lloyd-Goodwin from CLES. For those of you unfamiliar, CLES is a leading UK 'think and

do tank' whose mission very much mirrors our own – to create inclusive local economies that work for people, place and planet. I will be happy to take questions today on the outcomes from the day.