



Report to Council

Meeting Date: 6 March 2024

Public/Private*: Public

Title: **Adult and Community Health Portfolio Holder**

Report of: Councillor Markus Campbell-Savours

You'll have to forgive the brevity of this report, this portfolio is new to me and I am in the early stages of introductory briefings.

But I do want to update on the progress of the community engagement framework, because this is central to how we want to operate as a council – from the very outset we said we wanted to work differently, and this is one of the ways in which we will deliver on that promise.

Once complete this framework will offer us a menu of options we can select from and use, to take a variety of decisions, right across the council and Cumberland in the future. Sticking to our promise of taking decisions closer to the local people and communities that they affect.

It will shortly be going through the scrutiny process and I look forward to our internal engagement and discussion process, to make this document a genuine opportunity to capitalise on the opportunities open to us as a new unitary council.

I also want to reach out to Council because we're nearly a year in now post-vesting, and our AGM will be coming up in May. That means new appointments to committees and outside bodies and a new diary – so an opportunity to review how far we've come, and what is working and not working for you all. I will be asking officers to put in some sessions to facilitate these discussions – but don't hesitate to reach out with feedback.

Finally, Audit Committee met on 22nd February when the agenda included consideration of the external auditor Grant Thornton's Value For Money Report relating to Copeland Borough Council's 2018/19 and 2019/20 accounts. The item was deferred to the next meeting when Grant Thornton have advised they will also be able to submit the Value For Money Report for subsequent years up to LGR. This will enable a full consideration by Audit Committee. The reports relate to the former Copeland Borough Council but will contain a number of recommendations for Cumberland Council to satisfy the external auditor's concerns going forward. Cumberland Council has already put in place those procedures which may not have been in place in the legacy authority and will provide full management responses when the reports are considered at the March Audit Committee.

I'd like to thank staff and the audit committee for their work on what is a bumper backlog of audits for our predecessor authorities.