



CUMBRIA STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP
THE PARTNERSHIP VOICE FOR CUMBRIA

Cumbria

where energy
inspires
excellence

**A selection
of outstanding
practice**

As part of the Comprehensive Area Assessment process the Audit Commission will identify areas of outstanding practice which all local authorities could learn from. The very best examples will be awarded a 'green flag'

Green flags represent exceptional performance or outstanding improvement which is resulting in proven delivery of better outcomes for local people that are sustainable and which others could learn from. Good or very good practice is not sufficient. Nor is rapid improvement that auditors are not confident can be sustained. They will also use green flags to highlight innovative practice that has promising prospects of improving outcomes for local people that they consider others can learn from.

We strongly believe that these projects from Cumbria merit consideration for green flag status.

From energy to excellence

In Cumbria we are working together to energise our county. We are capitalising on our world class natural assets, safe strong communities, the warmth and industry of local people, and our collective desire to make a difference. We are building a new Cumbria positioned at the heart of sustainable energy markets, and offering matchless opportunities for active outdoor leisure. By making the most of these unique opportunities we are improving the quality of life for our community with clarity, commitment and an unrivalled sense of place.

The energy we bring to delivering our vision is giving rise to a wealth of outstanding practice. Cumbria is no sleepy backwater. It is a hotbed of innovation and creativity. We believe that the way in which we have applied our energy to the challenges of our place has created ideas and ways of working which could offer much to others.

We don't believe in keeping good ideas to ourselves, so we are presenting some of them here. We believe this work is outstanding. See what you think and, if you want to know more, please do give us a call.

Our Vision

Our community strategy sets out a clear vision for the future of Cumbria. It will be a place where we work together to energise:

- Safe, strong and inclusive communities
- Health and wellbeing throughout life
- A sustainable and prosperous economy
- Effective connections between people and places
- World class environmental quality

We believe there are examples of outstanding practice in each of these areas.

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Safe Strong and Inclusive communities

Children and young people will see bright prospects and diverse opportunities. They will get the best possible start in life and be empowered to get involved in their communities. Young people have an important part to play in Cumbria's future and they will be provided with excellent learning and training opportunities to help them achieve.

Our communities will be made safer, stronger and more inclusive by helping more people to get involved and make a difference to the place they live, confident that everything is being done to further reduce crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour.

Strategic Commissioning Children's Services

What is it?

Effective strategic commissioning and planning is at the heart of delivering improved outcomes for children and young people. At the centre of our strategic commissioning approach, is the shift of resources and activity into preventative and early intervention services that better safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children, young people and their families. The delivery of our priorities requires significant changes to the way we work.

To achieve this shift we have focused on:

- Strengthening governance and accountability arrangements.
- Achieving better engagement with schools.
- Implementing our prevention and early intervention framework.
- Strengthening locality planning, commissioning and service delivery.
- Integrating services and introducing the role of the lead professional, Early Support and Team around the Family for children with special needs.
- Increasing the participation of children, young people and their families in service development and design.
- Developing our workforce.

The Performance Management Framework adopted by the Children's Trust Board has been designed to ensure clear lines of accountability for the improvement of outcomes for all children and young people. The framework is based on a Results-Based Accountability model.

Wow!

Cumbria County Council and the Children's Trust were one of only six local authority areas short listed for the coveted Beacon Status in Strategic Commissioning in 2008/2009

Cumbria was short listed because of its innovative work with the Children's Commissioning Trust in shifting resources into preventative and early intervention services to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children, young people and their families.

The hard work and commitment of all partners within the Children's Commissioning Trust is being recognized by many authorities who have sought advice about our approach. Cumbria is seen nationally to be in a group of local authorities at the leading edge of a strategic commissioning approach which has a direct impact on improved outcomes for children, young people and their families.

The DCSF has identified Cumbria as excellent practice in this area – featuring our work in a case study been drawn up on our resource allocation model which was initially developed during the commissioning of children's centres.

We have also given presentations on strategic commissioning at a regional strategic commissioning event organised by the Virtual Staff College & GONW and also to a national Leadership Academy event organised by the Virtual Staff College & NCSL

Making a difference

Outcomes for children and young people are improving in Cumbria. For example in the last year as a result of conscious commissioning decisions –

- Childhood obesity is reducing – from 15.5% to 15% at Year 6.
- Parts of the county where there has been early adoption of joint preventative processes already show clear evidence of impact. In West Cumbria 170 children who would not previously have had their needs met have a lead professional and case planning ensuring that their needs are met.
- As a result of targeted action in localities the numbers of Children Looked After have fallen from 44 to 23 in Furness and from 70 to 52 in the West of the County.
- 80% of care leavers are now in education, employment or training from a low baseline.
- CLA attendance is improving and achievement at all key stages is above average and improving.
- School attendance has risen in Cumbria by 2% to 80%.
- Persistent absence in secondary schools is falling. Cumbria is the second best improving Priority Attendance (PA) authority out of 54 with significant improvements in Carlisle schools.
- Outstanding progress continues to be made with 5.24% of young people being Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), exceeding the year end target of 5.8%. We remain on course to meet the stretch target of 4.8% which is below the England, North West and statistical neighbour averages.
- A higher than average proportion of young offenders, supervised by the Youth Offending Service are in EET and over a third of teenage mothers are now in EET.
- Outstanding progress has been made in meeting the accommodation and support needs of care leavers and other young people. In March 2008, 98% of care leavers were in suitable Accommodation.
- Family support services have been reshaped through the commissioning of children's centres are services and as a result children and families are able to access family support services in their local communities. This service delivery model is based upon 28 local delivery communities/footprints!

We have been so successful with our strategic commissioning in Cumbria because of:

- Systemic change – structures/process/planning/commissioning/procurement/performance.
- A customised approach to Cumbria.
- A high level of partnership engagement in the Trust.
- Each agencies role to deliver within their own priorities – towards shared destinations.
- Strong engagement at leadership strategic; tactical; individual levels.
- Focus on “so what?”
- Monitoring impact.

- Implementing the whole commissioning cycle.

Within Cumbria, our work related to the allocation of resources has retained key principles across a range of services commissioned. These principles include

- Fairness, simplicity and transparency.
- Consistency in application.
- Achievement of value for money.

As commissioned services can vary significantly in priorities and needs, we have developed a Resource Allocation Model which was designed to be adaptable, taking into account weightings applied within the differing commissioning cycles. Potential options within the Resource Allocation Model include:

- Allocation of funding at a ward, locality or county level.
- Application of a per capita measure for children and young within the locality/county (adaptable based upon age-ranges).
- Assignment of wards to varying levels of disadvantage, based upon the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).
- Application of a variety of weightings to allocate funding between universal and targeted services, applying level of disadvantage as a measure.
- Deduction of a base allowance in recognition of set management and infrastructure costs
- Application of a caseload allowance by area where need for targeted services required cannot be determined by IMD data.
- Targeted rurality elements for those wards above average size.

The above work can be demonstrated in sustained improvement and high levels of strategic and operational commitment to further improvement in outcomes for children and young people.

Built to last

Much of what we have achieved in terms of improvements in outcomes for children, young people and their families has been as a result of reshaping our services. This is what our strategic commissioning approach is all about. We intend, through the Children's Trust, to continue its roll out so that we are always in a spiral of continuous improvement shaped by our understanding of needs and current delivery of services.

What could others learn from us?

- An overarching Preventative approach.
- Developing a Supporting Families Strategy.
- Commissioning and procuring Children's Centre services and Integrated Youth Support Services. These services have been commissioned on the 28 footprints ensuring the correct services are being delivered at a local level.
- The successful engagement of the third sector creating a voluntary and community sector reference group which has allowed a structured approach with service providers that takes into account commissioning principles and Compact issues.
- The development of a locality approach which has ensured the delivery of agreed strategic priorities, monitoring performance and reshaping the delivery of preventative services on a multi-agency basis.

Find out more

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Implementing the 14-19 Reform Programme

What is it?

The 14-19 reform programme is about improving the aspiration and achievement of young people in our county. The Cumbria 14-19 Strategy provides the vision, structures, processes and activity which have enabled rapid progress towards delivering the national 14-19 entitlement, and raising the participation age in all parts of this diverse county. Latterly this has had to be done in the light of the new statutory requirements for LAs to plan and secure provision for 16-19 year olds as a result of transfer of responsibilities from the LSC.

Wow!

Cumbria was awarded Beacon status in 2008 under the Better, Brighter Futures theme for excellent practice in the implementation of the national 14-19 reforms. This followed a period from 2002 when Cumbria became one of the first nine DfES 14-19 Pathfinders. The intervening years saw the development of much effective practice that was subsequently incorporated into national requirements. This included the establishment of travel to learn area 14-19 partnerships, the on-line District Prospectus, 14-19 Transport Co-ordination, and piloting of Diploma implementation and the Foundation Learning Tier. 14-19 practice in Cumbria is nationally recognised as being best practice in a rural authority.

Cumbria is now a 16-19 Sub-Regional Group in its own right and will commission 16-19 provision through the structures of the 14-19 Strategic Partnership from April 2010. We are the only single LA Sub-Regional Group in the North West Region.

Cumbria led the way in developing a number of initiatives, some of which are now incorporated into national policy, which facilitate improved learner access to the personalised curriculum including:

- **Futures4me.com** – the web based area/district prospectus giving information on locally available 14-19 learning programmes by subject, level, provider, qualification outcome and possible progression routes.
- **Cumbria Higher Learning Link** – linking the District Prospectus with HE learning opportunities across the county, identifying progression routes to Level 4 and beyond.
- **Plan-It** – a web based individual learning plan that supports learners in action planning, recording and evaluating their learning in multi provider programmes.
- **E-learning and Moodle** – our Virtual Learning Environment that supplements and enhances the learning experience, facilitates improved access to learning opportunities where there are gaps in existing provider capacity and provides a platform for practitioner networking.
- **Flexible curriculum modelling** – area developed agreements on programme delivery according to clear criteria on curriculum content, quality of provider, learner need and access arrangements.
- **The 14-19 Concordat and Area Planning Framework** – the partnership agreement and the information, advice and guidance and curriculum self-assessment criteria to inform area based planning of entitlement provision.
- **Pre-vocational assessment tools** – simple assessment instruments and self-evaluation processes to gauge aptitude and motivation in vocational lines of learning.
- **Manual of Good Practice in Personalisation** – examples and materials to support access to a personalised learning programme for all young people.
- **Involving Young People Toolkit** – Methods and materials to assist young people in getting involved in the development of and taking control of their own learning.
- **Personalisation Self-Assessment Toolkit** – guidance and framework for providers to audit their capacity to personalise learning, mapped against the five ECM outcomes and drawn from learner feedback.

A selection of outstanding practice

- **Building Bridges** – the partnership with the Open University giving 16 and 17 year olds access to HE modules with CAT points accreditation.
- **Peripatetic Specialist Teachers** – vocational specialists who travel to schools across a partnership area and provide learning opportunities in the home base. They also play a leading role in teacher professional development.
- **Management Information, the 14-19 Database and the Sixth Form Learner Record** – cross provider data capture and analysis systems to enable student tracking, area performance evaluation and informing local planning.
- **Area ALPS** – Area based aggregated A Level Value Added data to identify agreed area based strengths, weaknesses and gaps in curriculum offer.
- **Operational Arrangements** – the policies, procedures, and protocols needed to deliver area based collaborative provision and safeguard the young people engaged in it.
- **14-19 Transport Co-ordination** – the centralised planning and procurement of transport to access collaborative 14-19 provision across the age range.
- **Change Management Initiatives** – a series of activities and events to support and encourage the cultural and organisational change required for effective collaboration.
- **The FE College Working Group** – ensuring the FE sector is fully engaged and able to take the lead in their specialist curriculum areas.
- **Parents Advisory Panels** – local focus groups of parents and carers. Set up and supported to help develop materials and methods for raising awareness of new curriculum opportunities and collaborative options. Key element of personalisation, IAG and learner voice strategies.
- **Rural proofing** – adapting the instrument developed for rural development and local authority decision making to apply it to the initiatives, plans and aims of the 14-19 reforms.

This activity and good practice is integrated with the key collaborative curriculum delivery programmes operating in all areas, namely:

- 1 **14-16 Increasing Flexibility Programmes** which are being expanded and forming the basis of preparation for Diploma delivery in Key Stage 4.
- 2 **Young Apprenticeship** programmes linked to CoVE and Specialist Schools to ensure high quality learning experiences for learners with high prior attainment.
- 3 **The Appropriate Curriculum Extension (ACE)** Programmes which are targeted at vulnerable and at risk young people to provide opportunities to achieve and progress, often in real work environments.
- 4 **Key Stage 4 Engagement** Programmes tailored for a range of disaffected young people to give access to mentor support and learning in appropriate contemporary settings, including real work environments.
- 5 **Post 16 Co-operatives** where the range of 16-19 options is expanded and minority subjects protected by sharing course provision, according to strengths and specialisms, across an Area Partnership. Supported by the 16-19 Area Prospectus distributed to every Year 11 student.
- 6 **Diplomas**. Based on current Key Stage 4 participation rate, in related vocational learning, of over 50%, the planning for the Gateway and Diploma implementation is on track to meet learner entitlement before 2013.

Other initiatives ensure coherence of activity and development across the county. These include:

- A county Workforce Development Strategy linked to the Cumbria 14-19 Strategic Plan. The resulting Action Plan will be cross-sectoral and cover: Leadership and Governance; Area Performance Management; E-Learning; Curriculum Development; Personalised Learning; Information, Advice and Guidance; Functional Skills; Teaching and Learning; and, Learner Voice.
- Common Action Plans for Diploma preparation and development through Diploma Line Working Groups.
- Moodle Learning Community Networks in the 14 Diploma lines.
- Joint 14-19 and National Strategy Team planning of INSET for Functional Skills Delivery.

The Stage 2 submission to DCSF and DIUS to become a Sub-Regional Group in February 2009 was approved with minimum levels of external intervention and support required.

Making a difference

We believe our figures speak for themselves:

<i>Performance Indicator</i>	<i>Baseline 2001</i>	<i>Outcome 2008</i>	<i>Target 2012</i>
Participation in Full Time Education at 16	67.9%	78.75%	80%
Participation in Education, Employment and Training at 16	81%	96.7%	98%
Participation in Education and WBL at 17	72%	88%	95%
16/17 year olds NEET	9.4%	4.7%	3.6%
5+ GCSEs A*-C (incl Eng + Ma)	50.8%	63.2% (48.4%)	68% (58%)
Achieving Level 2 at 19	61%	74.6%	80%
Achieving Level 3 at 19	Data unavailable	46.9%	58%
Young first time entrants to HE	27%	32%	38%
14-16 year olds taking accredited vocational courses	1440	5480	6500
16-18 FE retention	86%	92%	97%
Vlth Form Y12-Y13 continuation	79%	88%	90%

Built to last

A comprehensive 14-19 Strategy and 14-19 Education Plan. Both of these are in the process of being updated to incorporate new statutory requirements arising from 16-19 Transition from the LSC.

What could others learn from us

- Delivery of 14-19 Reforms in a rural area.
- Commissioning collaborative 14-19 provision across the age range.
- Employer engagement in the rural context.
- Partnership development.

Find out more

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The Scafell Project (Prolific & Priority Offender Management in Cumbria)

What is it?

The Scafell Project is a multi-agency approach to address Government expectations in tackling Prolific and Priority Offenders (PPO) in the county. It is making a real difference by reducing re-offending and cutting crime.

Wow!

The project has received ministerial recognition, and been endorsed personally by the Prime Minister following a presentation in Downing Street. The project received the highest assessment at the national Prolific and Priority Offender Conference resulting in several visits by peer groups from across the country.

The project was positively assessed by a multi-agency inspection team in October 2008, and received national recognition with a Butler Trust award presented at Buckingham Palace on 18.3.09.

Making a difference:

The project is making an exceptional significant contribution to making our communities safer and stronger. Performance has exceeded Government Office for the North West expectations and Local Area Agreement targets. It has contributed significantly to Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership crime performance and, because of reduced re-offending, the consequential downstream savings to partner agencies assessed as part of the 'Cost of Crime' are significant.

As a direct result of this project there has been a 73% reduction in Prolific and Priority Offender convictions (08/09) and on current performance GONW target for 2009/10 will be exceeded. A reduction in PPO re-offending has contributed to local CDRP crime rates, and the project has exceeded the NI30 target to reduce re-offending rates within the Local Area Agreement.

Built to last

The project, supported by defined terms of reference and a detailed PPO management framework, began in April 2007 and is successful based upon the effective relationships and joint working of the professionals involved. Three divisional teams are made up of a collocated Probation Worker, Police Officer and Assertive Outreach Worker, each managed by a Cumbria Area Senior Probation Officer.

The project is robust and there are clear plans to sustain improved performance into the future. This is the 3rd year of the project which is funded by the participating agencies and other partners. Funding for 2010/11 and beyond will be subject of a Reward Grant bid as the Scafell management of PPO's has contributed greatly to this future funding stream.

What others can learn from us

- Case management through a shared client file approach – highlighted as best practice during inspection.

- Sound financial management leading to cost effective service delivery.
- Sound professional working relations based upon trust and shared objectives.

Find out more

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Streetsafe

What is it?

Streetsafe is about local agencies visiting people in their homes to learn about the day to day issues which affect their quality of life. We listen and respond to the community through a simple but effective process, based around pairing up personnel from statutory, Third Sector and community agencies to engage with residents in their living rooms. If possible, any specific problems are addressed there and then. The resident is given a Streetsafe 'community bag' which contains leaflets (offering information, education or advice), preventative tools (ultra violet marking pen, road safety tags, key fobs, safety colouring books etc.), promotional/advertising goods (pens, pencils, book marks, toys and sweets) and flyers (community news etc.). Agencies are able to contribute to this bag as appropriate. Problems are captured, shared with the relevant agencies and actions fed back to the community.

This multi-agency approach has been delivered across Barrow and South Lakeland over the last 8 years reaching over 16,000 homes to date. Since late 2004, a community questionnaire has been used on all operations to gain a wide range of information, not only in identifying problems but also as a tool to measure and evaluate the agencies' service to the community.

Wow!

The Home Office have recognised Streetsafe as best practice, inviting officers to present their work and share best practice. The Department has commissioned a best practice case study on the project. Government Office for the North West have also recognised the scheme as demonstrating best practice, and Cheshire constabulary have gone a step further – adopting the scheme in the Congleton area following a consultation visit. Streetsafe has also featured prominently in the Fire and Rescue 'Ready to share, ready to learn' project between Cumbria, Merseyside, Hampshire and South Yorkshire. The Streetsafe scheme has also attracted interest in Uganda where police and community leaders looking to develop a Neighbourhood Policing approach are working closely with services in Cumbria.

Making a difference:

Feedback from residents shows that they feel confident in talking (and disclosing information) to the teams. Every effort is made on the day to achieve as much as possible. This includes a follow up to the previously completed visual audit of the area (before and after), fitting of smoke alarms if required, graffiti removal, rubbish removal, abandoned or untaxed vehicles removed, prosecution of offenders (litter and dog fouling) and media coverage.

There have been no recorded Fire Deaths in the homes where the Streetsafe initiative has visited.

Streetsafe focuses on all areas of the Local Area Agreement (LAA) not just one problem/priority/area. Therefore, it is beneficial for all agencies who have LAA target responsibility to be involved as well as doing it for the satisfaction that they have 'made a difference'.

The scheme addresses 39 of the 198 National Indicator set, 16 of which are from the 35 LAA recognised targets.

Built to last

In Barrow, Streetsafe now forms part of the Community Engagement Network (CEN) which is a multi-agency 'hub' for local practitioners to come together, sharing resources and intelligence to identify solutions. The development of the CEN operates around a 'toolbox' approach which identifies the most appropriate tool to use when engaging with the community, from basic information sharing through to full empowerment eg Neighbourhood Forum, focus group, participatory appraisal etc.

Streetsafe is continually evolving ensuring that activity is reviewed and improved. The development of a virtual Streetsafe is now being pursued with a dedicated web site, social networking sites and an interactive problem mapping site. This opens Streetsafe up to the wider community and allows them to access information, provide community intelligence and become involved.

What could others learn from us?

- A genuine willingness from all local agencies, at strategic and operational levels, to approach problem solving from a resident perspective rather than an agency perspective.
- To set aside differences and work together to identify local community issues and deliver solutions utilising local resources.
- Streetsafe offers the agencies involved the chance to operate in true partnership on a practical basis. It offers the opportunity for personnel to work alongside people they may never normally work with.

Find out more

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A shared approach to equalities

What is it?

Integration of Equality between Cumbria County Council, Primary Care Trust and District Councils demonstrating considerable innovation with potential to deliver very positive outcomes. The project has been selected to be part of a national pilot.

The project takes a unique approach to embedding Equality and Diversity by developing a single team that is embedded within the County Council, PCT and Districts to mainstream the equality agenda from within, while drawing the organisations together into a close partnership.

Wow!

Cumbria has been selected along with Stockport and Sefton to pilot a project to disaggregate the National Indicator Set by Equality Strands. This will feed into IDeA research and guidance for all authorities on how to use the NI's to create a suite of Equality indicators that are outcome focused.

Cumbria County Council was able to move from Level 1 to 3 of the Equality Standard in 2 years, which is one of the fastest rates of improvement in England.

This has demonstrated a clear example of a Corporately managed programme that has been embedded through the Council's Directorates.

This formed the basis for developing an integration model with the PCT which was about developing a shared service between both organisations.

With money from the Cumbria Improvement and Efficiency Partnership, the next phase will be to support the 6 Districts to be externally assessed at Level 3 in 2010-11, so that all 7 Local Authorities and the PCT are externally accredited as being able to offer:

- Fair access to services for people of all backgrounds.
- Clear linkage between community need and outcomes relating to services and employment in the organisations concerned.

Cumbria is now on a sustainable footing to be the leading rural area on Equality and Diversity.

Making a difference

Place Survey evidence shows that people from all backgrounds in Cumbria are equally likely to believe that public services treat them fairly (NI 140). This is a major equality outcome as it suggests that the corporate approach is working.

We specifically tested this out by comparing BME/non-BME responses, Disability/non-disability responses, male and female responses and across all age bands. So it is a proper result.

BME people were more likely than non-BME people to be happy with the way Councils run things. This is important given the areas of disadvantage they experience in relation to many of the Stronger Community indicators.

Within the past year we have been able to:

- Use the Place Survey to map Equality Gaps between BME and non-BME people, Disabled and non-Disabled people and people from different age groups.
- Carried out a Targeted Community Engagement Programme based on the findings of the Place Survey.
- Start embedding feedback from the Targeted Community Engagement into Equality Impact Assessments across the County Council, PCT and Districts to ensure that the principle of 'you said we did' is focused on specific services.
- Start work on the disaggregation of the National Indicators by diversity strands.

This will ensure that Equality will become a foundation for assessing performance against all of the NI's, and that targeted action can be focused on any NI's where there is evidence of a group not benefiting on the basis of their ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age or religion and belief.

Built to last

Equality for All is the Single Equality Scheme which sets out how the council and partners will achieve sustainable improvements in outcomes around areas as diverse as employment, health, educational and community belonging.

A suite of performance indicators will be developed across services in the County Council, PCT and Districts that will be based on the findings from the Equality Impact Assessments and the disaggregation of the National Indicators.

Everyone who has participated in the Targeted Community Engagement exercise will be personally contacted to explain how the County Council, PCT and Districts have acted on their issues. They will be offered the opportunity to take part in more engagement opportunities, so that the Council and partners evolve an Equality network in the community.

What could others learn from us?

- The development of a single Equality Scheme Equality for All which lays out the basis for equality across the whole public sector in the county.
- The Cumbrian approach to shared services on equality.
- The Cumbrian approach to the National Indicator Set.
- Using an equality analysis of the Place Survey to identify narrowing the gap targets, and support this with a targeted community engagement programme.

Find out more

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Cumbria Road Safety Partnership

What is it?

The Cumbria Road Safety Partnership (CRSP) is a multi agency partnership which aims to reduce road casualties through coordinated approaches to education and training, publicity, engineering and enforcement.

Wow!

The CRSP is delivering casualty reduction figures substantially ahead of national and local targets by helping develop and implement a wide range of successful multi-agency road safety interventions. The partnership continues to be energised by its successes and strives for continuous improvement at a county wide level, and working in local communities.

The partnership was invited to provide evidence to a House of Commons transport committee on young novice drivers during 2007 and has presented best practice at national conferences on motorcycle safety, safety camera good practice, and data sharing.

The CRSP is able to recognise its weaknesses, one of which, in common with many partnerships, has been the lack of evaluation of some elements of its road safety activities. The CRSP has therefore become one of 12 organisations selected to work with the Shared Intelligence consultant from July 2009 to produce a DFT guidance document on this subject.

Making a difference

As a result of the work of the Cumbria Road safety partnership fewer people are killed or seriously injured on the County's roads. Since 2000 the number of annual fatalities has been reduced steadily from 55 to 29 and over the same periods the number of serious injuries is down from 493 to 276. Cumbria now performs well ahead of local and national targets. Cumbria has made a massive leap forward in road safety in recent years – a fact recognised by Audit Commission figures which show us to be one of the most improved areas in the country.

We firmly believe that this is because of a strong multi faceted and multi agency approach which has brought concerted effort and energy to tackling all the main factors of road safety – from education to engineering – in a targeted and intelligence led way.

The CRSP is responsible for the agreement and achievement of targets within NI 47 (All KSIs), NI 48 (Child KSIs), SI 14 (legacy stretched target for young drivers) and LTP S3 (slight injuries). On all these measures Cumbria's performance is set on a journey of sustained continuous improvement which will see our roads become even safer in the years to come.

Built to last

The joint working arrangements and structures put in place have embedded the partnership within the Local Area Agreement and Cumbria Strategic Partnership and in local communities. The combination of skills, knowledge and responsibilities among the partners has resulted in innovation of new approaches.

A strategic review commenced July 2009 to ensure that the partnership is prepared for the next decade. An agreed Action Plan is included in the Annual Road Safety Statement 2009.

What could others learn from us?

- 1 The Pass Plus Plus scheme provides further instruction to novice drivers after their test which once completed leads to cheaper car insurance. The Partnership pays for this training if young drivers first attend a fire service road awareness course which highlights the potential consequences of unsafe driving.
2. Intelligence led enforcement and the targeting of resources making use of data analysis techniques to maximise use of resources.
3. The Random Road Watch approach to the deployment of safety camera vans – targeting accident blackspots in a random pattern which motorists can't predict.
- 4 The First Gear project of detached and outreach youth work - using the 'Young Cumbria' organisation to engage their peers on road safety issues.

Find out more

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Health and well-being throughout life

We will live healthier lives and enjoy high quality support whatever our health and social care needs.

We are committed to involving people more in decisions in their lives and their communities. Health inequalities across the county will be reduced by targeting neighbourhoods in greatest need.

Cumbria will be a great place for people to enjoy active, healthy and fulfilling lives. We will value the contribution that people of all ages make to the social, economic and cultural diversity of the county. In particular we recognise the contribution that older people make to the community. We want to empower Cumbria's older population to influence and shape their communities, live independently and have maximum control over decisions that affect them.

The Care Sector Alliance Cumbria

What is it?

Locally and nationally, the recruitment of a high quality, well trained social care workforce has presented significant challenges and threatened the delivery of a number of policy and performance objectives including those captured in NI 136 - people supported to live independently through social services (all ages); NI 129 - end of life care - access to appropriate care enabling people to be able to choose to die at home; and NI127 - self reported experience of social care use.

A big problem has been public perception of the care industry as having low pay and a lack of career opportunities when compared to other sectors such as retail. The problem is complicated by the wide range of potential employers - from large scale national and local government employers, to small private and voluntary sector organisations.

This is happening at a time when demand for social care services is steadily increasing and expectations about the quality of care are increasing amongst both regulators and consumers (linked to HCOP theme : Outcome 3: increase choice for service users)

Care Sector Alliance Cumbria is the Cumbrian solution to tackling these issues. Critically this is not a single organisation approach, but an alliance of Cumbria's social care providers (statutory, private and voluntary).

Since being set up five years ago, the Alliance has delivered a range of projects designed to support the organisational and workforce development of all its members.

These include developing apprenticeships for school leavers, re-training schemes for people from other employment sectors that promote social care as a career, multi-agency training from basic literacy and numeracy through NVQ s in care and beyond. It has run a number of successful recruitment initiatives, including job fairs, media campaigns and community events.

Its steering group includes employers from all social care disciplines and areas across Cumbria so that the work of the Alliance is relevant and responsive to national, regional and local priorities.

Wow!

Care Sector Alliance Cumbria has won a number of awards including the national Community Care Magazine 'Skills for Care' accolade in 2008 in the 'Most Effective Partnership for Workforce Development' category, and the 'Winner of Winners Award' at the same ceremony. It has also been cited in the Department of Health's Policy Research Programme's Social Care Workforce Initiative report "A social care workforce for the 21st Century" as an "innovative model of working".

Additionally the Alliance won a Regional Training Award in 2008 for its innovative 'MOVE ON CAREfully in Cumbria' package of literacy & communication learning materials contextualised for care. This work has also been highlighted as an example of good practice in two government publications: "Stepping Forward – the main steps to embedding skills for life in health & social care" by the Essentials Skills for Health & Social Care (England) project; and in: 'English Language at Work – work-based English for speakers of other languages' produced by the Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills. The Quality Improvement Agency, the national Move On project and Skills for Care have also disseminated information regionally and nationally about this project.

Making a difference

As a consequence of the work of the Alliance, there is a much better understanding of the social care workforce in Cumbria, and a cohesive approach to recruitment, training and retention. There is now a strong sense of social care as a valid and rewarding career. Recruitment within social care in Cumbria no longer presents the challenges that it once did.

Additionally the Alliance has helped transform a fragmented group of providers into a cohesive, professional and participative workforce.

Many social care providers have received inspection reports which highlight organisational training and the contribution this makes to improved service delivery. Additionally feedback from care staff themselves and service users indicates that improved learning and understanding gained as a result of taking part in Care Sector Alliance initiatives leads to greater confidence, and therefore more effective, service delivery. This has been captured in a number of County Council CSCI inspections.

Built to last

The Alliance has sought to develop a long term approach rather than just focus on short term tactics such as overseas recruitment. It has sought to engage with people at all stages of the employment cycle through its links with schools and colleges and provides basic and advanced levels of training for staff which have increased their employability.

The partnership is supported by a Workforce Development Officer who is permanently employed by the county council, and a recruitment and retention Officer with funding guaranteed to at least March 2011. The county council is committed to the continued development of the Care Sector Alliance, both strategically, and as a member organisation.

What could others learn from us?

- Innovative ways of recruiting and retaining care sector staff - all researched and piloted in Cumbria.
- A range of learning programmes especially contextualised for care - for UK nationals and speakers of other languages.
- Talkback – a project which trains older volunteers as peer researchers in order to gather information/data from older people.

Find out more

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A sustainable and prosperous economy

A dynamic and diverse Cumbria that earns a place in the global economy by capitalising on our world class assets - our landscape and our energy. We aspire to be the fastest growing economy in England, delivering jobs and world class skills and training in order to address worklessness. We will concentrate efforts on areas and neighbourhoods in greatest need, and on creating opportunities which reduce the need for young people to leave the county

Sustainable Procurement

What is it?

Cumbria County Council is committed to ensuring its procurement policies and procedures are environmentally, economically, socially and ethically sustainable. The project aims to ensure such commitment is embedded and applied at a strategic and operational level and leads to measurable improvements in outcomes and value for money.

The Council has taken a range of actions to ensure the commitment to sustainable procurement is embedded in policy, procedures and processes which are designed to deliver value for money and tangible improvements in outcomes for those who use Council services and our communities. A holistic approach to sustainable procurement has been developed and implemented to deliver improved outcomes for communities and best value for the Council.

The financial, policy and legislative environment in which public procurement operates often restricts innovation in procurement as local authorities focus on the delivery of best value, usually expressed as cashable efficiency gains. In particular the EU Procurement Directives and an authority's own Standing Orders require open competition with contract awards being weighted towards issues of cost and value for money. However, Cumbria County Council has taken an innovative approach to its procurement policies and procedures to ensure contracts are sustainable - socially, economically and environmentally – as well as being financially sound. This approach is stated and communicated at policy level with support from our Elected Members and Corporate Directors, and at an operational level where social clauses have been used to develop specifications, evaluate tenders and to monitor contract performance. In addition, our policy based approach to procurement has shifted resources and focus from the tendering aspect of procurement to a more holistic scheme which encompasses needs assessment and resource allocation models to meet community objectives.

Also we have developed and deployed a proactive market and supplier engagement process which is fully inclusive, responsive and which meets the needs and requirements of third sector organisations, SME's, and social enterprises. This includes working closely with a range of support organisations including the Chamber of Commerce, Business Link, and Cumbria CVS to promote our free to use electronic portal and tendering system, to provide and disseminate information on public sector tendering and the provision of learning and development opportunities. This ensures organisations wishing to trade with the County have an effective mechanism to contribute to service design, and possess the skills and knowledge to respond effectively to opportunities. Our innovative work on the use of social clauses and our progress in working

with the Third Sector have been identified as good practice by central government, cited as best practice by other local authorities, and recognised through external award schemes.

Wow!

The Council's Strategic and Commercial Procurement Unit (SCPU) was shortlisted for the Sustainable and Social Procurement category of the national Excellence in Public Procurement Awards and won the Sustainable Procurement category of the North West Business Environment Award. In addition the Council has received requests to share our experience and has been approached from a range of other local authorities.

Making a difference

While there is a clear strategic commitment to sustainable procurement, as shown through a range of policy documents including our Sustainable Construction Policy, our Corporate Procurement Strategy, the Cumbria Procurement Framework and our Third Sector Compact, our innovation is best demonstrated through a number of practical procurements:

Children's Centres: The Council procured organisations to establish and operate a series of 26 Children's Centres, each providing a range of services to children, young people and their families and carers. The procurement process involved a range of stakeholder events with interested organisations and, specifically, third sector organisations who were given information on the process, invited to contribute to the development of the specification and, through a joint project with Cumbria CVS, were given training on tendering skills and our electronic tendering system. Crucially the evaluation criteria for these contracts, which have an annual value of over £19m, included a requirement to demonstrate community benefit, including job creation, use of volunteers, and the provision of complementary services. Such additional benefit is now being monitored and is valued at approximately £5m per annum. Equality and diversity issues also formed a major factor in awarding and monitoring the contract as providers were required to evidence how the Centres would be accessible to all members of the community and how their own equal opportunities policies would support such services.

Debt Advice: When procuring the provision of debt advice services, 10% of the evaluation criteria related to the delivery of community based outcomes, including use of volunteers, access to services and how the service delivery model impacts on the economic sustainability of communities.

Construction: The Council's commitment to sustainable construction is expressed through our Sustainable Construction Policy and is being delivered in all our construction projects. An example of this can be found in the design and construction procurement of a range of new Academies where bidders not only had to meet BREEAM standards but were required to demonstrate sustainable supply chains and products and were required to work with the school to provide training, apprenticeships and job opportunities in the local area.

Food Supply and Distribution: Another example of our recognition of the importance of sustainable supply can be seen in food where we have an annual expenditure, including school meals and residential care services, approaching £5m. Of this over 25% of the value is spent on foods grown, reared and manufactured in Cumbria – up to £1.25m. In addition all foods are distributed by Cumbrian companies and we estimate that up to 1000 people are employed in the local businesses that supply food products and services to us. The local foods range consists of fresh beef, lamb, pork and poultry as well as fresh butchers' sausages. We purchase all our fresh liquid milk, including organic milk, from a local dairy using milk from Cumbrian farms. Other items include free-range eggs, some potatoes and a selection of vegetables and salads, fresh breads

and rolls, savoury pastries, locally milled flours, cooked meats, sandwich fillings and wet salads. In buying locally, as opposed to the next nearest options, we believe that we are saving up to 150,000 food miles per annum.

Fairtrade: The Council is one of only two counties in England which has accredited Fairtrade status. This policy commitment is expressed at an operational level, not only by only buying Fairtrade tea and coffee for Council meetings and for use in Council buildings, but by only using external venues for courses and conferences which meet our policy commitment. In addition we work with the Cumbria Fair Trade Network to raise awareness of the Fairtrade issue by promotion to schools, voluntary groups and partners and by presenting workshops disseminating our good practice. This has results in invitations to national and European conferences, enhancing the reputation of the Council for ethical procurement.

Built to last

The development and approval of the Council's new Sustainable Procurement Strategy, including wide consultation and stakeholder engagement, provides a policy framework and an Action Plan to ensure the work undertaken is, itself, sustainable. By linking the policy commitment to measurable performance measures in operational procurement activity, sustainable procurement will continue to form a key principle of our activity and be measured in improvements to outcomes

The work directly relates to the Council's 'Better' theme, though procurement activity supports each of the Council's priorities. Also it supports NII79 and our LAA target to generate a healthy environment for the third sector.

In addition, elected members have stated a desire to support local businesses through the current economic climate (Cabinet Jan 09) which this project encompasses.

The project also anticipates many of the key recommendations of the Glover Committee report in improving access to public sector contracts to smaller organisations.

What could others learn from us?

- How to implement an holistic approach to sustainable procurement balancing the trade off sustainability and efficiency.
- Translating a policy commitment to ensuring its procurement policies and procedures are environmentally, economically, socially and ethically sustainable is reflected in operational activity.
- How to relate this work to the newly introduced KLOE 2.1 which assesses the impact of intelligent procurement and commissioning, not just in terms of value for money, but also in improvements in outcomes.

Find out more

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Barrow waterfront business park

What is it?

The Barrow waterfront project has created eight hectares of employment land, together with associated infrastructure including access roads, public realm, community allotments, landscaping footways and cycleways.

The project is the first tangible evidence of delivery on the Barrow Waterfront Master Plan which was a response to the main issues facing Barrow:

- the long-standing dependency of the local economy on a few large employers and traditional industries,
- a declining population,
- long term unemployment,
- high concentrations of deprivation.

Barrow district is in the most deprived 10% in England for overall deprivation; unemployment; health deprivation and disability, living environment; and the “indoors” sub-domain of living environment.

The Waterfront Business Park lies within the Barrow Island, one of the two Local Super Output Areas in the town. Barrow Island ward is the most deprived in the country (out of 32,482) for the “indoors” living environment sub-domain

Wow!

Development of site won North West Regional Construction Awards 2008 – Cumbria Best Practice Award

The award recognised the drive and determination to identify and deliver a site in the heart of Barrow that was capable of delivering employment land on the scale required and in a way that would be sustainable.

The project has succeeded by turning identified needs into reality by delivering in partnership with the local community, private and public sectors. The infrastructure will provide sustainable employment land for the next 5–10 years.

The contract includes Key Performance indicators relating to the local economy and community engagement.

Making a difference

The Barrow Waterfront project contributes towards the three priority economic development outcomes within the Local Area Agreement.

Through utilising effective procurement methods, we were able to secure the utilisation of local labour on the project thus encouraging the creating of local jobs. We were also keen to ensure that a core component of the contract was the inclusion of up-skilling opportunities with a number of employees gaining recognised qualifications. The contractor was required to meet key Performance Indicators in this area.

The main outcome of the project will be the development of eight hectares of high quality employment land which will encourage investment and business growth within the Barrow area,

thus helping to increase enterprise rates and provide employment opportunities within a deprived area in the long term.

The project was particularly innovative in the way that the community were involved in developing the detailed development requirements. This helped to ensure that they understood the nature of the scheme, and that the proposals incorporated as much of their needs as possible. This included the development of a network of footpaths and cycleways through the development. As well as providing access to the business park these also provided recreational opportunities for the residents - responding to the fact that the ward is one of the most deprived area in the country in relation to the "indoors" living environment. Key performance Indicators on community engagement were an integral part of the contract with the developer.

The project also required the incorporation of some innovative ecological mitigation measures to maintain the sites biodiversity.

Using best practice procurement routes enabled accurate costing of the remediation and infrastructure requirements it also allowed the development of a strong partnering contract using New Engineering Contract 3 Option C which encouraged the appointed contractor to fully engage with the local community and support the local economy in a significant and measurable way.

Built to last

This project provides a sustainable model for the procurement and engagement with the local community which is measurable and demonstrates that this can be achieved even when using a national contractor.

The project has built in sustainability - ensuring that while both the community and ecological needs were met, the site delivered a high quality environment capable of attracting inward investment.

What could others learn from us?

- Development which delivers sustainable outcomes.
- Engagement with the local community.
- The development of tender documents which relate to the desired outputs and meet procurement best practice.
- Working with the contractor through early contractor involvement to develop jointly proposals that will meet desired outcomes.

Find out more

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Port of Workington Development and Investment Plan

What is it?

We are well advanced in achieving our vision that by 2010 the Port of Workington will be operating successfully as a strategic gateway into and out of West Cumbria, The Port will complement the physical and economic regeneration of the sub-region, and beyond, through an infrastructure investment programme to underpin revenue-building activities for long-term sustainability.

Investment stems from a public-public partnership bringing together County, Borough and Regional funds. Multi-stakeholder partnering has built confidence in the Port's future by securing many new revenue generating projects.

Wow!

Best practice and innovation in generating revenue for the Port has been recognised by central government through the Department for Transport's review of municipal ports and the subsequent award of Leading Lights Status.

The Port is owned / operated by Cumbria County Council and managed through the Workington Harbour Board comprising officers and members from both the County and the Borough, alongside private sector independent members recruited for their expertise in fields such as marine, logistics and project management.

The investment programme is key to the Region's business plan. Its significance, and further project developments, such as development of a container terminal, has also seen national recognition as an integral part of delivering projects within Britain's Energy Coast™.

Making a difference

Development of the Port has turned around negative historic perceptions, and breathed new life in to a previously under utilised asset. The programme has been rigorously project managed with milestone monitored and met and output targets regularly exceeded.

Development of the Port has created jobs directly, and indirectly in associated sectors. There is good evidence of evidence of Port customers engaging closely with local communities and making socio-economic investments. Job creation, job security, social wellbeing, community satisfaction and development all feature as significant outcomes locally.

The Port investment and development programme contribute directly to the Sustainable Community Strategy – objective: sustainable and prosperous economy.

The work also supports the Regional Economic Strategy 2006 – objective 51: develop and implement an integrated economic plan for West Cumbria; objective 19 - focus the Region's inward investment, domestic relocation and aftercare activity to support and improve the Region's knowledge base and complement, support and strengthen priority sectors; objective 51 - diversify the economic base and support lagging rural areas in Allerdale Borough; objective 52 – develop and encourage employment creation in or near deprived areas focused on urban regeneration areas.

A masterplan for West Cumbria – Britain's Energy Coast™ – under the Memorandum of Agreement between Government and Cumbrian partners (2005), seeks to deliver the critical

elements of a national energy strategy that meets the imperatives of both combating climate change and securing the nation's energy supply. Integral to this is the masterplan's commitment to the Port's ongoing development in support of sustainable freight distribution as part of transport and connectivity improvements.

Built to last

Revenue surpluses are ring-fenced for exclusive re-investment in the Port. The regeneration funding and any application of trading surplus is viewed as a precursor to inward investment resulting in further economic, social and community development. Transformational projects such as the development of a container Port will deliver this goal in establishing global connectivity via a number of main transport hubs.

What could others learn from us?

- Best practice in the management of municipal ports.
- High quality partnership working.
- Early community, public and private sector stakeholder engagement.
- A focus on goal orientation.
- The importance of delivery against strategy and planning.
- How to constantly measure performance to rectify deviations early.

Find out more

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Effective connections between people and places

The energy and potential of our people will be realised through transport connections which help people access jobs and services and link us to the rest of the UK and beyond. More sustainable transport modes will be promoted to help reduce CO2 emissions. As well as these physical links, better connections between organisations and communities in Cumbria will encourage learning from best practice and sharing resources and expertise to maximise value for money.

Rural wheels

What is it?

Rural wheels is a demand responsive transport service utilising transport providers already commissioned by Cumbria County Council. The scheme serves rural areas which would otherwise be isolated from public transport connections - helping people access key service centres. The scheme makes use of smartcards instead of payment.

The project was developed with a wide range of partners including Health Authorities and Help the Aged with funding from the Countryside Agency. Dft supported the funding for the technology. From an initial pilot, the service has now been extended throughout Cumbria.

This project was developed specifically for Cumbria as a low cost transport solution given the low density of population. The service only requires funding when it is used, and utilises existing Council passenger transport services in a planned way. This, together with the smartcard technology, makes it unique.

Wow

This project was recognised at the end of Rural Transport Partnership programme when Cumbria County Council represented the Region at the House of Commons. The recent Commission for Integrated Transport study led to a visit to Cumbria to see the service. The Commission recognises the innovation and effectiveness of the project and will be showcasing the model in Westminster later in the year. The Commission for Rural Communities (CRC) also recognise the scheme as best practice with considerable potential for rural areas elsewhere in the country.

Making a difference

Whilst this service is used in the main by older people in rural areas to access key services, it is also used by other ages to get to bus and train stations. For those who had no transport in the past it has provided such a vital link for going to the Doctor, visiting friends etc. This fits very well with the Council's aim to maintain older people in their own homes as long as possible as well as enabling them to enjoy a healthy and happy life

It makes a direct contribution to helping Cumbria achieve NII75 – 99% of rural households are within 30 min of a key service centre. This service complements the network of bus services in Cumbria which are either provided commercially or are supported by Cumbria County Council.

The service has also provided an important income stream for small transport providers in rural areas. There is much enthusiasm for the service amongst the providers as well as the users

Built to last

The County Council has an agreed policy for funding passenger transport services. The Rural wheels service is a key component of this criteria, as it provides access opportunities for people where scheduled bus services are not sustainable.

When there was an opportunity to get additional funding for services Cumbria County Council was particularly keen to develop something that met the needs of people, but had a also low cost base. The service started with a small trial and has grown incrementally. Many schemes come and go because they start with too high a cost. Rural wheels has the capacity to grow and develop – it has been designed to have a nature of flexibility in relation to cost.

What could others learn from us?

- How to provide effective low cost public transport links in low population rural areas where mainstream bus routes are not sustainable.
- How to provide demand responsive public transport.
- How to make flexible use of smart card payment mechanisms.
- How make public transport sustainable in testing circumstances.

Find out more

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Nowcard

What is it?

Nowcard is a regional SMART card project led by Cumbria County Council working with the transport authorities of Lancashire, Blackpool and Blackburn. It has delivered the largest fully ITSO scheme in England, with full capacity for the 2008 England National Travel scheme.

The project is an exceptional multi-authority initiative involving with four transport authorities and a further 18 district councils, several major and numerous minor local bus operators, and leading technology suppliers.

Within each card is a small microchip that can be read by smart ticket machines on local bus services, allowing the bus service operator and the local authority to account accurately for concessionary fares.

There are some 357000 Nowcards in circulation. Some 1800 local buses are smartcard enabled.

Wow

Nowcard is the first scheme of its kind in the UK and won the innovation award at the National UK Bus Awards 2008. It is recognised by the Department for Transport as an exemplar project.

Nowcard is at the cutting edge of the innovative use of smart card technology, using the national standard (ITSO) from its inception. The project has helped deliver solutions to issues created by the ITSO standard.

Making a difference

The smart card scheme is for concessionary passengers who are aged over 60 or disabled – making it easier for them to access their concessionary fares – and easier for operators to implement concessionary fare schemes.

Nowcard has created a central in-house card bureau and card management service used by all 20 travel concession authorities. The scheme has provided a full replacement service with the roll out of the England National Travel scheme in 2008. It has streamlined process for issue of concessionary smart cards and created a customer friendly single point of contact through a call centre and website.

Work is well underway with other local travel concession authorities to provide seamless national travel concessions scheme.

The Nowcard has undoubtedly helped to improve the attractiveness of bus travel and will continue to do so in the future as it is made available to other passenger groups through new ticketing projects. In the longer term it is anticipated that this will contribute to increased passenger numbers and journeys made.

Built to last

There is a sustained commitment to expanding the Nowcard project by the four participating transport authorities. There is a potential to broaden the partnership to other transport authorities, including potential transfer of concessions from districts to County Council level.

There will be further enhancement of the Bureau capability in 2009 to develop further products and card types. There is also a planned upgrade of equipment and a continuous project improvement programme

What could others learn from us?

- Effective partnership working on complex technology projects.
- Nowcard technology delivering a paperless application at front desks, including photographic correction.
- QWA software for financial settlement and data management.
- Practical working with the bus industry at a regional and local level.

Find out more

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Community empowerment

What is it?

Cumbria is widely recognised as having mature arrangements for community engagement which are used by public services across Cumbria for consultation and information giving. They are especially valued by parish and third sector representatives as a local networking tool and way of influencing public services. Our engagement work is spearheaded through the well recognised neighbourhood forum brand but includes a wide range of other techniques for engaging with local communities to meet their needs and influence public services. The maturity of our platform has meant that newer initiatives including 'streetsafe', 'together we can' and 'community planning clusters' have been able to develop quickly using these established community networks.

This approach has secured the involvement locally of a wide range of councillors from three tiers of local government public services including police, Cumbria NHS, districts, parishes and third sector organisations and offered the community regular opportunities to have their say and have local issues addressed. The platform now embeds monitoring through which the performance of engagement activity is assessed and community issues are tracked.

Wow!

Cumbria's work has been recognised through its nomination by CLG (2008) as an 'empowering authority', one of 18 councils nationally. Cumbria has also been identified (2008) by CLG as a participatory budgeting pilot. In 2009 Cumbria has been invited by IDeA, LGIU and the North West 'together we can' network to promote its engagement platform. What distinguishes this approach from those used in other councils is that it has councillors at the heart of the process, involves public services staff as appropriate, and uses a wide range of customised techniques to engage local people. Over the last year more than 450 such events were organised.

Making a difference

Since 2008 we have developed our community issue tracking identifying those issues which are of greatest immediate community concern and testing out local solutions to resolve these. Forums are not simply places where people can have a moan but where people can identify how they can make a difference. We have a wide range of examples where local engagement has defused and responded to community concerns. Two recent examples from Barrow demonstrate how the engagement process has made a difference to residents.

Community power improves bus services at no extra cost

Residents in the villages of Askam & Ireleth raised concerns over their bus service at their Neighbourhood Forum. There was no direct route from their community to access services in the nearby town of Dalton. We organised a meeting between Councillors, the local manager of Stagecoach bus company and local officers and the Transport team. A Neighbourhood Forum was arranged and together the partners discussed the issues of transport with the community. After listening to the concerns raised it was possible to reach a compromise and a new daily bus service has been agreed, traveling between Askam and Dalton and eventually reaching the hospital in Barrow. A follow-up Forum meeting consulted local residents on the best routes around Askam and this information has been used as the basis for an additional improved route. No public funding has been used for these improved services, apart from officer time involved in arranging and facilitating meetings. The whole scheme owes its success to partnership, persuasion and open and effective dialogue with local communities. As a result of the process residents felt more in control of their neighbourhood and more able to influence public services.

Barrow Waterfront Development Masterplan

Residents concerns over traffic increase, noise and safety were all taken on board by partners involved in the Waterfront Development Masterplan when residents were given an opportunity to influence delivery of this project through the multi agency neighbourhood forum and community engagement process. This has led to an increase in their influence on this major development. The Community Unit was asked to undertake consultation for West Lakes Renaissance, Cumbria Highways, Capita Symonds and Carillion (formerly Alfred McAlpine). who were the main contractor.

One major concern was traffic implications as there would be increased traffic due to the importing of materials by road. Residents requested that a high proportion of the materials required are brought in by sea to reduce the increase of traffic. Despite this adding to the project costs West Lakes Renaissance and Capita Symonds agreed to import the bulk of concrete and aggregate by sea to reduce traffic disruption to residents.

Carillion were persuaded by residents arguments and, in partnership with Cumbria Highways, developed a traffic management plan with the community. From this they implemented 20mph zones, briefed all their drivers on specific routes and to ensure that no deliveries were made at school times and introduced a cleaning regime for their wagons to reduce dirt on the street. Consultation, using a range of different techniques, continues to be undertaken with residents as the project develops. Residents have really influenced the way this project is being delivered and good partnership working between all partners and the community is ensuring a successful development. By holding regular Neighbourhood Forums, and working with the developers, we have ensured that local people have real and continued opportunities to influence the roll out of this major regeneration project for Barrow. The outcome has been development more sensitive to resident's concerns and a greater feeling of community influence.

Built to last

The approach is secured through embedded commitment from public services and councillors and funded through mainstream Council budgets.

What could others learn from us?

- Cross authority working in communities to resolve local concerns.
- Effective promotion of the role of frontline councillors to resolve community concerns.

Find out more

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Calling and Counting Cumbria

What is it?

Calling and Counting Cumbria were two separate but connected initiatives led by the Leadership Centre for Local Government with Cumbria partners through the Cumbria Strategic Partnership. They were designed to challenge the status quo and encourage more effective joint working by refocusing activity on real people in real places, developing a more accurate understanding of need.

Calling Cumbria took a wide range of colleagues out into the community, and in some cases out of their comfort zone, to hear stories from residents, and from voluntary and community sector workers about their lives and work. This led to broad discussion about how services are currently delivered and highlighted that in many cases there could be better way.

Counting Cumbria provided hard evidence about how much public sector money is spent in Cumbria and by whom, but most importantly led to questions about local accountability, potential duplication and opportunities to debate efficiency.

Wow!

The Calling and Counting Cumbria activity has triggered national interest and led to a national initiative set out in the Operational Efficiency Programme, which underpinned the Budget this spring. In this, Sir Michael Bichard has proposed that 13 pilot schemes take the essence of these initiatives forward. Under the heading of Total Place these have been designed to discover how public money comes together in a local area, where better outcomes can be achieved through better joining up and collaboration, and to investigate the scope for value for money savings from the process.

In response to this national interest in the Cumbria work, an Information pack has been produced, containing the 2 reports, Calling and Counting Cumbria, a high-level overview of the project in Cumbria, some examples of where it has made a difference and a presentation, with notes, designed for colleagues to use in their own workplaces to summarise our experience.

This work has had far reaching effect across Cumbria and the impact can be heard and seen in all partner organisations. There is now a strong recognition of the Community Strategy as an expression of the vision and aspirations for the whole county, and evidence that partners are increasingly using this as the starting point for organisational strategic planning.

Making a difference

Many new relationships and informal networks were formed coupled with a greater awareness of the contributions of all sectors. More partners are now focused on the delivery of our shared outcomes expressed in our Community Strategy through a new and innovative style of CSP meetings. The approach to CSP meetings has changed to reflect the increasing focus on the delivery of the shared priorities expressed in the Cumbria Community Strategy and the Cumbria Agreement. The introduction of "Focus On ..." Events provides opportunities for a range of people from partner organisations to come together to explore one of the big issues facing Cumbria, and identify actions that they can take to respond to the challenge.

In particular the Focus On Climate Change event in September led to partners signing up to the Commitment to tackle Climate Change, and the Focus on Regional Engagement and Influence in June resulted in increased understanding and awareness of the importance of the Regional

Strategy, some emerging priorities for inclusion, and a commitment to a clear, sustained and focused single voice at regional level supported by the mechanisms to achieve this.

Work has also commenced on a further investigation into Worklessness where partners will talk to people who have been long term unemployed and aim to uncover barriers to resolving this complex issue. This local research, when coupled with further examination of the many funding and support systems in place, will drill down into the high level figures presented in Counting Cumbria and is intended to lead to radical recommendations to inform public sector reform.

All of this activity has strengthened partnership relationships in Cumbria without the normal approach through addressing structural review. Instead partners have been brought closer together by developing a much greater understanding of shared outcomes.

Built to last

This work is central to our approach to the delivery of all Community Strategy outcomes in partnership, both in terms of agreeing priorities, developing delivery plans in partnership and in shared performance management.

Plans are being developed to extend the methodology on the Deep Dive to share with partners and to use to address other “wicked” issues. Partners will also be fully involved in analysing performance against the community strategy outcomes and developing a programme of innovative and challenging improvement activity based when appropriate on this approach.

What could others learn from us?

- How to ensure that people and places are central to decision making and not funding streams.
- How partnerships can find ways of ensuring that decision makers are exposed to real situations on the ground to stimulate innovation.

We are in discussion with IDeA to hold an event, in particular for Total Place pilot representatives, to share this learning.

Find out more

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World class environmental quality

We will have a passionate enthusiasm for celebrating, conserving and enhancing our inspiring world class natural environment, culture and heritage. We will lead international thinking on climate change mitigation and adaptation, sustainable energy, lifestyles and communities. Energetic communities will be helped to flourish by providing decent, high quality and affordable homes for everyone in places where people want to live and work and through a public realm which matches the quality of our landscape.

Waste minimisation

What is it?

Cumbria County Council and its district council partners have formed the Cumbria Strategic Waste Partnership (CSWP) and through its brand “Resource Cumbria” is delivering a strategic waste prevention programme. The programme comprises a number of market tested and innovative projects forming partnerships with organisations from public, private and third sector organisations.

The strength of the CSWP’s waste prevention programme has been in the ability to pool both financial and staff resource and apply these to the areas, issues and segmented audiences of most need. National campaigns have been adopted and localised to identified needs, and further innovative communication and public engagement initiatives across segmented audiences have been delivered throughout Cumbria. The Resource Cumbria brand has been used across all service information (print and web) with the partnership producing district-specific householder packs which are now recognised by WRAP as Best Practice.

Most recent and successful examples of such “homespun” initiatives have been the Recycle for Barrow campaign, which re-launched an improved recycling service across 32,500 household within the borough and has resulted in an increased combined recycling/composting rate (from 25% to 40%). The pooling of staff and financial resources for the Recycle for Barrow campaign further attracted significant funding from external sources (WRAP) and has created extra employment.

The R Factor was a schools based communication initiative which challenged primary schools to write, rehearse and record a “song for Cumbria” to promote waste reduction, reuse and recycling. Over 150 schools took part and the best six songs were put to a public vote across the county’s three independent radio stations thus reaching a combined audience of 206,000 people (RAJAR, 2009). Over 5,500 public votes were registered online and via SMS texting making the R Factor the most successful public phone in competition the three stations had ever run. NB The planning for both the Recycle for Barrow and the R Factor campaigns took place in the year 2008/9 and delivered in the first quarter of 2009/10.

Wow!

In 2004/5 the Audit Commission assessed Waste Management at CCC as “a one star service with little prospects for improvement”. Significant investment in the staff group, the refreshing of the CSWP and formation of the Resource Cumbria brand has resulted in the service being assessed in the 2008/09 CPA as a four star service. This dramatic improvement has been brought about by the strategic approach to waste management and the prevention programme.

Since 2004/5 this has resulted in a fall in waste to landfill of almost 36% and a rise in the countywide recycling rate to over 40%. The Audit Commission has recognised the improvements year-on-year since 2004.

Cumbria County Council is considered the best improved council for waste management in the north west.

Making a difference

As the designated Waste Disposal Authority (WDA) Cumbria County Council is obliged under the European Landfill Directive (and the associated Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme, part of the Waste & Emissions Trading Act) to reduce the amount of biodegradable waste that is landfilled and thus the waste prevention programme contributes significantly to this.

Starting from a baseline of 830Kg of residual household waste per household in 2007/08, Waste Prevention activity has reduced this indicator (NI191) to 647Kg per household in 2008/09: a 22% reduction which has allowed the Council to agree tougher targets for the coming years than had been anticipated. NI 193 (Percentage of municipal waste landfilled) is 58.52%, and the Legacy (Stretch) Indicator SI 15 (Now NI 192 : the Percentage of household waste arising sent for recycling or composting) is 41.51% an increase of 20% on 2007/08 in line with projected improvements expected to result from the partnership activity. .

Cumbria County Council undertakes a countywide survey, Community Voice, to ask householders opinions of local services. Comparing the 2004 and 2008 surveys shows:

- Between 2004 and 2008, the amount of people who feel they get enough information about how and where to recycle has doubled (from 30% to 60%).
- Between 2004 and 2008, 15% more people state that they feel guilty if they don't recycle.
- Between 2004 and 2008, 18% more people feel that there are good recycling facilities near them.
- An unprompted 31% of people have heard of Resource Cumbria.
- 50% of Cumbrians trust the information where the Resource Cumbria logo is present, less than 10% express a lack of trust.
- 95.3% of Cumbrians feel that recycling is either very or quite important to them personally.
- 85.9% of Cumbrians state that they recycle even if it requires extra effort.
- 94.8% of Cumbrians state that they either recycle everything or a lot.
- The percentage of Cumbrians who are 'committed' recyclers is 84% (those who say that recycling is either very or quite important to them, state they recycle even if it requires extra effort, and also recycle everything that can be recycled or a lot, but not everything that can be recycled.)

This clearly demonstrates that sustainable waste management, through reduction, reuse and recycling has become an important issue for local people and behavioural change has occurred.

Built to last

The monitoring of the effects of the waste prevention programme, with particular attention to participation surveys to help disclose individual barriers to recycling, using observational and geodemographic methods will enable the partnership to further segment its audiences and apply the appropriately tailored intervention.

What could others learn from us?

- How to form an effective waste partnership to take a multi-faceted and multi agency approach to waste minimisation.
- How to pool financial and staff resource to develop better ways of working- allowing County and District councils' staff to work across borders on common themes addressing the areas or issues of most need.
- How the adoption of a common brand identity can encourage strong partnership working and overcome parochial barriers.
- How effective social marketing can engage with the public to achieve social change.

Find out more

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Cumbria Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan

What is it?

A common understanding and pan-Cumbrian commitment to act on climate change mitigation has been developed through the Cumbria Strategic Partnership (CSP).

The CSP has developed a strategy and action plan through a partnership Task Group; gone out to public consultation with a draft strategy; held a 'focus on climate change' facilitated workshop which gave all partner organisations the opportunity to consider the detail and add their own input. From this an action plan has been developed and 34 of the 36 Cumbrian based CSP organisations have signed up to the Cumbria Climate Change commitments to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from their activity by 25% by 2014, and to further commit to develop through the Climate Change Task Group a risk based common adaptation strategy to be implemented through individual adaptation plans by 2011.

In addition 4 non CSP member organisations also signed the Commitment, including the County Council's main highways and street lighting contractor.

Wow

The Government Office for the North West have given positive recognition of the work being done to secure leadership on climate change through the CSP and the Cumbria Local Authorities Services Board. GONW have proposed working with Cumbria County Council to test some of the issues to emerge from an internal climate change project designed to identify how GONW teams could maximise their contribution to CO₂ reduction across the Northwest and to help ensure the region successfully adapted to the unavoidable consequences of climate change.

This joint (GONW/CCC) project, preparation for which is being finalised in July 2009, will also establish how GONW and Cumbria should work together to deliver Cumbria's climate change priorities.

This unique collaborative working is an outstanding example of how to join up policy and practice and make things happen.

The NW Local Authority Climate Change Support Programme has produced a series of NI 186 factsheets ('Greatest hits') for dissemination across the region. Many of the best practice examples draw on work being done in Cumbria.

Making a difference

The level of consensus achieved is remarkable given the diverse range of partnership activity and interests; potentially conflicting agendas; and the fact that this was achieved in March 2009, in the midst of a global recession, when some partners expressed reluctance and concerns about affordability, particularly industrial organisations.

As an illustration of the breadth and depth of consultation, the draft action plan was presented to council leaders and chief executives in January 2009 followed by a full discussion of the implications resulting in their support being gained.

The resulting commitment to cut CO₂ emissions by 25% by 2014 survived difficult behind the scenes negotiations with some individual partners who were reluctant to sign having concerns about the cost implications of mitigation action and the as yet unknown costs of adaptation. The

success was to achieve a public commitment by 34 public and private sector organisations across Cumbria to act on mitigation and adaptation without destroying the integrity of the commitment to act.

One of the reasons for the high level of agreement was the introduction of two main versions of the Commitment each designed for a particular audience. Another was the care taken to put together a task group that was representative of the CSP as a whole and the leadership provided by the County Council in shaping the strategy and raising the level of awareness amongst partners of the likely impacts of climate change on society, the economy and local infrastructure and the natural environment.

The County Council also took the lead on securing £270,000 of regional funding to stimulate local action in support of the Northwest Climate Change action plan. This funding has been used to employ a climate change officer, commission from consultants a 'mini Stern' report on the implications of climate change legislation on the economy, a NI 186 delivery report options paper, and fund a series of community level pilot projects.

In addition The Lake District National Park commissioned a separate report on a Low Carbon Lake District which also informed the CSP strategy and action plan.

The work commissioned from consultants to identify how Cumbria could meet its NI 186 targets was subject to consultation and dissemination across CSP partners and other Cumbrian organisations and this helped inform the CSP delivery Plan on NI 186 which was approved by the CSP in April 2009, as well as the climate change action plan.

Arising from this emerged the Cumbria Renewables Panel which is currently examining the case for setting up an 'Energy Agency' in Cumbria and exploring the renewable energy capacity of the county - dovetailing with the work on Britain's Energy Coast. The Cumbria renewables panel has just published for consultation (July 2009) a renewable energy scoping study which in addition to identifying the potential for generation also realistically assesses the barriers (cost, planning permission and grid connection).

The Cumbria Renewables Panel is still quantifying and qualifying the expected level of energy generation from low carbon energy against energy demand in a dynamic environment of national policy change and changing national targets, the introduction of feed in tariffs and low carbon industrial strategies. The natural resources exist which if managed properly (eg neglected woodlands) can propel Cumbria towards a carbon neutral status and recent policy announcements by Government (July 2009) reinforce and make more practical Cumbria's ambitions to increase renewables and become an exporter of energy by 2050.

Work continues on raising awareness, particularly through the Local Strategic Partnerships, as evidenced by the workshop organised by the climate change officer and held on 14th July 2009 in partnership with GONW and others to explore how LSPs could inspire and support climate change activity at community level using case studies of existing local projects like green travel initiative in Staveley and Ambleside's planned sustainability trail. Part of the day specifically focused on financing community renewable energy projects with representation from banks and other funding bodies.

Overall, given that the CSP signed up to these commitments in March 2009 and that partner organisations are gearing up for implementation it is too early to expect proven delivery examples. However, watch this space - this is a highly innovative local partnership with strong prospects for making a real difference to the lives of local people.

Built to last

A monitoring process has been integrated into the climate change action plan along with targets and timescales for each of the 146 actions and each of the CSP's Thematic Partnerships was briefed in April 2009 about which targets each has to monitor and report progress on to the CSP's Executive Board.

In addition a letter will be sent to all partners next week (July 2009) reminding them that they should by now be completing their organisational arrangements for implementation of the CSP climate change action plan and that a first round of monitoring progress will commence in September 2009.

In addition to this further work continues through the CSP Task Group to explore adaptation and work has begun to build organisational capacity to carry out risk based assessments of the threat of extreme weather events to service provision by partner organisations.

At community level work continues to disseminate best practice through the recently set up Communication and Engagement fund (£50,000 of NWDA funding secured by the Sustainability Manager).

The CSP Task group has also recently widened its membership to draw in all of the District Councils rather than a single council to represent all districts and also the Energy Savings Trust Advice Centre to achieve a more focused approach to per capita reduction from citizens.

What could others learn from us ?

- The draw down and imaginative use of regional funding to commission research to establish realistic targets for CO2 reduction and explore opportunities arising from climate change to stimulate the development of a low carbon economy.
- It was this proactive approach that help prevent alienation by the private sector by demonstrating that climate change impacts also brought opportunities for regeneration.
- The strong glue of partnership working and the synergies created by joint working under sustained high level leadership.
- The use of climate change as a topic to further develop and cement partnership working across the CSP.
- The success of employing a dedicated officer on climate change to stimulate economic regeneration and cross sector synergies in tackling climate change, eg catalysing and funding local action on sustainable transport, fuel poverty and low carbon technology.

Find out more

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