

COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL COMMITTEE FOR COPELAND

Meeting date: 14 September 2020

From: Executive Director – Corporate, Customer and Community Services

AREA MANAGERS REPORT

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 *This report provides Local Committee with an update of activity undertaken by the Communities team since its last meeting. It is also to advise Members on their current budget position. This report makes specific reference to the COVID 19 Emergency Response and Recovery activities.*

2.0 STRATEGIC PLANNING AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

2.1 *Copeland Local Committee has executive and non-executive duties as set out in the County Council's Constitution. This report sets out the duties that have been fulfilled since the last meeting and recommendations for decisions that are required to fulfil those duties.*

2.2 *The County Council's vision as set out in the Council Plan 2018-22 is to be a 'Council that works with residents, businesses, communities, and other organisations to deliver the best possible services within the available resources'. The approach and work of Local Committee directly contributes to this vision with area based working and shaping of services locally, as one of the key ways of delivering this vision.*

2.3 *The work of the Local Committee, through Area Planning and its projects, help to deliver the Council Plan priorities which are:*

- *People in Cumbria are healthy and safe*
- *People in Cumbria are well connected and thriving*
- *The economy in Cumbria is thriving and benefits everyone*

- 2.4 ***The development, operation and monitoring of the Council Plan requires a focus on the Council's performance against outcomes which, increasingly, are understood through localities. Copeland Local Committee supports this by targeting projects that deliver its area priorities.***
- 2.5 ***Local Committee has locally devolved funding available to allocate in the area and support improved outcomes for the communities of Copeland. This funding can be targeted to initiate new activity or to enhance or complement existing provision according to locally determined need.***
- 2.6 ***The work of Local Committee directly supports the wider Council equality agenda and it considers carefully all its actions and decisions so that they do not result in inequality of service or exclusion from participation.***

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 ***Members are asked to note the current budget position outlined in Appendix 1.***
- 3.2 ***Members are asked to note and specifically to ratify the Community Grant that exceed £5,000 as outlined in paragraph 4.3.***

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Community Team continued to support the emergency helpline over the summer months, during which time calls dropped off exponentially as restrictions were gradually lifted. From 1st September any calls for assistance will be dealt with by the County Council Ways to Welfare service.

Local Committee Budget and Grant Update

- 4.2 A summary of the Local Committee Budget Summary is attached at Appendix 1.
- 4.3 Since the last meeting of Local Committee the following projects have been recommended in line with local priorities and Area Planning. Any grant over £5,000 requires Local Committee approval:

An allocation of £4,960 to Women Out West for e-tablets and wifi access for remote access by clients to the WOW support systems.

An allocation of £2,980 to Whitehaven Community Trust for new furniture for rooms at the Lowther Street hostel.

To provide additionality to the Cleator Moor West Local Members Scheme Project of an agriculture and skills programme, a grant of £10,650 from General Provision was allocated at Grants Panel in February 2020. Members are asked to ratify this recommendation.

Members are asked to de-commit an allocation of £20,000 from the 0-19 Universal Services budget made in the 2019/20 financial year. This sum was originally recommended to Howgill Family Centre to support their transition period.

- 4.4 As you will be aware, Cumbria County Council has been awarded a DEFRA Local Authority Emergency Assistance Grant for Food and Essential Supplies. The total grant is for £554,554.83 and, of this, £355,000 has been apportioned across the Community Services based on area population levels. For the Copeland area this equates to £48,410 which has been added to the devolved grant budget. The agreed criteria for funding projects which provide food and essential services in response to Covid-19 emerging needs are attached at Appendix 2. Applications will follow the current Community Grants process.
- 4.5 As part of the Covid-19 grant funding response, North Lakes Foodbank received support for summer holiday lunch packs for primary and secondary age children. Early reports on the scheme indicate that -
- 265 packs were given out from the Whitehaven centre, equating to support for approximately 38 families per week
- 91 packs were given out from the Egremont centre, equating to approximately 15 families per week receiving support
- 4.6 Similarly, Phoenix Enterprise Centre received funding to continue the food pantry provision for families and individuals in need. An interim report shows that over 30 families and 5 community groups accessed food and toiletries every week; 2 clients have secured employment; and 3 have reported an improved financial situation and no longer need support.

Libraries and Archives update

- 4.7 Whitehaven Library, along with 5 other main libraries in the county, re-opened to the public on 10 August. The on-site service has been adjusted to provide social distancing, infection control and other features of Covid-safe access; opening times also allow for times when staff can safely re-shelve quarantined book stock and provide other services.
- 4.8 Adjustments, in accordance with government and sector specific guidance will remain in place for some time. These also include limiting the number of customers entering the building, reducing visit time and PC session length, the removal of toys, sensory resources and other shared equipment, and the suspension of face-to-face participatory events and seating areas.
- 4.9 The library is currently open weekdays 09:30-13:00 for browsing, book borrowing and return, and PC access, and 14:00-16:00 for pre-arranged Select & Collect orders to be collection by those who prefer not to, or are unable to visit the library to select their own books.
- 4.10 The Home Delivery service to all existing customers in Copeland also resumed in August; a number do not yet feel comfortable receiving visits or deliveries so for the first month 27 customers received deliveries amounting

to 264 books. At present, this has become a staffed delivery service with Cumbria Libraries currently not using any volunteer support, but Copeland's staff look forward to welcoming them back when it is possible.

- 4.11 As yet, there are no details on when or how branch libraries and the Archive Centre will reopen to the public. Essential maintenance tasks are occurring on all sites.
- 4.12 A small team from Whitehaven Library are supporting 10 people in Copeland after a successful bid to the Good Things Foundation for digital devices as part of the DigitalDotNow project, to connect the unconnected. Started during the Covid-19 lockdown this DCMS sponsored initiative aims to connect offline households in order to maintain social connections, use essential services and including connecting with medical support and also access accurate health information online. Whitehaven Library was awarded 10 tablets, and is now setting up each device with key links and resources, distributing them, and then helping each recipient to set it up and start to use it to get connected.
- 4.13 Every summer, Copeland libraries encourage a love of reading over the school holidays by participation in the national Summer Reading Challenge (SRC). With children at home for longer periods, and no access to libraries for the bulk of the summer, SRC only offered a digital version, with a bespoke website. This was promoted extensively and local resources such as related craft activities made available.
- 4.14 Although the mid-point figures for this year's SRC for the entire North West showed a good performance in terms of Cumbrian children's participation, second only to Cheshire East, numbers were substantially reduced (separate Copeland figures cannot be obtained). At the beginning of August, countywide 533 children were taking part, a significant reduction from last year's figures of 4363 starting the challenge and 2339 completing. Problems with the SRC website where it could not cope with the initial demand could have contributed to this, as could the plethora of online alternatives and the loss of the 'Unique Selling Point' for many local families, encouraging reading by visiting a library.
- 4.15 The library online offer has been popular during the Covid lockdown, particularly the resources available on the 'Borrowbox' platform. Although Cumbria wide, rather than Copeland specific, a comparison of the 19 weeks before lockdown (23/09/19 to 15/03/20) compared to the 19 after our libraries closed (16/03/20 to 27/07/20) showed the following increases:
- eAudiobooks active users 48%
 - eAudiobook loans 35%
 - eBooks active users 68%
 - eBook loans 86%

Public Health Update

- 4.17 Diary Dates and Reminders–
- North Cumbria Action for Health Network 29 September 2020
 - Copeland Health and Wellbeing Forum October 2020 (date TBC)

- West Cumbria Community Forum 11 September and 16 October 2020
- North Cumbria Mental Health Provider Forum 21 October 2020

4.18 Coronavirus (COVID-19)

At the end of August, case numbers have been decreasing with a fall in all districts in Cumbria. It should be noted that most of the recent cases are amongst younger age groups, 5 – 29 years followed by 20 – 44 years. Public Health advice remains unchanged but if the situation changes in Cumbria, or within a locality, then lockdown measures could be reintroduced. The situation remains fluid and information can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus> and here <https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/coronavirus/landingpage.asp>

Following consultation Cumbria's Outbreak Control Plan has been published which describes Cumbria's approach to managing outbreaks of COVID-19. It can be found here [COVID-19 Outbreak Control | Cumbria County Council](#)

4.19 National Public Health Updates

In August, the Secretary of State, Matt Hancock MP, announced that Public Health England would be replaced by a new organisation called the [National Institute for Health Protection \(NIHP\)](#). The NIHP will bring together PHE and NHS Test and Trace, and the new organisation is expected to be operational in Spring 2021.

As part of the changes to PHE, Duncan Selbie [wrote to colleagues](#) to confirm that he will step aside as Chief Executive Officer. Baroness Dido Harding will lead the NIHP as interim chair, while Michael Brodie will return to PHE as interim CEO.

10,000 people now signed up to COVID-19 immunity study

A nationwide effort led by PHE to find out whether people who had COVID-19 can get infected again has now recruited 10,000 health workers from across the NHS

[The SIREN study](#) is exploring whether specific COVID-19 antibodies provide immunity. Scientists do not yet know if people who have been infected in the past are protected from becoming sick again, or how long any protection lasts. This study will help to answer these questions

Returning to school

PHE's scientists have been analysing the impact of COVID-19 in schools, and the evidence to date has indicated that schools are not a major driver of COVID-19 infections in the community. As the new school term approaches, PHE are supporting the Department for Education's (DfE) preparations, including the [update to advice](#) on face coverings for staff and children.

[The PHE study](#) published in the BMJ this month explains that children and young people mainly experience COVID-19 asymptotically or as a minor illness with age remaining the biggest determinant for severe illness. They have also published a [rapid review](#) on transmission of COVID-19 in schools and interventions to minimise transmission, and we will continue to monitor new studies as they are published.

Parents can be reassured that PHE has provided rigorous input to the extensive guidance published by the [Department for Education](#)

Annual Tripartite Flu Letter

Further to the letter that was published on 14 May 2020, the second National flu immunisation programme 2020 to 2021 letter was published earlier this month. The letter gives further details on the expansion to the programme, and [is available online here](#).

Update to the Dementia profile

PHE has updated figures on the estimated diagnosis rate for dementia. Published on the Fingertips website, [The Dementia Profile](#) is presented in an interactive tool that allows users to view and analyse it in a user-friendly format, and it provides a snapshot of dementia care, broken down by geographical area, to help local government and health services improve dementia care.

Update to the Public Health Outcomes Framework

In line with the [Official Statistics release cycle](#), PHE has published an update to the [Public Health Outcomes Framework \(PHOF\)](#) data tool which examines indicators that help us understand trends in public health. This update contains the addition of one new indicator and more recent data for six indicators.

4.20 Locality Update

The **Copeland Health and Wellbeing Forum** online meeting 27 July 2020 was well attended with participants receiving a presentation on the previous pre COVID-19 Public Health forum priorities, impact of COVID-19. A discussion followed on individual, family and community experiences and how that will shape the priorities going forward. Updates on Social Prescribing and Track and Trace locally were also received.

The next meeting, date to be confirmed in October, will consider the context and environment to return to the continuation of moving forward with population health improvement in Copeland.

Copeland and Millom ICCs have recommenced meetings online and are in the process of starting to return to pre COVID-19 work programmes considering impacts and the potential of second phase response alongside the additional pressures usually associated with autumn/winter.

5.0 OPTIONS

- 5.1 Members can note the report and comment on the activities undertaken by the team.
- 5.2 Members can agree, reject or amend grant recommendations. If Members choose to commit different levels of funding this should be within the delegated budget.

6.0 RESOURCE AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Discretionary Budgets are reporting £164,875 actual and committed spend against a budget of £296,208 leaving unallocated resource of £131,333
- 6.2 Non-Discretionary budgets are reporting £152,667 actual and committed expenditure against a budget of £153,467 leaving unallocated resource of £800.
- 6.3 If the recommendations in section 3 of this report are agreed the member scheme unallocated resource will reduce by £10,650 from £11,416 to £766

7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 In relation to recommendation 3.1 this is for noting only and as a result there are no direct legal implications

In relation to recommendation 3.2 under Part 2D of the Constitution 5.1.2 (d) provides that it is a function of Committee to approve applications for grants from the Local Committee's budgets for amounts exceeding £ 5,000 in line with the policy

8.0 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 This report provides the Local Committee with a comprehensive update on the activities undertaken as part of the recovery phase of Covid-19, alongside Area Planning and the budgets available to assist.

Dawn Roberts
Corporate Director, Corporate, Customer and Community Services

September 2020

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Budget Summary

Appendix 2 – Defra Grant Funding Criteria

Electoral Division(s): All Copeland

Executive Decision

| | |
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| Yes | |
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Key Decision

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| | No |
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If a Key Decision, is the proposal published in the current Forward Plan?

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| | | N/A |
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Is the decision exempt from call-in on grounds of urgency?

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| | No |
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If exempt from call-in, has the agreement of the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee been sought or obtained?

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| | | N/A |
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Has this matter been considered by Overview and Scrutiny?

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| | No |
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If so, give details below.

Has an environmental or sustainability impact assessment been undertaken?

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| | | N/A |
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Has an equality impact assessment been undertaken?

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| | | N/A |
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PREVIOUS RELEVANT COUNCIL OR EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

No previous relevant decisions

CONSIDERATION BY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

Not considered by Overview and Scrutiny.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers

REPORT AUTHOR

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