

PORTFOLIO:

LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

Report of
Portfolio Holder:

**COUNCILLOR
BARRY EARP**

Members Learning Charter:- On the 8th October, I attended the North West Employers Organisation Charter Review in Manchester as Cumbria's representative on the Development Committee and I am pleased to report that Carlisle was successful in retaining the Charter Level 1 Assessment. I wish to thank those members selected for interview, along with officers, for undertaking the necessary preparation of the exercise and providing guidance to the Member Learning and Development Group. At the meeting I was elected to represent Cumbria on the "Skills for Life" Committee. A key activity for the Committee will be promoting improved literacy and numeracy standards amongst local authority employees.

Member – Officer Forum: - This year's forum will take place on the 4th November, in the Flensburg Room during the lunch break and prior to Council. Several Officers have put a great deal of effort into their displays and given of their time for our benefit, so I do hope that Members will take up the invitation to attend.

Pay and Workforce Strategy: - I reported last time that the Job Evaluation Exercise had ended and work has now concluded on the harmonisation of Conditions of Employment across the Authority (Single Status). Senior Managers have recently presented a proposed new Pay Policy to the Unions and pay modelling is taking place. Negotiations with the Trade Unions are now underway in all these areas concurrently.

Sickness Absence: - No doubt Members will be aware of the recent publicity generated by our current deteriorating performance. Members of the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee have called for, and received, a new action plan designed to improve attendance which has

been considered at J.M.T. There should be no doubt that the Authority is treating this matter both seriously and urgently.

Tullie House: - On September 9th, Officers attended a conference in Birmingham at which Adrian Babbidge gave a paper on the formation of Trusts for Museums in Local Authority control. On the 13th October, Adrian visited Carlisle to speak and answered questions by Staff at Tullie House. In the afternoon he, with Roger Vaughan the Chief Executive of the Coventry Museum and Michael McGregor the Director of the Wordsworth Museum in Grasmere, attended a workshop for Members at the Civic Centre. I was disappointed that so few members attended.

On the 18th September, I attended the Keith Tyson Nature Painting Exhibition Preview and on the 1st October was present at the photo-shoot to promote the use of Wi-Fi in and around Carlisle.

Northern H.R. Briefing (People and Places) : - Held at Harrogate on September 25th/26th.

Papers included: -

- a) Attracting Talent to Local Government
- b) Shared Service Evaluation
- c) Handling Change with Confidence
- d) Employment Law Update
- e) Engaging Leadership (The link between Engagement, Leadership, Performance and Morale).
- f) National Issues

A most informative and interesting conference.

Information Technology (I.T.): - Shared Service with Allerdale – work is progressing well and there is a determination on all sides to produce a quality service between the two Councils.

The Carlisle Wi-Fi Service was launched on the 20th October. This project provides an enhanced mobile broadband service to the citizens, visitors, students and businesses of Carlisle. Carlisle is poorly served in this area with commercial operators being slow to develop such a service on a city-wide basis. The project provides for a Wi-Fi hotspot at thirty locations around the City urban and rural locations. These are based in a variety of different locations such as community centres, public areas and public sector buildings. The distinctive branding campaign will draw peoples attention to the availability of the service and ensure the service is taken up by its target market.

Learning City: - On the 9th October, I attended the Carlisle Children and Young Peoples Forum Meeting on Secondary Education which discussed Health promotion and the NHS (Teen Lifecheck) with feedback from the Carlisle Joint Schools Council. There were also presentations by the Chief Executive of the Richard Rose Federation, the Director of the Richard Rose Central Academy and the Headteacher of the William Howard School, Brampton. The AGM of the Joint Schools Council was held on the 21st October when it was decided that the Teen Lifecheck should be progressed.

Emergency Planning:- I would like to give Members early warning of an Emergency Planning Training Event for Members which will be held here in Carlisle on the 12th March 2009. Time and venue are not yet fixed but I would ask Members to keep the date free if possible. Further details will be sent to Members in due course.

Councillor Barry Ogilvie Earp
Learning and Development Portfolio Holder
21st October 2008