

**REPORT TO:** CARLISLE & EDEN JOINT COMMITTEE

**DATE:** 13 JULY 2005

**REPORT OF:** CHIEF EXECUTIVES – CARLISLE CITY COUNCIL & EDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

**REPORT TITLE:** JOINT WORKING BETWEEN CARLISLE CITY COUNCIL & EDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL: PROPOSALS FOR THE FUTURE

## **SUMMARY**

This report looks to the future joint working arrangements between the two District Councils and proposes a way forward to strengthen the current partnership work. The report also looks at the structure of the Carlisle & Eden Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and proposes a way forward which strengthens the respective work of partners in Carlisle and Eden. The proposal for the future of the LSP will be informed by the views of all LSP Members who are currently being consulted. These views will be reported to the Joint Committee meeting on 13 July.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is proposed that the Carlisle & Eden Joint Committee are asked to consider:

1. The proposals outlined in 1.3 below regarding:
  - i. The Carlisle & Eden Joint Committeeand the proposals outlined in 2.7 regarding
- ii. The Carlisle & Eden LSP
2. And agree a way forward and make any recommendations to the Carlisle City Council's meeting on 19 July 2005 and Eden District Council's meeting on 21 July 2005.

## **1.0 CARLISLE & EDEN JOINT COMMITTEE – Proposals for its future Work**

- 1.1 The Joint Committee was established in 2003 and since that time members of both Councils have been meeting regularly to discuss issues of importance, concern or common interest. The main focus of the agenda items has been on the partnership work developed between the two Councils including joint work on recycling and environmental projects. The Joint Committee work has helped to forge pivotal links between Members and Officers and a number of partnership initiatives have benefited from the Councils meeting together
- 1.2 It is now considered appropriate to review the work of the Joint Committee and to consider how it can be strengthened in terms of including new areas of work within its remit. By extending and widening the issues discussed it is considered that both Councils will benefit individually and jointly. The Joint Committee is not a decision making body and any areas of work requiring decisions to be made will be referred to the respective Councils.
- 1.3 There are a range of issues that will benefit from discussion and consideration by the Joint Committee and these include:
- Crime & Disorder Reduction Strategy for Carlisle & Eden – to inform the work of the CDRP Leadership Group
  - Emergency Planning & Civil Contingency Planning
  - East Cumbria Countryside Project (ECCP)
  - Joint Health Improvement Initiatives
  - Joint work in relation to Flood Defence and Recovery initiatives
  - Annual Community Conference (see 2.0)
  - Rural Exclusion Pilot
  - Work Planning
  - Further joint service delivery initiatives
  - Waste minimisation, collection and recycling

The existing partnership work will of course still be an important aspect of the Committee's work and both Councils see the benefit of developing the partnership work further, whenever appropriate.

**PROPOSAL:** That the Carlisle & Eden Joint Committee is strengthened by extending the areas of work to be discussed and considered at its meetings and that elected Members and Officers continue to develop effective ways of collaborative working across both District Councils.



## 2.0 CARLISLE & EDEN LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP (LSP)

- 2.1 The Carlisle & Eden LSP was established in 2002 where the two districts were brought together as a direct result of the Foot & Mouth Disease. Since that time much positive work across the two districts has been undertaken including:
- Preparation of a Community Strategy covering both Districts
  - Completion of 'Partnership through Performance' and 'Singing Communities' Projects
  - Development and launch of Eden Valley cycle route
  - Attraction of funding to the Rural Exclusion pilot and the Arts Council exemplar projects
- 2.2 However, over the last two years, the LSP has not progressed as well as it should and certainly the CPA judgements for both Carlisle & Eden raised concerns regarding the LSP and the ability to work closely with partners across the public, private and voluntary sectors, in helping to secure collaborative areas of work for the Carlisle & Eden local communities
- 2.3 There were a number of factors which hindered the LSP developing from its promising start, and these ranged from lack of staffing resources for nearly a year; the first Chair of the LSP leaving in 2004 and the resulting difficulties in replacing her; falling off of active participation in the work of the LSP and a perceived lack of interest within the membership of the LSP. These factors together with a perceived lack of national direction for LSPs in terms of their 'statutory' role led the Carlisle & Eden LSP to be in a stagnant position in the summer of 2004.
- 2.4 Since that period real efforts have been made by the two Councils and the LSP Executive to give a strong commitment to the future of the LSP and this commitment has involved:
- The establishment of Co-Chairs of the LSP who are the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Housing, Infrastructure & Transport (Carlisle City Council) and the Joint Leader of Eden District Council
  - A series of training events for the LSP Executive which investigated the structural and membership issues of the LSP as well as the key priorities for the LSP to focus on
  - Production of an LSP newsletter which has been well-received by Partners

This renewed commitment has certainly helped to rebuild the Executive's sense of its own potential and has no doubt reminded its members of the LSP's key roles on behalf of its respective communities.

- 2.5 But now there are significant areas of work, which Carlisle & Eden Districts need to give separate attention to and it is felt that this work is best done within the individual areas, rather than within a joint LSP.
- i. The Carlisle flood and storm disaster of January 2005 has focussed the work of the Carlisle partners of the LSP on the development of the Flood Recovery Action Plans and now the emerging 'Carlisle Renaissance' Master Plan. Though the Eden LSP partners will be interested and concerned in this work, it does not impact upon them directly. Carlisle already has a City Vision Partnership and it makes sense for that Group to concentrate solely on this area of work, rather than bring it to a joint LSP for discussion and agreement. Carlisle Renaissance is developing into a Community Plan for Carlisle for the next 10 to 15 years and this Plan will include major areas of physical regeneration work across the City of Carlisle.
  - ii. Eden is also involved in significant areas of work, which though of course are of interest to Carlisle Partners, they do not directly impact upon them. These include:
    - The completion of an Eden Action Plan, detailing progress of Eden partners to achieving community objectives
    - The appointment of an Eden-based project development officer
    - The development of the Council's three priorities: Affordable Housing, Higher Wage Economy and Waste Management
    - The completion of work on how the Council might best support the sustainability of rural communities
- 2.6 Therefore it is proposed that the Carlisle & Eden LSP is further developed into two LSPs – one each for Carlisle & Eden.
- 2.7 But it is also recognised that the strengths derived from the joint working initiatives already in place should, at all costs, be protected and nurtured. Therefore it is proposed that an annual Community Conference is held to bring together the two LSPs to review and present their Community Plans and investigate potential for future joint working.

**PROPOSAL:** That the Carlisle & Eden LSP is now developed into 2 separate LSPs for each of the Districts and that a Community Conference is organised to bring both LSPs together on an annual basis.