



## CARLISLE CITY COUNCIL STATEMENT

Carlisle City Council notes the proposals contained in the White Paper "Your Region Your Choice – Revitalising the English Regions" and makes the following points:

### Elected Regional Government

Noting the main proposal to give the opportunity through a referendum for regions to choose an elected regional assembly, whilst the people of Carlisle and the City Council may not want an elected regional assembly the City Council accepts the inevitability of regional government. However the Council is concerned about the potential loss of democratic representation at both the local and regional level. The proposals for elected regional assemblies suggest an assembly size of between 25 and 35 members. This implies that the North East with a population of 2.5 million could have an assembly with the same number of members as the North West with a population of 6.8 million. This 'one size fits all' approach is seen as unfair and could leave Carlisle without any local representation at a regional level. Carlisle City Council would therefore urge that the special geographic and demographic circumstances, which pertain in Cumbria be taken into account and that the size of the assembly is such that sparsely populated areas remote from the centres of population are fairly represented. **Carlisle City Council accepts the inevitability of elected regional government and strongly supports the proposition that the size of the assembly should be set to ensure fair representation to all areas.**

### Unitary Local Government

Carlisle City Council welcomes the proposal that unitary local government should be the predominant pattern of local democracy. It supports the clarity and purpose which unitary local government brings to service provision and representation. However the City Council is concerned that the government maybe seeking unitary authorities with a population in excess of 250,000. It sees this development as both inequitable and unworkable. Recent rounds of local government boundary reviews produced a range of population sizes for unitary authorities in the Northwest ranging from 121,000 (Halton) to 191,000 (Warrington). It is only in the dense metropolitan areas where unitary populations exceed 200,000. In the sparsely populated areas of Cumbria it is vital that the Government considers a range of smaller population "footprints" to reflect local geography and ensures that local communities continue to have meaningful democratic involvement. **Carlisle City Council supports the principle of unitary local government and proposes that this should be based upon the successful partnership working being developed under the Carlisle & Eden Local Strategic Partnership and the Allerdale & Copeland Local Strategic Partnership together with the merger of South Lakeland District Council and Barrow Borough Council administrative and LSP areas.**

### Key Stakeholders

The White paper seeks view on how elected regional assemblies should involve key stakeholders and asks should the Government be prescriptive in setting out their involvement either as full assembly members, as part of the executive, through scrutiny committees or via a consultation forum. Carlisle City Council believes that it is important that local communities determine how stakeholders are involved to ensure that their involvement reflects local circumstances and therefore should not be prescribed. **The City Council supports the involvement of key stakeholders in regional affairs and this involvement should be determined locally however it firmly believes that only democratically elected representatives should be full members of the regional assembly.**

Leader  
Carlisle City Council

04/02/03

Town Clerk & Chief Executive  
Carlisle City Council