

Agenda Item 17

The Council agree to submit the following views to the Office of Deputy Prime Minister

1. The "Soundings Exercise"

"Whilst Carlisle City Council accepts the inevitability of regional government it has concerns about the level of accountability which can be achieved for the people of Cumbria. It has already made the ODPM aware of this view. However, it considers that the best way of deciding on the issue is to hold a referendum and allow people within the north West decide for themselves. For the referendum to be effective then people need to fully understand what they are being asked to consider, this means providing full and objective information on the proposal. Carlisle City Council believes that this issue should be clarified."

2. Timetable

If the North West Region is to be included in the first tranche Carlisle City Council considers it important that Authorities are given sufficient time to consider properly all the options and to provide timely and objective information for the citizens of Carlisle before a referendum takes place.

3. Raising Public Awareness

There is very little in the guidance, which looks at the issue of public awareness. If people are being asked to vote in a referendum then they need to be aware of all the issues and implications of a proposed Regional Assembly and Local Government Review. Carlisle City Council requests that there is enough time to do this properly.