

Eden District Council report September 2019

Chief Executive ward visit

Myself and Michael showed Rose around Alston, Nenthead and Garrigill on a very wet and windy day. This was a very positive afternoon, where we were able to spend time discussing issues and positive stories/projects about our area. The interest that she showed reaffirms my opinion that EDC will now be focussed on the whole District instead of just Penrith. We met at the Town hall in Alston, where we had a go of the new virtual reality headsets, Rose was very impressed with these and we had discussions about how this tech could be used throughout other parts of the district for different projects, e.g. showing housebound people the views from the tops of peaks in the Lake District. Highlights of the day – Community Garden, the Surgery & Hospital, Front Street shop fronts, Top School project, Fairhill, Nenthead Arts and Visitors Centre.

Executive 3rd September

Corporate Performance Report - In June the Executive authorised a new corporate performance framework, this is the first quarterly report using this new framework. The purpose of the report is to provide a summary of progress against the targets for the period April-June 2019 and to inform the executive and Scrutiny Co-ordinating board of any areas of concerns or issues requiring attention.

Budget Monitoring - We were presented with the quarterly budget monitoring report from 1st April 2019 to 30th June 2019.

Local Plan Review - We were presented with a report from the Leader of the Council, recommending that the Executive commits, in principle to a full review of the Eden Local Plan 2014 – 2032; that a local development scheme and Statement of Community Involvement is prepared for consideration by the Executive in November 2019; an early review of additional employment land options is scoped and commences immediately or Penrith, due to new employment opportunities.

The Eden Local Plan sets out the strategic objectives or policies for development within the area and includes policies on housing, Eden's settlements, the economy, the environment, the rural area, communities, and development principles. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires policies within the Local Plan to be reviewed at least once every five years to ensure that its strategies and policy details are legally compliant, up to date and effective.

Draft Housing Supplementary Planning Document - The Executive agreed for the draft Housing Supplementary Planning Document to go out to statutory public consultation and for the timetable for the draft Housing SPD to be adopted. The Draft Housing SPD has been prepared to provide additional information regarding the housing policies in the Eden Local Plan 2014-32.

Pilot Business Growth Programme - The new administration wish to continue the support given to new and existing businesses with Eden to help grow the local economy. As part of this aspiration, there is a wish to develop a Pilot Business Growth Programme, which will focus on complementary activities to support businesses in addition to what the Council currently provides. The finance requested for this recommendation is to be used from a source of money provided by Central Government aimed at supporting businesses with Brexit preparations, providing advice and support to businesses to prepare for Brexit and to assist with planning for post Brexit business continuation strategies alongside general business advice and support.

Eden Business Support Fund – The Executive agreed to amend the criteria for the Eden Business Support Fund in order to increase flexibility of the fund and support more businesses within Eden, primarily by extending the loan period up to 15 years and extending the loan amount up to £200,00.

Eden Community Fund – I asked for approval for the award from the Eden Community Fund of grants totalling £44,065.10 for 8 community projects within Eden.

Details of all reports and minutes can be found at

<https://democracy.eden.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cid=131&Mid=2628>

The next meeting is scheduled for the 8th October at Penrith Townhall, the agenda and supporting reports can be found at <https://democracy.eden.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cid=131&Mid=2629>

Fit 4 All – Shap visit

I visited the Fit 4 All project at Shap Community Centre where I spent an hour getting to know the members and watching them take part in their exercises. The youngest member is 62 and the oldest is 91. The group is led by Roo and Liam, two fitness instructors who's relationship with the members was brilliant. The group has been running for over a year, when they first started people were doing chair exercises, now they are all taking part in quite high energy intensive aerobic exercises standing up and moving around the room. The room was filled with smiles and laughter. They all spoke to me individually about their the Fit 4 All classes, the feedback was all really positive, they don't know what they'd do without it, some members have had hip and knee replacements and these sessions have improved mobility more than a physio session. One lady said that she had been sitting at home waiting to die until he started coming along to the classes. They have all made new friends and have said that the mental health has improved dramatically. I am in early discussions with the instructors and EDC officers about rolling this out to other areas, in particular the instructors are keen to come to Alston.

Community Led Housing

The Alston Moor Housing Review results have been put together – EDC Officers are to report findings and next steps to Alston Moor Parish Council's November meeting.

We discussed the importance of gathering community support and forming a wider working group moving forward. It is vitally important that what happens next is with residents of Alston Moor, first steps will be to hold a public housing event in order to present the results from the Alston Moor Housing Survey and the Eden District Housing Survey which puts a lot of the information gathered at a local level into a wider district context.

Eden Focus Group and Crime Safety Partnership Leadership meetings

We had a presentation from Richie Hinson, who is the newly appointed Forces Link for Carlisle & Eden for ex armed forces support, in partnership with Cumbria CVS. The focus of the 12 month project is co-ordination of services and signposting for ex-service personnel - transition and employment, housing, mental health services, employment skills training. This is a pilot for Cumbria and is hoped to continue and develop past the first 12 months.

Pubwatch has rolled out their computer based database with an active Penrith base, most areas of Eden have now signed up.

Council 12th September

For full details and reports:

<https://democracy.eden.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cid=167&Mid=2618>

A Motion on Notice was submitted for Council - "That an extraordinary meeting of EDC be convened in October 2019 to allow members to be updated on Brexit and to debate its consequences on the district..." There was quite an in-depth debate and eventually an amendment was agreed that we would meet after we have left the EU, when we will be in a better position to know some of the impacts will be.

As Communities Portfolio Holder, I was asked a question from Cllr Raine about firework displays and how they fit into a carbon neutral Council. My answer -

The Eden Community Fund is the Council's community grant scheme. It was established in 2013-14 to support and develop community initiatives with Eden District. The Eden Community Fund Partnership Panel meet to assess applications against set criteria and make recommendations for the award of grants. The Partnership is chaired by myself and consists of representatives from Cumbria County Council, Action with Communities as well as individual community representatives.

The application was assessed, in June, by the panel against the fund's current criteria for eligibility for the Eden Community Fund and was recommended for approval. Executive agreed the recommendation earlier this month. The current criteria for assessing applications are as follows:

- Delivers wide community benefit;
- Contributes to locally identified community needs and priorities;
- Demonstrates value for money;
- Ability to measure success of a project or event; and
- Ability to demonstrate equality of opportunity and the elimination of discrimination.

What we may have to take into consideration when regarding Bonfire night and firework displays is the positive impact they have on our communities. With a community led display they are an organised and controlled event, usually by a small local group maybe a PTA for example, with health and safety procedures in place, this will minimise individuals setting off their own fireworks in their back gardens. They're advertised in advance so animal owners have fair warning, local firework displays will often mean people are walking to the event instead of driving to some of the bigger displays and they bring communities together.

There is going to be a review of the current criteria for the Eden Community Fund, this will allow us to align criteria with the Council Plan and give us the opportunity to include a section on carbon neutral and potential impacts from projects on the climate and suggestions on how to minimise the negative impact.

The next meeting is scheduled for the 7th November, 6:45pm.

Cumbria Climate Emergency Action Summit

I attended the Cumbria Climate Emergency Action Summit hosted by Cafs (Cumbria Action for Sustainability). This was very interesting event and was centred around local Councils and their commitments help achieve a zero carbon Britain – some councils like EDC have declared a carbon emergency with targets for 2030, and this was very helpful in going some way to answering “how do we implement what we have set out to achieve?”

There was a brilliant presentation from Paul Allen, Centre of Alternative Technology, on how we achieve a zero carbon Britain with technologies that are already available. I would highly recommend reading the research reports at <https://www.cat.org.uk/info-resources/zero-carbon-britain/>

We had a presentation from Simon Pickering from Stroud District Council, which was the first Carbon Neutral Council in Europe, work which started in the 90s, they have addressed the carbon emissions of council buildings, formed an environmental strategy (2007-27), have audited annual savings, natural flood management. 207 Councils in Britain have now declared emergencies, along with Business declares, Music declares and Culture declares.

Rheged – Council Plan consultation event

We held a very successful and well attended consultation event at Rheged for the EDC Council Plan, with three separate sessions to allow a range of conversations with members of the public, key partners and stakeholders, Town & Parish councils and businesses.

The sessions included presentations from the Leader and Deputy Leader, Cumbria LEP, Promoting a creative culture to boost staff engagement and recruitment (Adam Vaughan, Director of Theldol.com), Hazel Graham (Chief Exec, CAFS) on sustainability and zero carbon Eden, Sustainable Communities (Fran Richardson ACT), Warmer Homes Eden (tackling Fuel Poverty – Housing Portfolio Holder).

Carlisle and Eden Community Forum

I attended the first meeting of the newly formed Carlisle and Eden Community Forum (CECF). This Forum is modelled on the West Cumbria Community Forum which has been meeting since 2014. This is facilitated by Healthwatch Cumbria and provides opportunities for coproduction, involvement and information sharing between the highest level of health and care decision makers and a wide range of representatives of communities of interest and place, in conjunction with North Cumbria Integrated Care System (NC ICS) colleagues and in line with existing engagement and communication plans.

Healthwatch Cumbria has a role to act as the consumer champion for everyone who uses health and care services and to provide mechanisms for their voices to be heard in a variety of ways. This will help to ensure that more people’s voices are heard at a time when the whole health and care system is changing in line with the aspirations of the NHS Long Term Plan and will help to involve people in the local changes being considered by NC ICS.

Senior leaders in the ICS have stated clearly that the system needs to engage more locally and has recognised that Healthwatch Cumbria is well placed to bring people and decision makers together. To do this they must work closely with local communities, community representatives, community groups and interested parties and provide evidence that this type of collaborative working, or coproduction, can work and result in services that are more person centred. Local people have the right to be confident that planned changes will lead to better outcomes for them and their families.

They need to know exactly what will happen in the future. Practically they want to know where they will go, for what and why, on an everyday healthcare basis.

The new Carlisle and Eden Community Forum will help to ensure that people's voices, hopes and concerns from these districts are heard, that informative conversations can take place and that accurate and timely information is shared. The group will have the following objectives:

- To welcome key representatives, including Local MPs, all three tiers of elected members, local community representatives, representatives of third sector providers, and representatives of North Cumbria ICS to come together on a regular basis for informed discussion focused on the change process and its likely impact in Carlisle and Eden.
- To provide additional mechanisms to; Ensure people are informed about the developing health and care system; Ensure that people's concerns, anxieties, questions, ideas, and experiences, are heard by decision makers; Ensure that commissioners and providers can answer questions from the community, listen first-hand to concerns and provide timely and accurate information about planned changes; Ensure commissioners and providers involve people in shaping proposed developments and changes and in considering how these can improve outcomes
- Provide regular accurate briefings about strategic and operational developments
- Ensure that the public are clear about which decisions will be subject to formal public consultation and explain exactly how and when this will happen – and that their views are taken into consideration over what processes might be used for consultation
- Ensure that there are opportunities with community leaders to discuss, test out and demonstrate how real life scenarios will be managed in Carlisle and Eden settings.

Case work and other meetings are ongoing and includes -

- Fly tipping and general mess at the two recycling bring sites is still an issue, EDC have instructed their team to tidy sites after the last complaints in mid-September.
- Raw sewage leaking on Park View Lane
- Garrigill Cemetery – due to meet with Elaine and Paul Emmerson on site next week.
- HR & Appeals
- LGA peer review – Communications
- Equality and Diversity training
- Portfolio meetings
- Group Leader meetings
- Informal Executive meetings