

Westmorland and Furness Induction Day 3.4.23.

Report by Michael Hanley

1. Introduction.

J Brooke (JB, LD, Leader): We are an ambitious council. We will drive forward new ways of working. We will work closely with town and parish councils. A top priority is to protect natural resources, combat climate change and biodiversity loss and protect the beautiful environment that we are responsible for. We will be a council that genuinely listens and puts people, customers and communities at the heart of all that we do.

We have a constitution and budget which will help us gain our objectives: supporting young and old, becoming carbon net zero, having confident resilient communities, sustainable economic growth and a confident empowered workforce. We have some fantastic opportunities to work with business. I have been to BAE (in Barrow) where there are great opportunities. The other two new unitary authorities, Somerset and Yorkshire, had big challenges, but we had to create two authorities from one area.

2. How Will We Deliver?

Sam Plum (SP, Chief Executive): SP discussed the senior leadership team. Catriona Stephens will be the Director of Public Health. We will need to stabilise over the next few months. It was a huge job to separate the county council into two authorities. We have 3600 staff members. Another part of LGR is transition: legacy systems and ways of working need to continue. Full disaggregation of services will continue. Transformation will take 5-7 years. Underpinning all of this is governance with oversight and monitoring. Everything will need to be at least as good as it was under the old councils.

Design Principles: 1. Focusing on Outcomes, 2. Achieving Localism, 3. Ease of Access, 4. Digital First, 5. Environmentally and Socially Focused.

Values: Ambitious, inclusive, outcome-focused, responsible, needs-led and ecologically aware.

3. Alison Hatcher (AH, Assistant Chief Executive): Discussed her role. Four teams will be driving forward change.

4. Paul Robinson (Enabler Services): Introduced various directors: ICT:Helen Blake, HR: Luci Polb, Monitoring Officer: Linda Jones.

5. Pam Dukes (Director of Resources): introduced other senior officers: Sue Roberts: Director of Finance, Susan Simpson: Commissioning, Alan Harty: Assets.

6. Angela Jones (Highways, Planning, Waste, Climate Change). Claire Gould: Assistant Director of climate and natural environment, Gareth Condlin: Assistant Director of Inclusiveness and Green Growth, Phil Greenup: Transport and Highways.

7. Stephen Condon: Director of Thriving Communities, Catriona Stephens: Director of Public Health, Tracy Ingram: Assistant Director of Safe and Strong Communities, Caroline Wagstaff: Assistant Director of Housing (looks after large housing stock of 2500 council houses in Barrow). Tracy Ingram will also look after the locality boards. David Hughian (spelling?): Director of Community Infrastructure: libraries, museums, leisure centres.

8. Cath Whalley (Director of Adult Social Care): We look after residential care, OT, social workers etc. It's a huge service. We are involved with hospital discharges. Nikkie Phips (?Phillips): Assistant Director of Provider Services: we look after Residential Care and Temporary Care.

9. John Redmond (Director of Childrens' Services): There are 43,000 children in the area, 148 schools, 500 children receiving additional support (SEN) and 270 children in care. Jonathan Taylor: Assistant Director of Children and Families, Amy Holliman: Assistant Director of Resources and Transformation. We also have an Early Health Team.

Cumbria Intelligence Observatory

A print-out from CIO was included in the Induction Pack. This was not discussed at the meeting but there are some interesting statistics included in it.

Key Findings for Cumbria

Payrolled employees resident in Cumbria in Feb 2023: 222,004. That is 2935 more than the same time last year. Growth has been slower than nationally, although Carlisle has been higher. Median monthly payrolled earnings in Feb 2023 in Cumbria: £2062, 94% of the UK average. Highest is in West Cumbria (101% of UK) and lower in East Cumbria (90%). This is partly due to more part-time jobs in the east.

Median payrolled earnings growth (pay-rise) in Cumbria compared to one year ago was 7.2% (above UK 6.7%). Proportion of 16-64 year olds in work in Cumbria: 78.4%, above national average of 75.5%. Employment is higher than one year ago but still lower than three years ago. The economic inactivity rate (those not working or not looking for work) is estimated at 19.1%, lower than the national average of 21.6%.

The claimant rate for Job Seekers Allowance/Universal Credit on 9.2.23 was 7190. 45 fewer than the previous month. Compared to one year ago, the claimant count is 1340 fewer. There were 35,883 claimants for UC, a rise of 1.4%, 2258 more than the previous year (I am not sure what the difference between "claimant rate" and the number of claimants is, I could not see an explanation) 30,172 households are in receipt of UC, up by 935 (3.2%).

Occupations most in demand were: care workers, nurses, kitchen and catering assistants, cleaners and domestic and administrative occupations. The most active job recruiters were: The NHS, Adecco and BAE Systems.

There were 458 small business start-ups in the quarter ending Jan 23. Start-ups were highest in real estate and professional services, recreation, personal and community services, construction and wholesale/retail.

There were 30,616 active companies in Cumbria in Feb 23, 185 businesses went out of business in Feb 23.