

South Lakeland District Council
Council
17 December 2019

Portfolio: Promoting South Lakeland Portfolio

Report from: Cllr Giles Archibald

Working with partners and stakeholders in the public, private and voluntary sector, at national, regional and sub-regional level. To act as an ambassador and advocate for the Communities of South Lakeland.

To represent the Council on local and other strategic partnerships including nominated representative on the Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership as appropriate.

Delivery of the Council Plan objectives in collaboration with Portfolio Holders

Policies, Plans and Strategies

- Communications Strategy
- Emergency Plan
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy
- Performance Management

Key Areas

- Community strategy/area planning/development of recovery group
- Emergency Planning
- Local and Cumbria Wide Strategic Partnerships
- Media and Communications
- Performance Management
- Relationships with Government Departments, and other relevant authorities at a sub-regional, regional and national level

Community strategy/area planning/development of recovery group

The Council has been continuing to work in close partnership with the Environment Agency (EA) to develop and implement Phase 1 of the Kendal Flood Risk Management Scheme plans to adapt the local infrastructure in order to protect communities against the risks associated with Climate Change. Phase 1 of the scheme will deliver an appreciable net gain in biodiversity.

The Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DPD approved by the Council is continuing to be used to support planning applications. The DPD include guidance policies on flood risk management, key infrastructure, open spaces, trees and landscaping.

Emergency Planning

South Lakeland District Council has been supporting Community Resilience Groups to ensure at the earliest opportunity, they receive situational awareness information where possible prior to the emergency.

The Council is supporting the work of the Resilience Unit to provide a new online facility called 'Support Cumbria'. Testing is now in the final stages. 'Support Cumbria' will allow Community Resilience Groups to upload their emergency plans and update their contact details. Also significantly 'Support Cumbria' will also allow the public and organisations to register offers of support and goods - following a crisis the public may be directed to this site to register their offers of support.

Business Continuity Planning is continuing for the EU-Exit. South Lakeland District Council is as well prepared as it can be for Brexit, recognising that there are enormous uncertainties about the timing, scale and wider impacts of what will be an immense and unpredictable change for the country as a whole and we are working closely with partners to ensure that as far as possible, adverse impacts on the district are minimised, and favourable impacts are maximised.

Critical services across the Council have been involved in identifying potential risks and their mitigations where possible. Along with other Local Authorities the Council is continuing to escalating potential issues to MHCLG for advice and clarity.

Local and Cumbria Wide Strategic Partnerships

The Council is continuing to develop the Lancaster and South Cumbria Economic Region to increase economic prosperity across the Morecambe Bay footprint. The three Councils have been engaging with Cumbria and Lancashire LEP's, as well as County Councils to shape and influence the economic influence of the Bay area. A launch event was held in June 2019 where representatives from a variety of businesses across the Bay area attended to learn more about the intentions of the initiative.

A growth bid for the area is in the process of formulation and the hope is that we will have the opportunity to discuss this topic with government.

The three authorities recently met with Andy Burnham to discuss our aspirations and seek his support and influence in driving the initiative forward.

As Leader, I am acting as Chairman of the Ideas and Innovation Strategy Group as part of the Cumbria LEP.

I have been attending the Cumbria Leaders Board (CLB) and Joint Districts Board to discuss the key issues across Cumbria and seek partnership working to implement resolutions. The CLB agenda is now focused on strategic issues of importance to residents of the county such as climate change, housing, wellbeing and addiction.

A Climate Change Sub Group has been created which is looking at the actions Cumbria can take as a whole to reduce the effects of climate change which the Cumbria Leaders will feed into and drive forward. I and the Climate Emergency and Localism Portfolio Holder recently met the Deputy Chairman of Lake District National Park to discuss biodiversity and ways of enhancing and encouraging this across the district.

I have been appointed to the District Council Network Members Board and have taken on the role of 'Lead' of the 'Better lives' work stream. The meeting is scheduled to take place in January 2020.

Working with Cllr Dyan Jones in her portfolio responsibilities for Localism, myself, the Deputy Leader and other Cabinet Members have met with a number of Town and Parish Councils to identify ways of effective collaboration.

Media and Communications

The Council has been continuing to keep residents and stakeholders up to date of the council's activities through a variety of communication channels i.e. Social Media, Newspaper, and Website.

South Lakeland News is being distributed to each household with South Lakeland, covering around 52,000 properties. The most recent edition of South Lakeland news was distributed across South Lakeland in December 2019 which emphasised the impacts of Climate Change and encouragement to residents to recycle. There was also an inclusion to warn drivers of the dangers of passing collection vehicles in an unsafe manner.

Regular internal messages relating to Customer Connect are include on the Intranet page, which is accessed by employees and Councillors. These updates provide information on the ongoing programme progress, training and support opportunities and organisational changes.

As the Customer Connect Programme develops and introduces the areas which will enhance customer's access to Council Services, the communications team will updating customers and stakeholders. This will include access to online payments, 24 hour access to services etc.

Performance Management

The Performance Management for 2019/20 has been focusing on the Council Plan measures of success to monitoring progress towards the priorities for South Lakeland for example:

- Business start-ups in South Lakeland were the highest in Cumbria for 2018/19 at 76.5 per 10,000 working age residents
- The Council is on target to deliver the 1,000 new affordable homes for rent by 2025 with a cumulative total of 468 since 01/01/14
- For 2018/19 the total carbon emitted was 2,996 tonnes, which is a reduction of 166 tonnes from 3,162 tonnes at 31 March 2015.
- Life Expectancy in South Lakeland is higher than the UK's average at 85.0 years for women (UK 83.1) and 82.2 years for men (UK 79.6).

The Council Plan performance measures are continuing to be reported on a quarterly basis and all statistics are readily available to view via the Councils website.

Relationships with Government Departments, and other relevant authorities at a sub-regional, regional and national level

The Council has been continuing to raise concerns to government offices and other relevant authorities surrounding the issues that cause difficulties for the district.

Recently I wrote to government ministers highlighting the positive work the authority is undertaking in order to reduce the impacts of climate change. The letter requested that government reviews Part L of the Building Regulations to encourage all new developments to be zero carbon. It should also make clear that national housebuilders should be reviewing their standard house types now. I received a response from Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng MP which I am happy to share with councillors upon request.

In collaboration with other Cumbria District Leaders we recently wrote to the Leader of Cumbria County Council to express our concerns surrounding the proposed reduction of supporting people funding.

As leader, I also met with the Director of the Northern Powerhouse to discuss the Lancaster and South Cumbria Economic Region. Representatives from the Northern Powerhouse have also met with the Leaders and Chief Executives from the other three authorities and have identified support methods moving forward.

A Rural Services Network meeting was held in London in June which I attend alongside representatives from other rural authorities from across the country. A discussion was held in relation to the creation of Local Industrial Strategies and the House of Lords Select Committee recommendations on the rural economy. The Council has volunteered to host the Rural Strategy Roadshow in Kendal which took place on 17 October 2019.

In partnership with the Leaders of the Opposition parties we recently wrote to Professor Manning to express our concerns regarding the imposition of a minimum salary threshold of £30,000 and the serious harm this would impose to both the economy of South Lakeland and the wider social wellbeing of South Lakeland.