

Allerdale Borough Council

Council – 8 December 2021

Portfolio Holder updates

Portfolio holder	Councillor Mike Johnson – Leader
Report from	Senior Management Team
Wards affected	As indicated in the main body of the report
Is this a key decision	No

1.0 The reason for the decision

- 1.1 To update Council on the activities and decisions of Portfolio Holders since the last meeting.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Members note the content of the report.

3.0 Background and Introduction

- 3.1 This is a regular report that comes to each meeting of Council. The purpose of the report is to provide full Council with an update and overview of the activities of individual portfolio holders.
- 3.2 The activities of the Portfolio Holders are given in the following sections.

4.0 Leader of the Council: Economic Growth, Community Development and Place-making Portfolio: Cllr Mike Johnson

Taste of Wigton Food Festival, 23 October 2021

- 4.1 The first Taste of Wigton festival was a great success. Over 2,000 people visited the one-day event and traders, suppliers, supporters and attendees were all very happy. An independent evaluation was commissioned which concluded that the event worked well, providing a strong motivation to the town, generating good dwell times and stimulating additional activities which added to the levels of expenditure.
- Satisfaction rates for the event were very high, as were return and recommend levels which were close to 100%. The event attracted a slightly younger audience profile than some of the other Taste events, with lots of family groups in attendance.

The economic impact of the event is estimated at £80,345, with a return on investment of just over £4 generated for the local economy for every pound spent on the event which is a good return for a first time festival.

Cockermouth Outdoor Market

- 4.2 Cockermouth outdoor weekly market, operated by the council, returns to the town on Friday, 3 December 2021. Public consultation found overwhelming support for the return of the market which will be located in Sainsbury's car park. The range of products on sale will include artisan food and drink and arts and crafts which was strongly supported by respondents to the consultation.

Workington Hall and Parklands Winter Tales Event

- 4.3 The Winter Tales event is planned for 3-4 December 2021 and aims to attract residents and visitors to enjoy the park in the evening. The Hall and trees will be illuminated and Winter Tales will be told against a backdrop of a specially created soundscape. The event is being delivered through partnership working with the Carnegie Theatre and Soundwave, a young person's music charity based in Workington.

Better Business for All (BBfA)

- 4.4 The BBfA partnership of councils in the North West led by ourselves, held its latest two webinars on new allergens legislation. Both events were well attended by businesses. BBfA works to make sure that business are fully aware of, and make use of, the regulatory services provided by local councils.

Maryport Taste of the Sea, 14/15 August 2021 – economic evaluation

- 4.5 An independent evaluation of the festival showed that it generated £453,852 spend in the local economy over the weekend. Every £1 we invested in the event resulted in £11 spent in the town. Interviews with visitors, residents and traders showed almost 100% satisfaction with the event.

Workington Christmas market, 18/19 December

- 4.6 We are hosting a two-day Christmas market in the pedestrianised centre of the town to support the retail sector and increase footfall. The market will feature local traders, live music, Santa's Grotto and outreach activity carried out by local charities. The market is being delivered through partnership working with Workington Town Council, Washington Square, HMV, Carnegie Theatre, Rotary and other charities.

Taste Cumbria – Cockermouth, 11/12 December 2021

- 4.7 We will be holding our annual Taste Christmas market in Cockermouth on the weekend of 11/12 December. Located on Main Street, there will be a producer's market, live music stage, fairground rides, street theatre and craft activities for children.

Residents' Week

- 4.8 The first ever Residents' Week took place 2-10 October 2021. The week was to support the recovery of visitor economy businesses by encouraging residents to

visit them and spend. There was an incentive of a prize draw for residents to visit. We led on the initiative and all 6 Cumbrian local authorities joined in, with additional support from Cumbria Tourism and Keswick Tourism Association. Over 70 Cumbrian tourism businesses took part and it is hoped that the event will become a fixture in the Cumbrian calendar.

Workington Town Deal

- 4.9 Work continues to develop the business cases for the five Town Deal projects. It is intended that the business cases will be considered by the Executive in February 2022 prior to the submission of business case summaries to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) by 24 March 2022 in accordance with the agreed timetable for the Town Deal.

Maryport Future High Street (FHS) Programme

- 4.10 Mott MacDonald Consultants are now actively engaged in progressing the planning and design work required prior to the construction phase in relation to The Wave (pool and e-bike hub) and Christchurch (museum conversion). Various site meetings have taken place at the Wave and Christchurch and work is underway to produce detailed plans. Surveys of these buildings will also take account of existing building components, flood assessments and the listed status of Christchurch.

BEC are continuing to progress with plans for the demolition of 28 Senhouse Street and a more detailed specification for the former Carlton Cinema.

Meetings are progressing in relation to the assembly of several buildings and vacant land on the Empire Yard site. Negotiations are now taking place with all existing owners regarding future plans for the scheme.

The construction of all schemes is planned to be complete by March 2024 with the exception of a proportion of public realm improvements which will be partly funded by Allerdale.

Maryport Heritage Action Zone (HAZ)

- 4.11 Tender documents have gone out through The Chest for Maryport Town Hall. It is expected that work will start on site in January. Repair works will be progressed for 1 Senhouse Street (Maritime Museum) this financial year, but the moving and storage of artefacts will be postponed enabling more time to consider the various options. Discussions regarding the building's conversion to an art gallery have been positive and a revised plan is to convert the top floor to associated residential, in order for the running of the art gallery to be more cost effective. A planning application is being prepared.

The façade works to Heron Foods was expected to start on site in October, but the contractor has had some supply problems. A start is now programmed for early January, when the shop will close for an internal refit at the same time as the external HAZ works.

Two shopfront grant offers have been accepted, which will create three new and much improved shopfronts in Senhouse Street (Numbers 90, 117 and 119). It is expected that these will be carried out within this financial year.

A Historic England funded Cultural Co-ordinator role is expected to be contracted soon. They will be responsible further developing the Cultural Consortium and in

particular the production of a cultural programme. All footage for the oral history film of Senhouse Street in the 1930s and 40s has been collated and is being edited, for completion this financial year.

Maryport Programme - governance and support

- 4.12 The Programme Office has recruited a Capital Programme Manager and two Capital Project Managers to add capacity and support the successful delivery of the Council's capital programme to include regeneration schemes in the Maryport FHS and HAZ programmes, the Workington Town Deal, Lillyhall and other projects across the borough. The project managers' initial focus is to provide support to the 12 individual projects that make up the Maryport FHS and HAZ Programmes.

The existing governance structure for the Maryport Programme has been revised to take account of the fact that each of these projects is progressing. A new Maryport Programme Board has been set up which will be made up of Senior Managers at Allerdale and when required will also include representatives from Mott MacDonald and BEC. The Board will meet monthly and will review progress on each stage of planning and construction for all projects and ensure that work is completed in accordance with plans and funding available.

Encouraging Local Suppliers

- 4.13 The Procurement team gave a presentation at Cumbria Chamber of Commerce in late October to inform many local suppliers of the Council's procurement processes, what things the Council buys and how to register and use the Chest to apply for Council contracts.

In addition the Procurement team have worked with the Council's Communications colleagues to ensure that all opportunities are advertised on our business website (<https://businessallerdale.co.uk/procurement/>), and our social media channels including the Council's Facebook page and LinkedIn. The Bulletin has been issued to 2,500 subscribers

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKALLERDALE/bulletins/2f65a60>

Carbon Reduction in Council Contracts

- 4.14 The Procurement team has completed training and achieved accreditation in Carbon Literacy and held a workshop in November with staff to look at 'Taking Account of Carbon Reduction in Council Contracts'.

Workington Hall

- 4.15 Repair and consolidation works to the Ladies Kitchen and Justice Hall started on site at the end of September and will be ongoing until the end of the year.

Whilst on site, our team have discovered that the lead work at high level to the Gatehouse roof (Phase 1 works) has been stolen, which has led to damage to the gutters and part of the roof covering. The team are currently assessing the damage and getting a quotation for the necessary repairs, this will more than likely extend the contract period well into the New Year.

Flooding

- 4.16 The Property Team, along with colleagues from ABC and other major incident agencies were involved in the recent flooding event. Flood sacks were distributed as required and culverts and water courses were monitored and cleaned as necessary to prevent flooding to properties.

LGR Asset workstream

- 4.17 Members of the Asset team are now meeting on a regular basis with other Districts and CCC to progress the work required in respect of assets as we move towards Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

Housing Team

- 4.18 As part of the recent restructure the housing function has been brought under one umbrella with a Housing Manager who will be responsible for a full range of housing services. Two new Housing Technician posts have now been filled and options are being considered for the appointment of a further vacancy within the team to support on-going delivery of services. A training programme for all of the team is being developed to bring officers up to speed in other areas of housing management, enforcement, and policy and strategy.

Green Homes and Sustainable Energy Programmes

- 4.19 The team continue to work in partnership with the six Cumbrian Authorities to bring a significant funding programme to Cumbria to support work around home energy efficiency, fuel poverty and longer term sustainable warmth for residents in Allerdale.

Our Officers have expressed interest in a number of government funding programmes to support this work, we have also joined a partnership bid with Home Group to support the social housing programme. We are currently awaiting confirmation about the outcomes of those bids including: Local Authority Delivery 2 (LAD2), Local Authority Delivery 3 – on-gas homes (LAD3), HUGs – off gas grid homes, and Social Housing Decarbonisation.

5.0 Deputy Leader of the Council: Policy, Governance and People Resources Portfolio: Cllr Marion Fitzgerald

Nuclear issues

- 5.1 On 5 October, the Allerdale Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) Working Group announced a Search Area for further investigation into the potential for siting a repository for radioactive waste within the Borough. A briefing was held for members of the Council on the eve of the announcement with representatives from the Working Group and Radioactive Waste Management (RWM) in attendance.
- This follows the announcement of two separate Search Areas in Copeland and Copeland Borough Council's subsequent decision to join a Community Partnership.
- In the meantime, outside of Cumbria, a third Working Group has officially been launched in Theddlethorpe, Lincolnshire, marking the beginning of a further conversation to find out more about this national infrastructure project.

Search Areas have to be based on District electoral ward boundaries. Following completion of early-stage investigation, an area of approximately 230 square kilometres, comprising 13 Allerdale District electoral wards, is included within the Allerdale Search Area.

The Allerdale Search Area does not include any land that is within the boundary of the Lake District National Park (LDNP), which will continue to be excluded from consideration. Deep geology beyond the coast is also being considered for the siting of the underground elements of a GDF.

The electoral wards in the proposed Search Area are Aspatria, Broughton St Bridgets, Dalton, Ellen & Gilcruix, Flimby, Harrington & Salterbeck, Maryport North, Maryport South, Moorclose and Moss Bay, Seaton & Northside, St John's, St Michaels and Stainburn & Clifton.

The Working Group's proposal has been evaluated by RWM who have concluded that the area suggested, including beyond the coastline, does have the potential to accommodate a GDF deep underground, along with the infrastructure needed on the surface.

A surface facility, which would be the entry point for a GDF, would require in the region of 1 square kilometre of land and would require suitable transport links. The underground section is likely to require between 10 to 20 square kilometres of suitable geology deep underground. The underground disposal areas do not need to be located directly below the surface site. They could be separated by many kilometres.

RWM's evaluation has not confirmed that the Search Area is suitable to host a facility, only that it has the potential. Therefore, significant additional work would need to be undertaken by RWM.

The next part of the process is the forming of a Community Partnership to continue the conversation. However, a Community Partnership can only be formed with the participation of at least one relevant Principal Local Authority.

The Executive Committee met on 24 November to discuss whether or not Allerdale Borough Council would join a Community Partnership. Executive resolved to accept the invitation to join a Community Partnership in Allerdale to enable discussions to move to the next stage in the process. This acceptance is subject to the condition that all parts of the Solway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty are removed from the Search Area with regard to both the underground facility itself and any associated surface structures.

Agreement to join the Community Partnership should in no way be interpreted as consent to host a GDF, but will simply allow the conversation to continue.

Once a Community Partnership is formed, there will be a process for identifying groups, organisations and individuals who are reflective of the interests of the community within the Search Area to continue this work as Community Partnership members. At that point, the Search Area community will be eligible to benefit from Community Investment Funding for projects that improve the local area and the community's well-being.

Investigations are expected to continue for at least a decade. It is likely that the Search Area will be narrowed down during that time as further characterisation and investigation of the area takes place.

Even after the formation of a Community Partnership, both RWM and the community will have the right to withdraw from the process at any point before a Test of Public Support takes place.

Under the process outlined in RWM's Working with Communities Framework, construction of a GDF cannot commence until such time as the support of the affected community has been demonstrated via a Test of Public Support which would be likely to take the form of a referendum or local poll.

Community Safety Partnership (CSP)

- 5.2 More information about the Partnership has been made available online and can be viewed via the following link:

<https://www.allerdale.gov.uk/en/community-advice-safety/community-safety/community-safety-partnership/>

The Partnership covers the whole of West Cumbria and so I am delighted to announce that, in collaboration with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), both Allerdale and Copeland have been successful in their respective bids to the Safer Streets fund.

It was confirmed in early October that the bid in respect of Castle Park, Whitehaven, had been successful and that £191,584 has been awarded to improve this public area as a place of safety. This particular bid had strong links to the current Government initiative to tackle violence against women and girls.

As reported previously, £311,358 has been allocated within Allerdale to be focused on St Michael's ward in Workington. The objectives of the successful bid were to lower the burglary rate with the secondary benefit of reducing instances of anti-social behaviour, thus increasing the perception of safety for residents within the community.

The Project Co-ordinator is based within the OPCC. Safer Streets Assistants have been recruited who, following training, will be based in the Allerdale Local Focus Hub (LFH).

All grant agreements are in place with the Safer Streets Fund, Cumbria Constabulary, Cumbria County Council, Allerdale Borough Council and St Michael's Nursery and Infants School.

The contents of packs for delivery to 1300 homes have been discussed with the Crime Prevention Officer and finalised. Quotations have been received from several suppliers to ensure value for money and to comply with Commercial regulations. Sample goods have been tested and the final decisions about purchasing has been made. The packs will contain numerous items to enhance household security, including home property marking kits and associated signage, 24-hour timer sockets, plug-in simulated TVs and credit card defenders. The property marking kits should last for many years, as will the supporting window stickers and lamp post signs.

A crime prevention leaflet has been designed and printed ready for inclusion in the safer homes packs.

One hundred UV torches have been ordered to be used by officers deployed from Workington police station. The Crime Prevention Officer is developing a training video for officers about the benefits and most effective use of the UV torches to promote their value as a crime detection resource.

It is planned to provide direct home security advice to up to 150 homes across the area. Any home security measures provided to residents will be to Secured by Design standards. The expectation is that these products will remain effective for many years and should result in no or minimal on-going maintenance costs to residents, depending on the extent of wear and tear.

The Grant Agreement is in place with Cumbria County Council with work to improve street lighting and public realm lighting in Vulcan Park scheduled to commence in November.

Sufficient funding has been transferred to St Michael's Nursery & Infant School for a CCTV system to be purchased and installed. The CCTV will remain the responsibility of the school which will cover the ongoing costs related to the monitoring and upkeep of the CCTV. The school will allow the Police to access evidential quality images for the lifetime of the equipment. Potential further engagement opportunities with the school will be explored.

The Safer Streets Initiative will be promoted via social media (PCC, Constabulary and Allerdale Borough Council), encouraging residents and landlords to contact Safer Streets in order to receive a free survey, advice and, potentially, free security products. A brief survey has been developed to understand the concerns of residents which can be completed as the Safer Streets Assistants engage with the community. Further engagement opportunities will be developed and facilitated by the Safer Streets Assistants.

The project provides an opportunity for partner organisations and residents to form a positive network of trust and assurance, which will also contribute to greater guardianship and pride across the area. To ensure this network is preserved beyond the funding period, the local PCSOs will maintain a tangible link direct to the community as part of their normal daily duties. This strengthened relationship will also provide a mechanism for residents to report any concerns that are impacting on their quality of life which can then be referred through the correct channels to be addressed.

The local PCSOs will continue to regularly revisit the area, as part of their routine duties, and to engage with residents to reinforce the crime prevention messages.

Homelessness

- 5.3 The Council recently invited the Local Government Association to undertake a peer review of our homelessness service. A subsequent short diagnostic visit from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) has also taken place. Both reviews have offered suggested areas for improvement for the service, but both reviews have also acknowledged the dedication and hard work of the team, in particular the team has received much praise for the high success rate in finding accommodation for rough sleepers across Allerdale over the course of the pandemic.

The Peer Review has set out a number of recommendations for the Council which are now being progressed. One recommendation was that we develop a dedicated Homelessness Strategy separate from the Council's Housing Strategy. We had in fact already taken the decision to do this and this is currently being prepared.

Other recommendations related to ongoing improvements to partnership approaches and opportunities to develop ways of working following the recent restructure. An example of how this latter point is being addressed is that Customer Services staff will now receive additional triage training in relation to homelessness enquiries. This will enable members of the Homelessness Team to focus on supporting clients and addressing their individual needs with less time spent on administrative tasks.

The Housing Options Team undertook the Annual Rough Sleeper's Count in conjunction with the other Cumbrian Districts on the night of the 13 October, and reported a zero count. This information has to be submitted back to DLUHC, and highlights the hard work that has been put in to work with rough sleepers. This is the first time in several years that we have been able to report a zero.

I am pleased to announce that we have been successful with the bid that was submitted to DLUHC, in partnership with Home Group, for the Rough Sleeping Accommodation Project. This funding is to provide supported accommodation for rough sleepers across Allerdale for 12 high quality "move on" homes for clients. Clients will be able to live in these homes for up to two years with the benefit of wrap around support to help them achieve their goals in independent living. The key objective is that our clients will be able to access social housing and assured tenancies using Home Group's proposed pathway. The team are currently in the process of managing the referrals with the aim to go live by 6 December.

We have also been successful with a £29,518 funding allocation from DLUHC to help vulnerable renters this winter. The purpose of this exceptional one-off payment is to support low-income private renters with COVID-19 related rent arrears to avoid eviction or help find a new home where necessary in order to prevent homelessness, with local authorities able to target funding to those who need it most and help them get back on their feet.

Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment

- 5.4 As I reported in my last portfolio report the recent Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment raised a number of issues for the Council to consider, especially with regard to an apparent preference for smaller private sites. Conversations with the travelling community are continuing and confirm that, in the majority of cases, a permanent, Council operated site is not the preferred option. As a result of these findings a search has been undertaken to identify land owned by either Allerdale Borough Council or Cumbria County Council which may lend itself to the development of one or two small private sites.

Climate Change Advisory Group

- 5.5 Two cohorts of members and officers have completed Carbon Literacy Training with a further group having attended a shorter session on Climate Science and Solutions. The training has certainly prompted some interesting discussions and the Climate Change Advisory Group is keen to hear from members and officers who would be interested in taking part in future training rounds or who have a particular

interest or specialism in an environmental issue that they would like to share with the Group.

To ensure that the conversation continues, we are hoping to arrange regular online 'coffee sessions' for staff and members to join as and when they are available to discuss different aspects of climate change and what can be achieved locally.

The Climate Change Advisory Group is adding part of its budget to a much larger Cumbria wide fund administered by Cumbria Action for Sustainability. This will be used to support environmental projects within local communities in Allerdale.

Allerdale Borough Council's Action Plan has scored relatively well in a recent comparison study of Local Authorities carried out by Climate Change UK. The Group will continue to work on the individual objectives within the Plan.

Work has been undertaken to map alignment of the Action Plan with the Council Strategy, the Resilient Communities Strategy, the Economic Recovery and Growth Strategy, the Allerdale Local Plan and the Strategic Commissioning and Procurement Strategy 2020–2030. It is clearly important that environmental considerations form a continuous thread running through each of these policies and strategies and that they are a key part in all relevant decisions.

Local Initiatives for Children and Young People

- 5.6 Following the success of the Holiday Activities Fund in the summer, local businesses and organisations have stepped up once again to provide a programme for children and young people in Allerdale to enjoy over the Christmas break.

I was delighted to be asked to represent the Council at the launch of the Allerdale Youth Hub in October. It was good to see the Oval Centre and Riverside Housing working together with DWP and other partners to provide this service.

This type of targeted support should remove the barriers of entry to the jobs market at a time when there are more vacancies than usual. The service will provide opportunities for training and help to equip young people with the right skills.

The Youth Hub supports the Council's Recovery Strategy, in particular supporting excluded residents into work.

Electoral and Democratic Services

- 5.7 The transition work is in place to implement the changes to responsibilities for the new Electoral and Democratic team. Member training has been arranged for the Development Panel Chair and for Development Panel members, and a mop up training session for other Chairs is being arranged. The team instigated and attended briefings with members around the new ways of working and accommodation requirements for members and will continue to work with members as they return to meetings in Allerdale House. All formal meetings, apart from full Council, are now back in the Allerdale House council chamber.

The team ran elections on 4 November for Workington Town Council Westfield ward and on 25 November for the Allerdale Maryport South ward. Plans are under way for the elections to the shadow unitary council in May 2022 and regular meetings take place with colleagues in the election teams at Copeland Borough Council and Carlisle City Council. The annual household canvass was again very successful and the reformed canvass process meant that resources could be

targeted more effectively. The new electoral register is now published and is in the process of being distributed to statutory recipients.

6.0 Environmental Services Portfolio: Cllr Jim Lister

Environmental enforcement

- 6.1 Targeted intelligence and complaint-led high profile patrolling continues across the borough in areas with high instances of dog fouling, littering and fly tipping. Education and engagement activities have taken place including using leafletting, stencilling and signage in our hot spot locations. A structured social media campaign is in place to promote both education and enforcement.

We are also supporting a number of community volunteers with equipment and advice to ensure the amazing work being delivered by residents of Allerdale can continue, and that together we can drive positive behaviours. We attended Flimby Talk and Tidy with a fabulous group of partners and children from Flimby School, their litter picking efforts made a huge difference for this community.

The Team have been engaging with local businesses in relation to Duty of Care for business waste and have delivered targeted enforcement action in priority locations. We have committed to the Keep Great Britain Tidy 'We are watching you' campaign which will deliver a new approach to the prevention of dog fouling in Allerdale.

Waste and recycling

- 6.2 Allerdale Waste Services Limited (AWSL) have been asked by their Shareholder Committee to work up one of the options identified by the consultants working on the rerouting and re-rounding project. Work has commenced changing the high-level tactical rounds into workable operation rounds which should allow us to take a number of vehicles off the road and make significant financial and environmental savings as a result.

In addition the committee asked that we work with the other councils forming the new authority to make sure our services are aligned and opportunities for efficiencies and improvements are identified.

Both AWSL and Tivoli played a big part in the successful Operation Respect event held at Westfield Housing in September.

Following the pandemic AWSL have taken the decision to reduce their reliance on agency staff and have had a successful recruitment campaign to take on more permanent staff.

AWSL have been heavily involved in the summer events in the borough and contributed particularly to the Keswick Mountain Festival, Taste of the Sea, the Lakesman festival and the Solway cycling event amongst others.

After a busy summer following the easing of restrictions, we now have 1711 trade customers on our books.

National Recycling Week took place between the 20 and 26 September. The theme for this year was 'Step It Up this Recycle Week'. This theme was chosen to rally a movement in combating the Climate Crisis. We shared social media messages along with our partners in the Cumbria Strategic Waste Partnership and a number

of staff took part in Climate Literacy training organised by Cumbria Action for Sustainability.

AWSL's annual accounts for the period up to 31 March 2021 have now been presented to the Shareholder Committee and submitted to Companies House. AWSL have now taken over responsibility for the stock control and purchase of the Council's bin stock.

The most recent contract meeting between the Council and Cumbria Waste Management took place at Hespin Wood in Carlisle where officers were able to view the processing operation as well as the plastic sorting facility and the experimental secondary sorting process which appears to be paying dividends in early testing.

Through the Cumbria Strategic Waste Partnership officers from across the county received a presentation from Suez on their Social Value modelling which helps to identify environmental, social and economic benefits from our work and the social value multiplier of every pound we spend.

The first meeting of the Waste LGR workstream took place on 4 November. The workstream will play a key role in shaping the design of the services for the two new authorities between now and May of next year. During this time, options for how services could look will be prepared for the newly elected shadow authorities to review.

Grounds and street cleansing

- 6.2 Tivoli have been busy with leaf fall and flood related issues recently across the borough. In the past quarter they have supported three beach cleans with a supply of bags and removal of waste as part of the Marine Conservation UK's annual flagship event at Harrington Sailing Club, the Oldside Robin Rigg windfarm access track/slipway and the small car park at Hutton Place, Maryport Coastal Park/ Glasson Industrial Estate.

They have also donated: compost and filled pots for the friends of Fleming Square, Maryport; two boxes of black bags to Silloth Carnival Committee for their three-day mega weekend; and litter picking equipment, PPE and bags to a local litter picking group.

Tivoli supplied seven operatives (three of which were management) and one sweeper for the Operation Respect event in September and received compliments for their work on the improvements to the Moorclose Green pitch. Their work was well received and complimented on at the Taste Cumbria events in Wigton and Cockermouth.

Tivoli have been involved in two recent 'Walkabouts' at Derwent Howe and in Aspatria where opportunities were sought to improve the environment around the Derwent Howe commercial area to enhance its economic development potential and in Aspatria to improve the street scene environment.

Tivoli provided labour free of charge for cutting and collecting areas to assist with the keep Cumbria Buzzing Campaign helping to prepare areas for them to sow wild flowers.

Pest Control

- 6.3 Options to expand the contract side of this service to increase income to the Council are being explored.

Public realm and open spaces

- 6.4 *Northside and Siddick Pond:* The landscaping contract is on hold pending resolution of various matters with the two remaining plot holders on the north section of the site.

Mote Hill, Maryport: Work has begun on implementing a range of environmental improvements, initially through the involvement of the Nature Ranger and volunteers. The first school visits have taken place as part of the project.

Central Way Underpass: This project is now virtually complete. The artwork has been installed, but some final adjustments are required.

BMX track for Workington: £5k has been approved from Cumbria County Council's Under-19s Fund towards the cost of a feasibility study/options appraisal. £5k match funding has been agreed from Allerdale Borough Council (£4k) and Workington Town Council (£1k). The Tender Brief for the study is now being prepared.

7.0 Leisure and Tourism Portfolio: Cllr Anthony Markley

Fishing Faces, Beaches Guide and Military Trail

- 7.1 A new printed leaflet promoting the Fishing Faces videos recently commissioned to highlight those involved in the fishing sector will be distributed in spring 2022. At the same time, reprints of the Cumbrian Beach Guide, featuring mainly beaches in Allerdale and the cross-border Military Trail leaflet will also be distributed. They will help the 'attract and disperse' approach to encourage visitors to seek out the less busy parts of Allerdale, especially outside the Lake District National Park.

eBike Destination Development

- 7.2 Work has been completed to establish a comprehensive online directory of cycling routes within Allerdale, included those particularly suited to electric bikes. The directory utilises the Komoot mapping system, is free to use, and is in the process of being integrated with the Visit Allerdale webpages. Routes can be instantly sent to phones and GPS devices and helps to position Allerdale at the forefront of cycling destinations within the UK. As part of the project work has also been undertaken to develop a comprehensive guide for local businesses to maximise the benefits of the growing cycling tourism market, with a series of recommendations also made to improve e-bike infrastructure and route promotion across Allerdale.

Allerdale Tourism Conference

- 7.3 Building on the successful Tourism Breakfast Briefings that have been held regularly over the last few years a Tourism Conference was scheduled for Friday 26 November to help local tourism businesses recover from the Covid pandemic. The event has been postponed until the New Year as a number of businesses expressed a wish to attend but were too busy due to the Christmas season. Key topics for the New Year event will include staff recruitment and retention, the

growing cycling tourism market in Allerdale and how to effectively use social media to grow business.

Perfect Day in Allerdale Competition

- 7.4 The Perfect Day in Allerdale competition was held for the second time in 2021 and proved as popular as the inaugural edition with entries received from all over the UK. All runners-up prizes were kindly sponsored by local tourism businesses. The winners can be viewed enjoying their visit to Allerdale here <https://youtu.be/c0CWYtG02CU>

Sports and leisure

- 7.5 Strategic Leisure have been appointed to work with the Council, the people of Keswick, and other key stakeholders to develop an idea of what leisure facilities and activities are needed and could be developed in the town going forward. That work has begun and we expect to have a draft report of the findings in January.
- 7.6 We have now completed initial engagement with stakeholders and the public around what a future leisure service could look like following the end of the current contract with GLL. Responses will be clustered and combined with sector guidance, feedback from the market and associated financial information to develop a list of options to support decision making when the time comes.

Cultural Strategy

- 7.7 Work has started on the development of a West Cumbria Cultural Strategy in partnership with Copeland BC. Creative Tourist have been appointed to help develop the strategy. Development of the strategy is being part funded by Arts Council England, and Culture Carlisle are key stakeholders (having recently done their own strategy) to ensure alignment as we transition to the new authority.

Creative People and Places bid

- 7.8 Allerdale were part of a consortium bid to the Arts Council for £825,000 for West Cumbria, submitted in June. We got through to the interview stage, and expect to be notified of the outcome on 1 December. We have secured £30,000 from Sellafield to match fund the development stage of this project if we are successful.

8.0 Customer Experience and Innovation Portfolio: Cllr Alan Pitcher

Allerdale House – New Ways of Working and Sustainable Technology

- 8.1 Our move towards agile and hybrid working arrangements has included the fit out of a number of fully equipped spaces within Allerdale House to support hot-desking and the implementation of MS Teams Rooms equipment in six meeting rooms to enable hybrid meeting facilities (two rooms equipped to support huddle groups of up to 4 people; two rooms equipped to support 6-8 people; and two rooms with facilities to enable meetings of 12+ people).

Aged monitors have been replaced with energy efficient monitors that come with in-built USB-C hubs to support the enablement of wireless keyboards, mouse etc. and provide the device with power, eliminating the need to plug in the device.

Members were invited to briefing sessions in early November to understand the new ways of working, contribute to the discussion and ensure that your requirements are included in the plans.

Applications and Artificial Intelligence

- 8.2 A new Freedom of Information system has been implemented that includes artificial intelligence capabilities to provide information from previous similar responses, reducing the amount of time staff need to undertake fulfilling these requests.

Digital Workspace

- 8.3 We have introduced a digital workspace that has the aim of improving Digital Confidence among staff by simplifying access to all applications, news, the intranet, social media services and more. The solution (internally known as Alice) is a primary tool in our move towards Zero Trust Network Architecture and is protected by conditional access and multi factor authentication. It is a key element in our transition to modern flexible and mobile working practices while ensuring that the Council's staff, data and applications are secure.

IT Security

- 8.4 Following an ICT health check – a test to ascertain weaknesses in the Council's defences – we have undertaken a number of key activities to implement further security and infrastructure improvements including upgrading our IT architecture to run Windows hybrid environment and becoming certified against the National Cyber Security Centre Cyber Essentials accreditation.

We have undertaken a phishing test to ascertain the vigilance of our staff and, when compared with last year's test, there has been a marked improvement.

ICT Working with the Community

- 8.5 ICT have provided support to both Workington Town Council and Affinity in their respective move to new premises and transition into the Pennines Credit Union organisation.

Enterprise Resource Planning system

- 8.6 The implementation of the new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system will provide integrated applications to manage the business and offer greater opportunities to transform back office functions across Finance, Payroll and HR services. The project is on schedule and budget with the design workshops, training and system configuration completed in September and data extraction and cleansing taking place during October. The first phase of testing commenced in November.

Revenues and Benefits

- 8.7 The Revenues and Benefits department continues to deliver outstanding performance across business-as-usual processes whilst also providing assistance to people through the Covid-19 self-isolation payments. In the latest performance figures from the DWP, the department is processing HB claims on an average of 11 days. This is in the top 10% of performance across the country.

The department is currently testing a digital claim system. This will ensure that customers have a smoother digital journey and improve processing times. This is expected to come on-line in January 2022.

The team has provided self-isolation payments of £500.00 each to 861 low income households. In addition, the team has assisted businesses affected by Covid-19 by delivering Restart Grants totalling £15.5 million.

Customer & Fulfilment Services

- 8.8 Following the recent restructure Customer Service and Document Management have joined together under the management of Kelly Glaister to form the Customer & Fulfilment Services team. The team focus is well and truly aimed at improving the customer experience, not only for our residents but also for our staff and partners.

Changes as a result of the restructure, and in the ways our customers contact us, have enabled us to identify opportunities to redeploy staff into new posts within the team structure to improve business processes, reducing hand-offs and improving customer satisfaction by dealing with more detailed work at the first point of contact.

Key new posts include a Resource, Training and Quality Officer to work with the Hub Leads in making sure we have the right staff resource equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to deliver high quality services in an ever-changing environment.

There is now a dedicated Hub Lead in the Fulfilment Team as we develop the range of services needed to support colleagues across the business, wherever they may be working, with their printing, scanning, indexing and administrative needs. Work is on-going to identify other tasks that can be moved across to this team to free up officer time elsewhere in the business.

As I reported in my last portfolio holder update, customer satisfaction remains high, the number of customers we have spoken to over the telephone since April is now well over 50,000 and I'm pleased to say that our average wait time has reduced from 72 seconds in my last report with the average from August to the end of October down to 50 seconds. The free customer call-back feature remains popular at busy times with over 7,000 customers taking advantage of the service so far this year.

Emergency Planning

- 8.9 The team recently carried out exercise Watershed at Carlisle Civic Centre involving many external agencies, a debrief has been arranged and our comments have been fed into that.

Colleagues also attended the Oscar Steering Group meeting on 3 November, this is the main board for Sellafeld covering the new offsite emergency plan. Allerdale BC is a consultee and the Strategic Advisor – Health, Safety and Resilience is the lead officer.

A flooding debrief for the flooding event at the end of October has been held and officers are engaging with Flood Recovery Group meetings. The emergency was officially stood down in early November, but obviously recovery is still underway including work with county council colleagues and AWSL to remove damaged

goods and contaminated Floodsax. Another 2000 Floodsax have been ordered to replenish supplies.

Terrorism and Prevent

- 8.10 Health, Safety and Resilience colleagues took part in a terrorism bridge call for the Allerdale area. The sentinel reports sent to us showing all related incidents in the UK are cascaded to SMT and Executive members.

Business Continuity

- 8.11 Work is underway to review the corporate Business Continuity Plan.

Allerdale Local Focus Hub (ALFH)

- 8.12 The ALFH are experiencing an increase in the volume of referrals, 148 referrals have been received so far in 2021 (compared to 122 for the whole of 2020). Referrals range from anti-social behaviour, neighbour disputes, noise complaints, drug issues and complex location based problems. It is great to see referrals coming in from a wide range of partners. Monthly place based newsletters are being published by Cumbria Constabulary and we encourage all residents to subscribe to stay up to date with all ALFH activity, there are almost 8,000 subscribers signed up already.

Operation Respect – the multi-agency response to fly-tipping in Allerdale has completed a series of educational events. Our partners Westfield Housing Association led on an event in the Windsor Road, Westfield area, supported by the Police, Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service, Allerdale Borough Council, Tivoli, Allerdale Waste Services, Health and Wellbeing Coaches and residents. On 2 November the ALFH coordinated the Operation Respect multi-agency enforcement day of action - partners included Cumbria Police, Allerdale Enforcement Team, Environment Agency, DVSA and DVLA. Four locations were identified across the borough for a vehicle inspection operation, which included vehicle licence offences, traffic offences including drug and drink driving, waste carrying offences and DVLA compliance. 118 vehicles were stopped and the operation has been a huge success. A joint public communications strategy has been developed highlighting the successes of the day. This operation has significantly delivered against our aim of achieving a Cleaner, Greener Allerdale.

The ALFH have worked closely with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) on the successful Safer Streets funding bid for St Michaels, the Safer Streets team have now delivered 191 Crime Prevention packs to the residents in this ward and completed over 49 home visits to complete an assessment of home security. This is absolutely amazing for our area, the Senior Manager - Community Safety and Resilience will be the day to day contact for the team supporting the delivery of the activity in the St Michaels community.

9.0 Finance and Legal Portfolio: Cllr Colin Sharpe

Assurance, Risk and Audit

- 9.1 At the last Audit Committee meeting on 25 November 2021 the quarter two progress report which included performance against the 2021/22 plan, assurance

and consultancy activities, fraud work and agreed action follow up was presented along with the revised plan.

The National Fraud Initiative (NFI) is a data matching exercise conducted by the Cabinet Office which requires annual data to support the early prevention and detection of fraud in organisations. The teams responsible for the data match work, including Audit, have worked hard to complete their matches for the October deadline. 577 cases had been processed at the time of writing this report, with an identified over payment outcome from the Revenues and Benefits matches of £11,578.42.

As part of the corporate restructure a shared Assurance Risk and Audit Manager post has been created and advertised. The post is shared with Copeland Borough Council.

Corporate health and safety

- 9.2 Covid-19 risk assessments for different venues are still being revised according to changes in government guidance. A group stress risk assessment is being done for a whole team who have been heavily involved with Covid-19 work. Two further wellbeing/stress/mental health issues are being managed and dealt with to help prevent absenteeism.

A new Health and Safety Policy has been revised and signed by the CEO, Leader and Portfolio Holder for H&S. This will be distributed to all staff and posted in all our buildings.

Statement of Accounts 2020-21

- 9.3 As a result of resourcing issues faced by the Authority's external auditors, Grant Thornton, publication of the Authority's audited statement of accounts for 2020-21 was delayed beyond the statutory target date of 30 September 2021. Following approval of the statements by the Audit Committee on 27 October and receipt of the auditor's report and opinion on the statements on 29 October, the audited statement of accounts were published on the Authority's web-site on 1 November.

No material changes were required to the Statement of Accounts as a result of the audit and the Audit Findings Report, presented to the Audit Committee on 27 October, commented favourably on the high standard to which the accounts were produced, the quality of supporting working papers and responsiveness of Finance staff in dealing with audit queries.

In addition to issuing an audit report on the statement of accounts, the Auditor is required to issue a report on the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. This work has not yet been completed and as a consequence, the Council's external auditor, has not yet issued their certificate of completion of the audit. The Auditor has indicated that they expect to complete this work and issue their Auditor's Annual Report by 31 December 2021.

Q2 Finance Report and Revised Revenue and Capital budgets – 2021-22

- 9.4 The Financial Services Team have been leading on the preparation of the Quarter 2 Finance Report and the revised revenue and capital budgets for 2021-22. The report was presented to the Executive on 24 November 2021.

Covid-19 financial monitoring and income compensation scheme

- 9.5 The financial impact of Covid-19 on the Council's finances continues to be monitored by the team, with regular government returns submitted by the required deadline. Members of the team have been assisting service managers in monitoring the use of specific Covid-19 grants and the preparation of grant claims where applicable. Since the last portfolio update, the team have submitted a claim under the government's income guarantee scheme, covering the period April to June 2021. The scheme was first introduced for the 2020-21 financial year, to compensate authorities on eligible, irrecoverable losses on sales, fees and charges income as a result of the pandemic. Government announced that the scheme would be extended into the first three months of the 2021-22 financial year.

Enterprise Resource Planning System (ERP)

- 9.6 The Finance team continue to be heavily involved in work on the implementation of the Enterprise Resource Planning System. Recent emphasis has been on the configuration of the system to meet the requirements of Allerdale Borough Council.

Legal

- 9.7 The Legal Services Team continues to support the Council in the delivery of its priorities and objectives across the board. Work continues in respect of the Oldside project, planning and building control enforcement matters and procurement. The Team also continues to assist with the larger projects in Maryport, particularly around contractual and procurement matters.

Licensing

- 9.8 The newly appointed temporary Licensing Enforcement Officer has undertaken a number of visits to premises in Keswick, Cockermouth and Workington. This resource and knowledge base has been a huge benefit to the Team and has assisted greatly in supporting the day-to-day functions as well as ensuring that the most up-to-date information is held by the Licensing Authority. Multi-agency work has begun in respect of any premises of concern and the Team is also working with others internally, particularly Environmental Health, to ensure that information is shared to achieve the best outcomes.

10.0 Delivery arrangements

- 10.1 Not applicable to this report.

11.0 Implications and Impact

11.1 Contribution to Council Strategy Priorities, Outputs and Outcomes

This is an update on Portfolio activity in line with the Council's priorities as set out in the Council Strategy 2020-2030.

11.2 Finance/Resource implications

None directly associated with this report.

- 11.3 Legal and governance implications**
None directly associated with this report.
- 11.4 Risk analysis**
Not applicable to this report.
- 11.5 Increasing satisfaction and service**
None directly associated with this report.
- 11.6 Equality impacts**
None directly associated with this report.
- 11.7 Health and Safety impacts**
None directly associated with this report.
- 11.8 Health, wellbeing and community safety impacts**
None directly associated with this report.
- 11.9 Environmental/sustainability impacts**
None directly associated with this report.
- 11.10 Other significant implications**
None.

Appendices attached to this report

Appendix number	Title of appendix
None	

Background documents available

Name of background document	Where it is available
None	

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