



*Proud of our past. Energised for our future.*

## A SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS

2016 – 2017

### TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION



- We are set to launch Copeland Pride of Place; a capital £500,000 grants scheme to revitalise our town centres and villages.
- We relaunched Whitehaven Market, in partnership with Whitehaven Town Council, with 30 brand new stalls and its own Facebook page, and a new market development officer has been appointed. The market, alongside those in Egremont and Cleator Moor, has generated £19,300 for the council this year (up from £12,500 the previous year) and the number of regular stallholders has almost doubled.
- We worked with Britain's Energy Coast on a Local Enterprise Partnership bid to the Government's Growth Deal, that secured £4.5million investment for the North Shore project in Whitehaven. We continue to work with partners towards the delivery of this transformational scheme.
- Our Townscape Heritage Initiative worked in partnership on the Whitehaven Foyer scheme, which transformed the dilapidated former YMCA building into a housing and support service for vulnerable young people, and was recently opened by HRH Prince Charles. The THI has invested in four priority buildings, and reached 156 adults and 476 children through community engagement activities.
- We completed two regeneration projects co-funded by the Copeland Community Fund – the Community Partnerships Together and Youth Regeneration – that delivered £4.5 million of funding into our communities and engaged hundreds of young people in skills and volunteering programmes.
- Through our lease arrangement with Phoenix Enterprise Centre, we have ensured community and enterprise support is available to residents supporting existing and new business through flexible office space hire and licenses.



- Work to tackle derelict and dilapidated buildings continued, with particular progress in Egremont to improve two priority buildings.

## COMMERCIALISATION

- The Beacon has gone from strength to strength, with building work on the innovative new business centre due for completion this month. Overall visitor numbers rose by 24 per cent from the previous year, with over 24,000 through the doors, and the Copeland Pass has over 1,000 members and has proved a useful tool in enticing people to the museum. The collaboration with Sellafield Ltd and our work with schools continue to run successfully, and there were a host of popular exhibitions including Invasion, Brick City Lego and a specially-commissioned exhibition on the sun, run in conjunction with UCLan, to celebrate our new fourth floor Light and Dark Gallery.
- We launched the Copeland Growth Strategy at Muncaster Castle, providing a framework for discussions with investors towards stimulating opportunities to bring forward growth.
- Whitehaven Civic Hall continues to be a well-used facility, supported by our tenants Rosehill Youth Theatre, NuGen, Inspira and Whitehaven Town Council.
- New appointments have been made to our commercial team to drive our commercialisation agenda forward, and the number of commercial contracts has increased.
- We are working on an application to become part of the Government's Business Rates Retention Pilot Scheme that could offer a significant financial boost for the borough.
- We actively supported negotiations to secure a Devolution Deal for Cumbria, and hope to further this agenda in the near future.
- We launched two rounds of The Big Switch, an energy scheme that has resulted in residents saving money on their bills.
- We hosted the New Nuclear Local Authorities Group at Summergrove Halls, bringing 15 local authorities together to discuss ideas and best practice on nuclear new-build.
- We continue to work with West Cumbria Mining and partners to secure a masterplanned approach to the development of the former Rhodia site.
- We have increased the number of trade waste customers by more than 10 per cent.



## EMPLOYMENT, SKILLS AND SOCIAL WELLBEING

- In partnership with Cumbria County Council and the Changing Places Fund, we are about to open a fully accessible new disabled changing room at Copeland Pool and Fitness Centre in Whitehaven.
- Our social inclusion programme continues, in which we are working with a host of partners to enhance the lives of vulnerable members of our communities.
  - We worked with Howgill Family Centre to launch the Pre-Birth and Beyond project, to assist children and parents, especially those from a disadvantaged background.
  - Our Housing Options Advisors prevented 218 households from becoming homeless by providing advice and support.
  - We have continued to work actively with the Department of Work and Pensions locally on Universal Credit roll-out, using partnership resources to assist residents with budgeting and digital support. Our benefits and housing team has been a core resource to assist with the roll-out and mitigate impact where possible.
  - The council has maintained its council tax discounts scheme for residents on benefits, and encouraged all new Universal Credit applicants to apply for help.
  - We have given a £25,000 grant to Phoenix Enterprise Centre in Cleator Moor, to create an employment support project with digital access in Whitehaven, Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom.
  - We have continued to provide grants to Citizens Advice Bureau, Cumbria Law Centre, Egremont Market Hall, Millom Recreation Centre, AWAZ and Copeland Disability Forum, underpinning our core activity on social inclusion and sports engagement.
- We have enjoyed a smooth transition to Greenwich Leisure Ltd for provision of our leisure contract to run Whitehaven Sports Centre, Whitehaven Pool and Fitness Centre and Cleator Moor Bowls and Sports Centre. Offering affordable access to these facilities for those on low incomes is a priority for the council.
- As a key partner on the Board and by hosting the Fund team, we supported Copeland Community Fund to hand out over £1.1 million in grants to 24 organisations.
- A Work & Skills programme has been delivered, following match-funding from Copeland Community Fund, aimed at supporting over 100 people to access training and employment. This has resulted in upskilling local people in Advice and Guidance qualifications; supporting 12 people to access employment through the Employability Fund; and engaging 41 people with three Sector Based Work Academies.
- Copeland Health and Wellbeing Forum, which the council chairs, has identified partnership action and commissioned activity to target high priority health issues, namely child and adult obesity, reducing alcohol misuse and targeting small projects to address mental ill health.
- We have been working with partners towards securing the potential to deliver Well Whitehaven in Mirehouse; a shared ambition to improve health, aspiration and learning in the area.
- We worked in partnership to facilitate and then launch the Copeland Hub at Whitehaven Police Station to enable agencies to work in one place to tackle issues including anti-social behaviour and low-level crime; a model for Cumbria.
- We have collaborated with Arup to provide detailed consultation responses to NuGen and National Grid over their major plans for the borough.



- Our Housing Technical Support Officers ensured that 99 people were able to maintain their independence through our Disabled Facilities Grants.
- We have been active partners in Campus Whitehaven, a transformational scheme to improve education provision in Whitehaven, and to give the community access to leisure and sports.
- The Mayor was invited to celebrate West Lakes Academy's 'outstanding' Ofsted report, on the back of the support we have offered the academy.
- We welcomed the announcement that St Bees School will soon reopen, and have played an active role in helping maintain its business presence during its closure.
- We have worked with the Parent Action Group at Whitehaven Academy to help mainstream its issues to raise their profile as a priority for the residents of the borough.
- We have worked with the Environment Agency, Home Group, Two Castles and Cumbria County Council to secure funding to start work later this year on the Skirting and Whangs Beck flood prevention project.
- We continue to support the Creating Careers in Cumbria employment initiative which seeks to upskill and instil confidence in those looking for work.
- The new post of Empty Homes Officer was introduced and succeeded in bringing 21 empty homes back into use, while our Housing Renewals Team has improved the condition of 47 unfit homes.
- We submitted a bid to have a Garden Village in Whitehaven, and although this was not successful, we hope to submit a further bid in future rounds.
- We saw HRH Prince Charles open Rosehill Theatre, a project Copeland Council championed when the funding bid was being secured through Britain's Energy Coast.

## STRENGTHENING THE WAY WE OPERATE

- The 'rainbow' coalition continues to work successfully, with members of political parties working together for the benefit of the borough.
- We have completed a full review of our support staff, which has resulted in a number of new permanent appointments and no compulsory redundancies, and it has dramatically reduced our dependence on consultant support. Staff who relocated to the Market Hall last year continue to thrive in their new base.
- We have used the past year to develop our technology and systems to improve customer access, both at the Market Hall and in our customer contact service.
- We ran a highly successful – and extremely high-profile – Parliamentary by-election in February, and Cumbria County Council's elections last week.

- The work to replace our website is picking up pace, with a new website planned for the end of 2017.
- We produced a balanced budget that resulted in no cuts to frontline services for the second successive year, and also included investment in frontline service including waste.
- We were highlighted by The Times newspaper as one of the top 10 councils in the country for the percentage of planning applications approved.
- The number of food premises achieving the top safety ratings of five (the highest) and four has increased, demonstrating the value of advice and risk rated inspections. We also provided information sessions and food safety coaching for premises.
- We provided a multi-agency response to complaints about licensed premises and anti-social behaviour.
- We continue to work closely with a host of partners in a wide range of industries, including NuGen, the NDA, United Utilities and Sellafield Ltd for the benefit of the borough; not least the Lake District National Park Partnership during a key time for the Partnership as it progresses its bid for World Heritage Status.
- The Waste team continued to provide a regular collection service for the 33,600 homes in the borough, amounting to 2.23 million individual collections. Our success rate for refuse is over 99 per cent of all collections on the day planned.
- The Parks and Open Spaces team has managed to maintain all but one ground maintenance contracts, despite working in an ever-increasing commercial environment.
- We have significantly improved our performance on the speed at which we determine planning applications, and 93 per cent of all planning applications have been determined within national targets over the last 12 months.
- Our Enforcement Team responded to around 900 requests for service, involving 321 incidents of fly-tipping; 100 stray dogs (of which 48 were collected and looked after by our kennelling service); 85 dog barking problems and 100 anti-social behaviour issues.
- We completed a governance review of one town and three parish councils, which resulted in alteration to boundaries in Egremont and a reduction in numbers in Seascale, Parton and Beckermest with Thornhill.
- The team at Distington Crematorium has supported over 1,000 families in Copeland and Allerdale on their 'bereavement journey'.



- We provided support to local businesses with pre-opening advice on their compliance with regulatory requirements including cleanliness and safety.
- We have been working with United Utilities to deliver its major pipeline proposal and associated developments.

- We have started work with the Boundary Commission on a governance review of the borough council, and any changes will take effect in 2019.
- We supported 56 community or voluntary clean-up events, providing equipment, bin bags and collection services.
- In Building Control, we have used a proactive approach to secure over 90 per cent of the market share in a very competitive working environment, and 100 per cent of applications have been determined within statutory timescales, resulting in a high level of customer satisfaction.
- The Mayor continues to chair the Future Opportunities for Growth meeting, which brings together a host of key players from a number of different sectors.
- We are working with award-winning housebuilders Story Homes and High Grange Homes, amongst others, to deliver quality housing within the borough.
- We inspected and protected coastal defences, and inspected becks and watercourses that run through our land to prevent flooding.
- We have signed up to a new environmental policy, which reaffirms the council's commitment to a cleaner, greener environment. A key target is to reduce Copeland's carbon footprint by five per cent by 2020.
- Our Environmental Health team investigated over 1,000 complaints, from unwanted noise to unwanted items found in food.
- The Mayor held a series of well-attended public meetings in Whitehaven, Egremont, Cleator Moor and Millom.
- We have developed a strong relationship with the Government in both Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and the Department for Communities and Local Government, and met with Sajid Javid, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, to talk about our plans and our future.

