

CABINET

Meeting date: 16 September 2010

**From: Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment
and Cabinet member for Economic Development
and Corporate Director, Environment**

CUMBRIA EU STRATEGY

PART A - RECOMMENDATION OF CABINET MEMBERS

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 *This covering report summarises the attached Cumbria EU Strategy and Action Plan for 2010-2013.*
- 1.2 *This Strategy and Action Plan have been developed to present the framework for more effective engagement with the European Union to ensure maximum benefit for Cumbria and to give direction to our activities in accordance with a supportive national policy context of a distinctive and closer relationship with the European Union to maximise benefits.*

2.0 STRATEGIC PLANNING AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 *This Strategy and Action Plan will make a significant contribution to the Council Plan by supporting delivery of a number of Council Plan themes and priority outcomes and by helping support the Community Strategy.*
- 2.2 *The EU Strategy and Action Plan have been equality impact assessed (see Appendix 3). The Strategy and Action Plan will enable stakeholders to tap into opportunities for addressing equality and diversity issues in the County and its implementation will help contribute to achieving priority outcomes in the Council Plan.*

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 *That Cabinet agrees the EU Strategy and Action Plan.*

Tim Knowles, Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment

Tony Markley, cabinet Member for Economic Development

PART B – ADVICE OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR – ENVIRONMENT

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 This EU Strategy provides strategic direction and a framework for the Council's European Union involvement, with the Action Plan (**Appendix 1**) detailing how the Strategy (**Appendix 2**) will be delivered on the ground.

4.2 The Strategy proposes the co-ordination of how we :

- Influence at an early stage agreed aspects of the draft European Union laws and policies that relate to our priority outcomes, so they better reflect the interests and needs of Cumbria. Secondly, that we interpret and disseminate EU policy for local stakeholders;
- Assist with achieving the priority outcomes of the Cumbria Community Strategy and the Council Plan by accessing finance and knowledge through European Programmes and partners that link to our priority outcomes and help to innovate services, products and increase our know-how; and
- Promote Cumbria in Europe and how we encourage the people of Cumbria to enhance their lives and be more outward-facing by sharing good practice and learning opportunities.

4.3 The Strategy outlines the benefits and scope of proposed actions and how we might prioritise our partnership and programme engagement as well as describing avenues for having our say and influencing EU policy.

4.4 It also explains the existing Europe Direct contract the Council has won with the European Commission, which assists our branding and strategic positioning as lead Cumbrian player so that we make the most of our co-ordinating role and get the best value from scarce resources and submit high quality programme applications with trusted partners. (**Appendix 2a**) and EU policy context EU2020 Strategy (**Appendix 2b**)

4.5 The policy context is in Section 4 of the Strategy and background document in **Appendix 2**. The new government has described its UK European Strategy within a broader foreign policy framework which seeks closer positive ties between the UK and the EU within a distinctive foreign policy that favours growth and an export-led economic recovery, with the EU as a Single Market economy. Government policy is to ensure the EU is stable and prosperous and collaborating on matters such as climate change. These

are policy areas of significant importance to the Council, especially in the context of developing Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) that will help co-ordinate and encourage growth in the UK.

- 4.6 A significant issue for local government is the impact assessment of potential new EU legislation and how the Council will respond and seek to influence decisions. Responses will vary from a light-touch approach in terms of research on possible consequences of future legislation to relying on the Local Government Association and the UK Government to put across our views about the cost of implementation of EU laws. A new Paper from the Local Government Association called "*Knowing me, Knowing EU*" – a guide to the impact of EU laws on Councils has recently been published. It covers procurement, landfill and energy performance and urges Councils to get on the EU radar and start having a stronger influencing role about the cost of implementation of EU regulation. Keeping a light-touch awareness of these issues has been incorporated into the Action Plan, but is not resourced for an in-depth service.
- 4.7 The Council has recently secured a transnational EU programme to develop best practice in the field of converting waste into energy, both commercial and municipal. The result of this programme of knowledge exchange will be better policy and an action plan in this important area of the sustainability agenda. The details of this programme are attached to this report as an example of an EU Programme. (See **Appendix 4**) The Council recently hosted the first study visit of this programme in Cumbria.
- 4.7 The EU Strategy also informs Members of the role of the County Councillor who was elected at national level to hold one of the four seats in the north west UK on the Committee of the Regions (COR). The Committee of the regions influences the European Commission and the European Parliament through a process of formal 'Opinions' and acts as a scrutiny function. Our Cumbrian representative sits on the Natural Resources Commission which is currently dealing with the Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) – of critical importance to the future of Cumbria's rural economy. Influencing CAP reform is a key activity in the EU Strategy Action Plan.
- 4.8 In summary, the EU Strategy is there to open more doors for the people of Cumbria – so that we can optimise the economic and community benefits for Cumbria through the Action Plan.

5.1 **Implementation**

The Strategy's Action Plan (**Appendix 1**) details the delivery. Progress on implementing the Action Plan will be reported annually to Corporate Management Team in order to review actions and results and discuss any changes to the overall direction of the Strategy and the Action Plan. The Strategy itself will be reviewed in 2013 when the current EU programmes come to an end.

- 5.2 To support the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan, a Member Development event is proposed to explain more about the European Union

opportunities, discuss detail of the Strategy and seek views on how members might wish to be involved.

- 5.3 Cabinet is asked to agree the Strategy and Action Plan and to endorse its implementation with Council's partners through the Cumbria Strategic Partnership. This will ensure Cumbria-wide ownership, especially as many of the CSP stakeholders are part of the policy context and may be potential EU programme bidders – either alone or in collaboration with the County Council.

6.0 OPTIONS

- 6.1 Cabinet may agree the Strategy and Action Plan and recommendations as presented.
- 6.2 Cabinet may agree the Strategy and Action Plan, subject to any amendments they may identify.
- 6.3 Cabinet may decide not to agree the Strategy and Action Plan but this would result in Cumbria missing out on resources and opportunities to influence crucial EU policy.

7.0 RESOURCE AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications in the development of the Strategy and Action Plan and no additional funding is being sought. However, the Strategy may involve commitments by Cumbria County Council to provide future match-funding in cash and/or time resources on a project – by project basis. This would need to be within existing budgets and only with the approval of the relevant Corporate Director.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 None identified as a direct result of agreeing the Strategy.

9.0 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The presentation of the Strategy and Action Plan provides the opportunity for the Council to maximise opportunities in the European Union for the benefit of Cumbrian stakeholders.

Given the current climate of austerity and the substantial cuts faced through the loss of Government funding, it is vital that the Council takes maximum advantage of all possible additional funding sources and the opportunity to influence policy affecting Cumbria.

Marie Fallon, Corporate Director

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Cumbria EU Strategy Action Plan

Appendix 2 Cumbria EU Strategy

Appendix 2a Europe Direct

Appendix 2b Europe2020 Strategy

Appendix 3 Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix 4 Project Initiation Document

Electoral Division(s): All

Executive Decision

Key Decision

If a Key Decision, is the proposal published in the current Forward Plan?

Is the decision exempt from call-in on grounds of urgency?

If exempt from call-in, has the agreement of the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee been sought or obtained?

Has this matter been considered by Overview and Scrutiny?
If so, give details below.

Has an environmental or sustainability impact assessment been undertaken?

Has an equality impact assessment been undertaken?

PREVIOUS RELEVANT COUNCIL OR EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

[Including Local Committees]

None applicable

CONSIDERATION BY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

Not considered by Overview and Scrutiny

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- *“Knowing me, knowing EU” LGA, July 2010*
- *“EU2020 Strategy”*
- *“England’s North-West in Europe 2003-2008 Regional Successes”, NWDA/4NW*
- *“Working with the European Union – A practical Guide to the EU” DTI*
- *Committee of the Regions (CoR) Draft Opinion “Future of the CAP after 2013”, Commission for Natural Resources, NAT 3rd May 2010*

- “The Lisbon Treaty and the Regions” Professor Nugent, Manchester University
- “The Future of Cohesion Policy – Joint Position Paper of the Dutch Central, Regional and Local Government” The Hague, June 2010

Relevant Websites

Foreign and Commonwealth Office - <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/>

Official Gateway to the European Union - http://europa.eu/index_en.htm

Europe Direct - http://ec.europa.eu/europedirect/index_en.htm

RESPONSIBLE CABINET MEMBER

Councillor Tim Knowles, Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment

Councillor Tony Markley, Cabinet Member for Economic Development

Committee of the Regions (COR) Representative

County Councillor Mary Robinson

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EU STRATEGY ACTION PLAN - APPENDIX 1

Council Theme and Outcome Area	Action	Owner	Timescale	Expected outcome of activity	Measure of success	Lead Directorate	Resources
Wealthier Policy	Establish policy context for Post-2013 Programmes and how this might impact on Cumbria - briefing Cumbrian Observatory staff about need for benchmarking and baseline data to make case for resources and shape of programmes to suit Cumbria post 2013	KH	Ongoing	Cumbrian stakeholders know outline EU policy governing programme design	Able to have influence on EU policy framework through regional and national intermediaries such as MEPs, LGA, Brussels Office and other routes	Environment	Staff time and office overheads
Wealthier Policy	Advise on establishment and development of Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and on its role and reporting arrangements.	KH	Ongoing	Cumbrian stakeholders are aware of options and opportunities	Cumbrian stakeholders maximise options and opportunities	Environment	Staff time and office overheads
Wealthier Policy	Be involved with any relevant EU policy consultations on worklessness, skills and employment around low carbon skills and jobs	KH	Ongoing	Feedback views from Cumbrian stakeholders by consultation deadlines	Consultations takes account of Cumbria's needs and profile	Environment	staff time and office overheads and EU materials as part of EC contract
Wealthier Policy	Participate in, facilitate and commission discussions on the Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) Post 2013 to support the work of the COR representative on the NAT Commission and the RDPE Programme	KH/PD	31/03/11	Where appropriate, Cumbria contributes to draft COR Opinion	Official COR 'Opinion' takes account of Cumbria's needs and profile	Environment	staff and Member time and office overheads and EU materials as part of EC contract
Policy- All Council themes	Deliver the Europe Direct service as agreed in the framework contract 2007-2013	KH	20/04/14	People in Cumbria notified about EU policy	All stakeholders feel informed	Environment	staff time and office overheads and EU materials as part of EC contract

Greener Policy	Horizon-scan and track evolving EU policy debate on waste and climate change/energy (renewable energies measures and targets, CO2 targets, Carbon Capture and Storage etc.) , co-ordinate responses to EU consultations, raise awareness amongst stakeholders of emerging EU policy and discuss potential policy impact on local government - energy and environment and brief COR rep, EU Cabinet Member, LGA, NW Brussels Office about our response;	KH/PF/DW	Ongoing	Stakeholders are notified about draft EU policy and opportunities	CCC motivation to respond to EU policy debate	Environment	staff time and office overheads and EU materials as part of EC contract
Greener Policy	Compare EU Local Government nuclear policy agenda with other EU Member States and beyond - in areas on waste, new build, decommissioning and reprocessing through networks and events	MF/TK/SK/PF/KH	Ongoing bench-marking	Policy is informed by best practice	Attendance at event in December 2010 and good practice disseminated	Environment	staff and Member time and office overheads and EU materials as part of EC contract and other funding
Better Policy	Communicate EU good practice on energy efficiency and use of water, especially in public buildings – linking in with the Council's Green Ways to Work and other activity.	PF/KH/	Ongoing	Stakeholders are notified about EU policy and opportunities	Stakeholders feel informed about EU policy and opportunities	Environment	Staff time and office overheads and EU materials as part of EC contract
Better Progs/ partners	Put in place structures that ensure engagement and undertake needs assessment to ensure the County Council to make the most of EU opportunities	Corporate Directors/ Cabinet	01/12/10	Communication channels work well; governance is clear; needs assessments and profiles up to date; CMT takes up funding opportunities	Steering Group set up; assessments up to date; number of progs applied for; no of sustainable EU partnerships	All Directorates	Staff time and office overheads and EU materials as part of EC contract
Wealthier Progs/ partners	Continue to seek out EU transnational programmes/funding for Cumbria's priority sectors e.g. Tourism, food and drink, digital and creative industries, outdoor, specialised manufacturing, energy and environmental technology; assist with partner search and technical advice on EU funding applications	KH/PF/AH	31/03/11	Stakeholders are notified about EU policy and opportunities	No of EU programmes applied for	Environment	Staff time and office overheads and EU materials as part of EC contract
Wealthier Progs/ partners	Continue to increase awareness of innovation opportunities for research and development through the 7th Framework programme and keep light-touch watching brief on 8th Framework	KH	Ongoing	Stakeholders are notified about EU programme opportunities	SMEs and academic institutions	Environment	Staff time and office overheads and EU materials as part of EC contract

Wealthier Progs/ partners	Build on existing EU networks to increase the number, quality and sustainability of transnational partnerships and information exchanges around specific issues of relevance to the Council and its stakeholders	KH/MF/DI/AH	Ongoing	Wider choice of high quality EU partnerships	Better capacity to respond quickly and confidently to EU programme calls	Environment	Staff time and office overheads and EU materials as part of EC contract
Wealthier Progs/ partners	Support any transnational project initiatives arising from the Cumbria Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) where project manager identifies need to develop knowledge and improve outcomes.	PD/KH	01/01/12	Exchange of good practice focusing on clearly identified needs for Cumbria	Cumbria RDPE has enhanced knowledge and outcomes	Environment	Staff time and office overheads and EU materials as part of EC contract
Happier Progs/ partners	Collaborate with health partners with applications to EU Health Programme 2007-2013, offering assistance and partnering on request and as appropriate.	Cumbria PCTs and Public Health + NWHBO	01/03/14	CCC as potential programme partner	Potential programme co-applicants	Environment	Staff time and office overheads and EU materials as part of EC contract
Happier Progs/ partners	Promote active aging through the EU GRUNDTVIG over 50s Programme and encourage volunteering initiatives through the 2011 EU Year of Volunteering	KH/RP/DR	24/12/11	Staff and members can utilise policy 'hook' of volunteering to promote 'Big Society' activity	Programme take-up	Environment	Staff time and office overheads and EU materials as part of EC contract
Happier Progs/ partners	Work with the Culture Cumbria on accessing EU Programmes.	KH/JG	Ongoing	Stakeholders are notified about EU programme opportunities	Programme take-up	Environment	Staff time and office overheads and EU materials as part of EC contract
Safer Progs/ partners	Assist with accessing EU Programmes, knowledge exchange and partner search to support emergency and disaster planning and risk management	KH/DH	01/03/13	Exchange of good practice and access funding	number of good practices considered	Environment	Staff time and office overheads and EU materials as part of EC contract
Greener Progs/ partners	Seek information about project funding for biodiversity protection, sustainable energy coastal environments, grid connection and transport (e.g. IEE, CIVITAS, INTERREG4B NWE & Atlantic Area)	KH/AM		CCC considers programmes	Programmes considered	Environment	Staff time and office overheads and EU materials as part of EC contract

Greener Progs/ partners	Continue effective delivery of INTERREG4C Waste to Energy Programme; create action plan in accordance with the programme and contribute to recommendations about future EU waste management and EU energy policy	PF/KH/NC	31/03/13	Complete Waste management policy action plan, contribute to EU policy development and gain profile for Cumbria	Cumbria is more effective in delivery and procurement role in waste and energy management and has better understanding of its strategic role and capacity.	Environment	Staff time and the Council's INTERREG4C budget to 2012
Better Progs/ Partners Page 162	Notify partners in Cumbria about future Calls for EU programmes; facilitate partners in Cumbria to collaborate on bids - minimising risk of duplication.	KH	Ongoing	No competing bids submitted from Cumbria to same transnational EU pot for same kind of initiative and instead Cumbrian orgs collaborate	Cumbria has best possible reputation with programme secretariats	Environment	Staff time and office overheads and EU materials as part of EC contract
Better Progs/ partners	Develop capacity in Cumbria County Council to identify suitable EU transnational programmes and partners and put in place the leadership, aligned governance and financial systems that deliver EU engagement and efficient and effective administration.	MF/TK/GS/AH/DW	01/03/11	Funding and knowledge transfer opportunities maximised; reduced risk of EC clawback	No of progs applied for; no clawback; EU partnerships developed	Environment/Resources/ Chief Executive	Staff and member time
Better Progs/ partners	Support CPD of staff and Elected Members through EU Lifelong Learning Programme applications and other opportunities from the EU Employment and Social Affairs Directorate General.	MF	01/03/11	Staff consider CPD opps via EU	No of opps taken up	Environment	Staff time and office overheads and EU materials
Better Progs/ partners	Continue to support knowledge acquisition of staff in six main libraries about Europe Direct Service delivery in their service.	KH/JG	Ongoing	Staff in libraries briefed on materials	Staff in libraries motivated and confident in helping ED service	Environment/Adult and Cultural Services	Staff time and office overheads and EU materials

Wealthier-learning/info sharing	Signpost SMEs and other organisations, to awareness-raising about EU research and development and business development opportunities, finding EU partners and EU proposal preparation through the Enterprise Europe Network and UK Trade and Investment.	KH	Ongoing	SMEs aware of opportunities	All SMEs who approach ED Centre are satisfied with signposting service	Environment	Staff time and office overheads and EU materials as part of EC contract
Wealthier-learning/info sharing	Complete delivery existing Lifelong Learning Contract 'Together We Can' and achieve contract outcomes.	KH/AH	01/03/11	All study visits completed, learning evaluation undertaken and lessons built into future applications	Completion of final reports and learning transferred	Environment	Staff time and LLL budget
Healthier-learning/info sharing	Lead in profile raising events - MEP briefings, Schools and University debates and provide EU resources through Europe Direct.	KH/DI	Ongoing	Achievement of requirement of Europe Direct Contract	People in Cumbria have their say about EU policy	Environment	Staff time and office overheads and EU materials as part of EC contract
Better-learning/info sharing	Ensure CCC staff are aware of Europe Direct so they can act as a point of referral and reduce risk of duplication of effort in researching EU policy and programmes; Ensure all Cabinet Members receive training on Cumbria's EU Strategy and the EU policy context	KH/All Corporate Directors	Ongoing	Effective use of resources during tight economic climate for public sector; maximise existing knowledge	Successful referrals and non-duplication of work internally	All Directorates	Staff time and office overheads and EU materials as part of EC contract
Greener learning/info sharing	Encourage schools to be aware of EU policies on low carbon technology through EU materials specifically targeted at young people	KH/PF	Ongoing	Achievement of requirement of Europe Direct Contract	Schools satisfied with service available	Environment	Staff time and office overheads and EU materials as part of EC contract

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Cumbria European Union Strategy

2010 - 2013

Making the most of European Engagement

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Appendix 1 - Action Plan

Appendix 2a - Europe Direct

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1. Foreword

If you ask someone in local government within Cumbria what the European Union means to them, they may know about an EU-funded regeneration project, a school exchange, a local Town Twinning or lifelong learning partnership. They may know of local companies who benefit from trade with the EU or who employ staff from EU countries.

Many public sector bodies in Cumbria - if not directly involved in - are supporting EU programmes and policy areas on matters like:

- consumer protection
- waste,
- planning,
- energy
- low carbon, procurement
- economy
- transport
- agriculture
- education, training and culture
- Information technology
- Crime
- Equality and diversity

So there are many opportunities for us to tap into and, at the same time, ensure we have a say on decisions made at an EU level that have a real and significant impact on our day to day life in a local council, or for our partners and the communities we serve. Therefore, we want to make sure that EU legislation and policy is appropriate for Cumbria and is realistic at the frontline.

We want to maximise our gains – especially now in such a time of changing economics – and we need this to be done in a co-ordinated fashion.

Cumbria's first European Strategy is our way of pulling this together. It will support the County's strategic priority outcomes and build on our engagement in EU partnerships. It aims to encourage an active and early participation in the wider policy agenda and continue our involvement with programmes and partnerships which nurture Cumbria's dynamic future within the European marketplace and support a culturally diverse landscape – in all senses of the words.

We will deliver a vision reflecting what our Cumbrian communities need and want. In the context of tight public sector resources, it's essential that all partners in Cumbria speak with a single voice and act in an integrated way.

Tim Knowles, Portfolio-holder, Environment and Transport
Marie Fallon, Corporate Director, Environment

2. Introduction

2.1 Why do we need a European Strategy?

Cumbria County Council is committed to providing the best service for the people of Cumbria. This Strategy provides direction for our engagement with the European Union to help us grasp fully the opportunities and have our say for Cumbria that being part of the EU offers and our actions are set out in an Action Plan (**Appendix 1**)

This strategy also adds value to our Europe Direct Centre status (See **Appendix 2**) - showcasing ourselves with pride as a distinctive County and enabling our interests to be taken account of, accessing funding, investment and useful programmes and contributing to good policy-making and regulation.

Cumbria can benefit from increasing its capacity, confidence, knowledge and awareness about the EU, and better internal co-ordination amongst and between partners, within Cumbria.

As we approach the new EU programming period that runs from 2013 – 2020 underpinned by high level EU strategies such as the EU 2020 Strategy and the Lisbon Treaty, Cumbria wants to take the opportunity to influence policy, the EU budget and the shape of the next 7 years of EU programmes.

The Strategy seeks to help Cumbria County Council take a more proactive and joined-up partnership approach to preparing for and then responding to, the opportunities to benefit from EU programmes and funding.

So, this first European Strategy for Cumbria will aim to achieve the following outcomes by 2013:

- Have influenced at an early stage agreed aspects of the draft European Union's laws and policies that relate to our priority outcomes, so that they better reflect the interests and needs of Cumbria; have interpreted and disseminated EU policy for local stakeholders;
- Have assisted with achieving the priority outcomes of the Cumbria Single Community Strategy and the Council Plan by accessing finance and knowledge through European Programmes and EU Partners to help to innovate services and products. It will support the development of a 'Single Voice' on Cumbria's EU priorities and help with communication and lobbying at regional, national and EU levels.

- Have promoted Cumbria in Europe and encouraged the people of Cumbria to enhance their lives and be more outward-facing by sharing good practice and accessing learning opportunities.

This strategy is aimed at people in Cumbria, staff in Cumbria County Council and partner organisations and Elected Members of all councils across the county. With extremely tight public sector resources, it is imperative that all partners in Cumbria act in an integrated and co-ordinated fashion. In order to maximise the potential economic and community benefits offered through EU initiatives and funding programmes.

2.2 Benefits of Cumbria County Council's continued involvement in the European Union activity

The advantages of Cumbria's involvement in EU Programmes and partnerships and influencing EU policy are listed below. These are benefits to the public, private, third sector and social enterprise partners – as institutional, socio-economic and citizen benefits:

1. Access new trade and export markets for Cumbrian businesses and shared services opportunities in collaboration with key Cumbrian partners;
2. Attract investment;
3. Access and develop innovation and advanced technologies;
4. Access key geographical players;
5. Opportunities for benchmarking, good practice-sharing and learning;
6. Collaborate on ideas and research and development;
7. Input into the EU regulatory framework, identifying early on areas where there could be unhelpful or costly laws and policies that don't work for Cumbria and having our say on this;
8. Increase our health and well-being profile;
9. Maximise cultural enrichment;
10. Maximise Member and workforce capacity and development – building strategic, interpersonal and project management skills;
11. The harmonising effect of some EU regulations can make trade more easy for international businesses;
12. Enable the people of Cumbria, especially our young people, to expand their minds and raise their aspirations and chances for studying, living, working and travelling in the EU and be involved in the 'social network' of Europe;
13. Increase tolerance and understanding between and within communities leading to better social cohesion and stronger community engagement;
14. The Lisbon Treaty gives more recognition to Local Government.

The EU Strategy links and helps deliver other strategies and plans – see **Section 4 'Strategic context in Cumbria for our EU Strategy'**.

2.3 Disadvantages of Cumbria County Council's continued involvement in the European Union activity

The disadvantages of Cumbria's involvement in EU Programmes and partnerships and influencing EU policy are listed below:

1. The complication of accessing some funding streams;
2. The cost of implementing some EU legislation, especially where in some cases laws are inflexible to local conditions;
3. Audits of EU Programmes are usually quite burdensome;

3. About Cumbria

An overview of Cumbria here provides a geographical, economic and social context to the EU Strategy.

3.1 Geography

Cumbria is located in the North of England and is amongst the geographically outermost locations in the European Union. The county is bound by the Irish Sea (part of the Atlantic Ocean) to the west and it borders Scotland to the north. Emerging policy thinking in the EU Institutions is to identify clusters of what are called 'macro-regions', referenced by common geographical and economic factors – such as seas or river basins they face onto - which afford both opportunities and threats to maximise and mitigate collaboratively. Cumbria also borders Northumberland to the northeast, County Durham to the east, North Yorkshire to the southeast, and Lancashire to the south. Cumbria has road and rail links which connect the county to the north, east and south. Some of these are classed as Trans European Networks (TENs).

Cumbria is a predominantly rural county and much of the county's terrain is mountainous. All of the territory in England that is over 3,000 feet above sea level is located in Cumbria, including England's highest point, Scafell Pike, which stands at 978m (3210 feet).

Cumbria is home to England's largest National Park, the Lake District National Park, which is considered to be one of the most beautiful areas of the United Kingdom and has provided inspiration to generations of artists, writers and musicians. There

are many opportunities to work with other EU National Parks. The World Heritage Site of Hadrian's Wall runs across the northernmost reaches of the county.

3.2 Local Government

Cumbria is the second largest county in England. The county is made up of six districts; Allerdale, Barrow-in-Furness, Carlisle, Copeland, Eden, and South Lakeland. Other EU countries also have tiers of government and the degree of devolution and centralisation, the number of tiers and their functions vary. The Lisbon Treaty has now enshrined more significance to Local Authorities within the EU, so this is an opportunity we must optimise. The EU decision-making process is lengthy and complex but in short, the European Commission proposes new laws and having consulted various stakeholders, these are debated, amended, adopted by the European Parliament and national ministers; New EU rules are then made into UK law, after which they are implemented by local councils and the role of this Strategy is to ensure the Council has a say in this – influencing those deciding new EU laws and policy in Brussels, Westminster and Whitehall – spotting new initiatives in the pipeline; analysing draft proposals, lobbying opinion-formers and decision-makers, briefing our Committee of the Regions member and keeping in touch with European partners.

3.3 Population

With a population of just under 500,000 Cumbria is the second least densely populated county in England. Cumbria's population is an 'ageing' population; the number and proportion of citizens within older age groups is increasing. While this trend is similar to trends seen at a regional and national level it is more exaggerated in Cumbria. Furthermore, the trend is forecast to continue into the future driven by, to a large extent, in-migration of people aged 45 and over and out-migration of younger adults. The ethnic profile of Cumbria is changing to become more representative of the rest of the UK with rapid increases in most minority ethnic groups.

Over the coming years the county will be challenged by changing demographics creating an older and more culturally diverse population. There will be an increased need to provide high quality personalised services that meet the needs of the changing demographic and a need to ensure that there is equality across the county for residents to access to these services.

3.4 Deprivation

Perhaps the biggest issue for Cumbria is tackling the gap between the most and least deprived areas. Overall Cumbria appears to be relatively affluent; overall levels of deprivation in Cumbria are relatively low and some of the county's residents live in areas where the quality of life is outstanding. As a proportion of the

EU average, Cumbria's Gross Domestic Product per head is 103.4% (2007 – latest data from Eurostat). West Cumbria is 92.2 and East Cumbria 113.6. In context, the NW region is 114.5 and UK is 134.6. However, this masks the deprivation facing specific neighborhoods and communities within the county; there are some areas of the county where deprivation is similar to that found in the most deprived inner city areas of the country. As a result, there are inequalities across the county in relation to, for example, levels of educational attainment, crime rates, life expectancy, and household income to secure EU resources, we need to continue to point to the disparities we face, as well as optimising and retaining our strengths.

3.5 Economy

Employment in Cumbria is mainly based in the manufacturing, public and tourism sectors. The workforce in Cumbria has internationally renowned skills in nuclear, naval shipbuilding and specialist engineering; expertise which the national 'Britain's Energy Coast' initiative intends to build on. Accessing professional networks across the EU in public sector policy on matters such as nuclear waste, municipal and commercial waste, socioeconomics, spatial planning, education, risk prevention, flood mitigation and many other fields can enable Cumbria to tap into policy and performance benchmarking, shared service and commercialisation opportunities for the private sector.

In the 1990s, Cumbria's growth in economic productivity lagged behind the rest of the UK, particularly in West Cumbria. However, more recent statistics have shown productivity to be improving with increasingly diverse strands of activity bringing strength to the Cumbrian economy.

From around 2002 until the onset of the recession, employment growth in Cumbria was strong. However, as a result of the global recession, this growth slowed down and eventually took a downwards turn in 2007/08. Nevertheless, although rates of unemployment have risen in Cumbria since this time, these increases have been much lower than the increases experienced at a regional and national level.

3.6 Environment and Sustainability

In March 2007 the EU's leaders endorsed an integrated approach to climate and energy policy that aims to combat climate change and increase the EU's energy security while strengthening its competitiveness. They committed Europe to transforming itself into a highly energy-efficient, low carbon economy.

To kick-start this process, the EU Heads of State and Government set a series of demanding climate and energy targets to be met by 2020. These are:

- A reduction in EU greenhouse gas emissions of at least 20% below 1990 levels
- 20% of EU energy consumption to come from renewable resources
- A 20% reduction in primary energy use compared with projected levels, to be achieved by improving energy efficiency.

Collectively they are known as the 20-20-20 targets. (There is also a proposal to go beyond the 30% target.)

In January 2008 the European Commission proposed binding legislation to implement the 20-20-20 targets. This 'climate and energy package' was agreed by the European Parliament and Council in December 2008 and became law in June 2009. Local implementation of these targets is being overseen through the Cumbria Strategic Partnership's Climate Change Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan.

3.7 Children and young people

Cumbria is home to approximately 111,200 children and young people aged between 0 and 19 years. This age group accounts for 22.4% of Cumbria's total population; which is marginally lower than regional and national proportions of 24.4% and 24% respectively. In the last 10 years the number of 0-19 year olds in Cumbria has fallen by around 4,600 (-4%). This trend is forecast to continue over the next 10 years. As is the case with many areas that are predominantly rural, one of the biggest challenges facing Cumbria is the number of young people who are leaving the county to seek opportunities, in employment and lifestyle, that they don't yet see being offered within the county. Reversing this trend is important for the future of the county. Many other geographically remote areas in the European Union face the same demographic challenges and so working with other Member States, we might find solutions together. Indeed demographic change is a major European Commission policy area, guided by the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities "The Demographic Future of Europe – From Challenge to Opportunity".

Many schools in the County are already very active in integration with other European countries as part of the school curriculum through languages and citizenship, geography and history subjects. There are four Specialist School Status for Languages and one school aiming to be an International Eco School. A good number are involved in EU transnational and international programmes such as Comenius and other British Council-funded Programmes. We therefore need to encourage schools to maintain the work they are doing in raising educational standards and in some cases doing groundbreaking work through these routes. We also need to target schools who are not currently active and may wish to be so they can access educational resources and opportunities.

3.8 Further and Higher Education

The University and College sector in Cumbria is well-versed in the advantages of being involved with EU transnational programmes and have delivered EU funded

projects, including European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), European Social Fund (ESF) , Inter-regional Co-operation, Lifelong Learning programmes. The sector also takes part in European and international networks in connection with exchanging academic research and has acted as expert assessors on the EU Research Seventh Framework Programme. The County Council continues to assist these bodies to increase their applications and take-up of research programmes where this fits with their strategic objectives.

As part of a process of capacity-building in Cumbria, the Council should continue to work alongside these partners in EU project applications and as a consultee on EU policy impacting on public services.

4. The European, national, regional and local context

Strategic Context in Cumbria for our EU Strategy

The context that underpins this strategy is set out below in terms of European, National, Regional and Local.

Finally this section refers to some best practice that was reviewed as part of developing the Strategy. (The strategy development process itself is detailed in *Section 8 - Shaping the Strategy*)

4.1 European

The Lisbon Treaty and the Europe 2020 Strategy shape the main direction of travel across all EU Member States. We need to make sure both of these work for Cumbria.

'Lisbon' enhances the democratic nature of governance and the EU2020 Strategy sharpens the vision for a social market economy:

4.1.1 The Treaty of Lisbon is an international agreement that amends the treaties governing the European Union (EU). The Lisbon Treaty was signed by the EU member states on 13 December 2007, and entered into force on 1 December 2009.

It is relevant to the Council's EU Strategy context because the Treaty aims to enhance the efficiency and democratic legitimacy of the Union and to improving the coherence of its action and our high-level objective in the EU Strategy concerns EU policy influencing via this democratic legitimacy. The UK will receive draft EU legislation, seeing to it that the principle of subsidiarity is respected. The Treaty of Lisbon allows national parliaments eight weeks to study legislative proposals made by the European Commission and decide whether to send a reasoned opinion stating why the national parliament considers it to be incompatible with the principle of subsidiarity. National parliaments may vote to have the measure reviewed. This is where Cumbria has the opportunity to have its say by lobbying. By default, the House of Commons Scrutiny role and House of Lords Select Committee will potentially be able consult local government and pass or veto what does not fit with existing UK policies.

Secondly, the Committee of the Regions now has a stronger scrutinising role under the Treaty. The North-West UK has 3 COR Representatives, including a Cumbria County Councillor – who can reflect what Cumbria wants and needs.

4.1.2 The “Europe 2020 Strategy – A Strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth” (**Appendix 3**) put forward by the Commission, sets out a vision of Europe's social market economy for the 21st century and how the EU can come out stronger from the crisis and how it can be turned into a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy delivering high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion. To deliver rapid and lasting results, stronger economic governance will be required.

The UK Representation of the European Commission agrees an annual Action Plan with the Europe Direct Centre Managers, including Cumbria, to enable citizens access resources on EU opportunities and policy and serves as another access route to the officials and staff in the EU Institutions.

4.2 National

National high-level policy statements in the UK have come from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), through the Foreign Secretary and the Europe Minister who are keen to foster more proactive engagement with the EU and its institutions through a “distinctive foreign policy”. They have outlined a UK European Policy that brings the UK closer to Europe to ensure our EU membership delivers results, the UK is attractive to inward investors looking for an educated workforce, provides stable government and a business platform from which to export to the rest of Europe and beyond.

The new coalition government is encouraging more UK people to enter the EU Institutions as a career so that the UK can increase its influence in the EU. The FCO envisage this to be a thread running across all UK government departments.

The Local Government Association's (LGA) European and International Team services the Committee of the Regions (COR) UK Delegation and meets European Policy staff from across UK Local Government. It agrees approaches to and consultation responses on EU policy and legislation which is felt to be best focused around examining draft legislation at the pre-policy stage, examining potential costs to implementation at the frontline in Local Government. Their publication “Knowing Me, Knowing EU” identifies high-risk areas of EU regulation on procurement, landfill and energy performance to exemplify what it has meant for Councils and the UK's role in influencing EU decision-making.

4.3 Regional

Regionally, the Councils will share knowledge and expertise in European Policy, programme and seeking partners where there are identified benefits in collaborating.

4.4 Cumbria

The strategic context is the Cumbria Community Strategy and Council Plan, which set out our commitment to improving the lives of local people and delivering good quality services that are responsive to local needs and expectations.

The Council Plan will :

- enable local people to have a voice in decisions that matter to them in their local neighbourhood or area;
- introduce new ways of working and decision making within localities; and
- ensure that people feel they have more opportunity to contribute to decisions made by the Council.

It will seek to ensure that our resources are focused in the best ways possible to support the delivery of services to the people of Cumbria. We will continue to drive out inefficiencies and provide value-for-money services. We will look for ways we can seamlessly develop and deliver services jointly with other organisations in order to improve outcomes for local people. It is also important to us to listen to the voice of the rural population and make sure that people in more isolated rural areas of the county have access to essential services. The enhanced role of local government in EU decision-making enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty means greater access to influence for communities in Cumbria.

There is a particular focus in the 2010 Council Plan on outcomes relating to our “Better” theme, which looks to improve the quality and effectiveness of services and ensure the Council is well placed to continue to respond to the needs of local people and make the most of new opportunities and challenges.

Access to EU partners in other Member States means we have the opportunity to benchmark and compare best practice in strategies, processes and outcomes – and raise our performance.

Looking forward, our long term vision is for Cumbria to be a place that is....

- Wealthier... with a sustainable and prosperous economy
- Healthier... where we are improving the health and well-being of adults
- Happier... where we are improving life chances and well being of children and young people
- Safer... with stronger and inclusive communities
- Greener... with a world class environmental quality and effective connections between people and places
- Better... where Council services are connected to people and places

Over the next three years the council will focus on achieving the following priority outcomes in order to achieve the long term vision:

- Local people benefit from Cumbria's prosperous economy
- People lead independent healthy lives

- People reach their full potential to learn and earn
- People are safe from harm
- The county's carbon footprint is reducing
- People enjoy living in a high quality and sustainable environment
- People move easily and safely around the county
- People have confidence that their Council delivers effective and efficient services that provide value for money
- People find Council services easy to use
- The Council has the right number of people with the skills, attitudes and behaviours to work in modern and efficient ways
- People can have a say about decisions that affect them.

Cumbria County Council's past experience in EU programmes, policy and partnerships

It is acknowledged amongst other local authorities in the North West region and amongst our European partners that Cumbria County Council has a long and successful history of positive involvement in European programmes going back some 15 years. It currently runs the Europe Direct Centre for the European Commission. (See **Appendix 2**) As such, it is well-placed to lead in opportunities for sub-regional EU activity through its broad knowledge and experience in interpreting and implementing EU policy. Where Europe Direct Centres are in place in the UK, all other county councils perform this role in their area, demonstrating their strategic leadership on European matters. No other Cumbrian organisations have this dedicated resource. Indeed, over the last 5 years, the Council has led Cumbria's involvement in at least 8 European transnational initiatives, involving over 20 Cumbrian partners and many other EU Member States. Bodies like DEFRA appreciate that Cumbria has been at the forefront of good practice in developing the LEADER approach to rural development in England and has contributed significantly in community, economic and agricultural policy development. We have used the 'LEADER' approach to maximum benefit to rural communities in Cumbria and EU and UK partners have benefited from visits to Cumbria to show our best practice.

Under the EU Programme, the UK is expected to receive upwards of £7 billion worth of EU money over seven years 2007 – 2013, which local government can access. European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) has played a hugely significant role in Cumbria for well over 15 years - helping deliver flagship economic development and regeneration projects and programmes such as the Barrow Waterfront Business Park and Whitehaven Harbour development.

Transnational EU programmes, such as the TOWER Programme enabled the County to share lessons and know-how with other Member States on food marketing, sustainability, and economic development. The Waste to Energy Programme that commenced in January 2010 is leading to exchange of efficient, effective and cutting edge practice and policy in both municipal and commercial waste as well as public engagement where Cumbria is particularly strong in showcasing its work

with schools. Waste management is a highly topical policy area where we need to exchange lessons in mitigating landfill costs so the EU partnership has benefits in terms of long-term cost efficiency and potential commercialisation and economic development policy. (see **Appendix 4**)

This exemplifies how EU programmes bring intrinsic and immediate advantages and also longer-term benefits that are less unquantifiable but potentially highly valuable for the County to remain competitive.

4.5 European, national and regional and local best practice

The UK is an influential member of key international organisations – such as North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the United Nation (UN) and the European Union (EU) and through these and other channels, the UK has strong links with many parts of the world. Leading on from membership of these bodies and its position in the world, Britain is emerging as a global hub for ideas and a primary force in the search for answers to global problems.

Some of the national best practice on EU engagement in this field comes from across the UK. However, we can also look to other Member State Local Authorities to learn lessons. For instance, Ostergotland in Sweden is extremely effective in securing EU transnational Programmes and as such has an impressive organisational 'curriculum vitae' of delivery that assures ongoing awarding of future EU funding. Those local authorities across the EU that do best in securing and managing their EU programmes, funds, policy consultation and implementation are those where all internal functions are aligned around EU programme delivery and risk management. Successful local authorities are also responsive, aligned and co-ordinated in their corporate governance and financial systems and where EU activity is seen as integral benefit – not an add-on.

In terms of Europe Direct activities, Leeds City Council makes a significant impact in their locality in terms of high profile events delivered; In Hampshire there is a Europe Direct which focuses on providing an EU law monitoring and information service for stakeholders and the general public. In terms of benchmarking the EU strategy process we might look to Dorset and Gloucestershire's EU Strategy and Sunderland's EU component within their International Strategy.

In Summary, the research into good practice elsewhere has helped us benchmark what we currently do and think about how we want to drive forward a fresh approach in a more cohesive and purposeful fashion. We are confident now that we know better now how we compare.

5. Our vision, outcomes, priorities

5.1 The vision of the EU Strategy is to “add value to Cumbria's engagement with Europe by promoting an outward-facing identity and maximising EU opportunities and funding.”

The value of building and maintaining successful relationships with the European Union is growing ever more important in a global economy and the people of Cumbria increasingly recognise the role they can play in tapping into the many opportunities. Indeed, this is not new of course – Cumbria has a shared European heritage going back for centuries: there is the legacy of the Roman Empire in Cumbria and we were settled by Scandinavians in the twelfth century and so this is a strategy to optimise more effective continuity in our place-shaping - where the European Union has merely opened up the reach and depth of European activities.

Thanks to better transport, communications and social networking, it is easier to connect and co-operate with partners, businesses, cultural and educational institutions across Europe and make our aspirations and voices heard at the forefront of European policy making. Cumbria has much experience to offer here and it is essential that the sub-region of Cumbria is in a position to maximise the opportunities offered by the many EU programmes, collaborative partnering, benchmarking, funding, sharing ideas and knowledge available from and through the EU. There is an increasing expectation across the EU and by EU Institutions themselves that Local Authorities will be real partners in the EU - not just intermediaries - so the public sector's role in the co-ordination of policy innovation around big issues will be significant.

The EU works in seven-year periods for its programmes of work. As part of this, Cumbria will want to make its case for accessing appropriate levels of EU programmes and budget allocation in the lead up to the 2014-2021 EU programme period, as well as optimising our opportunities within the current 2007-2013 Programme. We will need to build a strong case about our needs and profile so that we don't miss out in the face of strong competition from those who are far ahead of us and those who are fast catching us up. Cumbria needs a clear strategy for this work so we are efficient and avoid duplication to ensure effective governance.

As funding is only available on a competitive basis and requires evidence of effective stakeholder engagement and value for money, a robust corporate approach is essential to achieve our outcomes.

5.2 High-level Outcomes

Our desired outcomes by 2013, as previously articulated in the Introduction, are :

a.) EU Policy

Have influenced at an early stage agreed aspects of the draft European Union's laws and policies that relate to our priority outcomes, so that they better reflect

the interests and needs of Cumbria; have interpreted and disseminated EU policy for local stakeholders;

b.) EU Programmes and Partners

Have assisted with achieving the priority outcomes of the Cumbria Single Community Strategy and the Council Plan by accessing finance and knowledge through European Programmes and EU Partners to help to innovate services and products. It will support the development of a 'Single Voice' on Cumbria's EU priorities and help with communication and lobbying at regional, national and EU levels.

c.) Sharing good practice and accessing learning opportunities

Have promoted Cumbria in Europe and encouraged the people of Cumbria to enhance their lives and be more outward-facing by sharing good practice and accessing learning opportunities.

The influencing referred to above will be the European Commission and the European Parliament. The routes for doing so will vary according to the issue.

5.3 Details of the above three outcomes

The high-level outcomes are explained in detail below :

a.) EU Policy – detailed outcomes

- We have been able to represent Cumbria's interests during consultations on draft EU policies, regulatory frameworks, co-financing arrangements, structural funds and other EU programmes.
- We have strengthened Cumbria's profile in the EU Institutions and amongst other Member States and have taken every opportunity to promote Cumbria's viewpoint and interests;
- We have increased our knowledge and awareness of new thinking across the EU and stakeholders have been alerted to relevant ongoing EU policy news;
- Our Council strategies and policies have been developed in the context of relevant EU policy;
- We have locally implement EU policies that govern Local Authorities.

b.) EU Programmes and Partnerships - detailed outcomes

- There is increased capacity to develop and partner EU projects;
- We have built and maintained effective long-term partnerships between Cumbria and other Member States partners to ensure we are 'programme ready' on the 'starting blocks' when appropriate Calls for proposals and tenders come forward;
- We have acted as conduit in Cumbria for connecting Cumbrian EU project ideas to ensure efficiency, economies of scale;

- There has been sufficient participation in European and UK networks to enable us to access EU programmes, funding, and exchanging good practice;
- There has been sound facilitation and technical advice provided to transnational projects in Cumbria at the programme application, implementation and closure stages;
- Strong EU programme applications have been submitted to support the work of the Council Plan and the Cumbria Community Strategy;
- There are better EU-informed staff and Members;
- Cumbria has maximised its business survival and efficiency through EU and international engagement;
- There is greater cultural awareness and integration.

c.) Sharing good practice and accessing learning opportunities - detailed outcomes

- We have raised the profile of Cumbria internationally;
- We have become more efficient and effective by looking afresh at how we do things;
- The skills and knowledge levels of the people of Cumbria have been raised, resulting in more employable, entrepreneurial, adaptable and skilful people;
- We have enhanced Cumbria's capacity to be aware of and reach global standards, where appropriate;
- We have promoted awareness in Cumbria of choices available for where and how to live, study, travel and work through greater access to information, new experiences and the 'social network' of Europe.
- We have acted as an 'intelligence hub' about Europe to people and projects, including Council services, businesses and Cumbrian citizens;
- We have created a 'single foreign policy' - promoting Cumbria as a European Union County, showcasing what we are proud of and good at and share our achievements.

5.4 Priorities

The detailed priorities for action are articulated in the attached Action Plan in **Appendix 1**

These priorities can be summarised as:

1. Ensure all actions fit with the Council Plan and the Cumbria Strategy;
2. Ensure we have the right communication infrastructure in place to maximise EU opportunities;
3. Deliver existing EU programmes within the Council so that we are optimising existing grant-funding already in the County and maintaining beneficial partnerships;

4. Promote new EU programme opportunities, help Cumbria find funding application partners to create high quality applications;
5. Influence the European Commission and the European Parliament, through appropriate conduits, to maximise future opportunities for Cumbria on an ongoing basis and post 2013;
6. Horizon-scan for draft EU policy that we want to have our say on.

The chief actions Cumbria will need to do to turn these proposed outcomes into reality will be about visible, passionate and consistent leadership and communication with all stakeholders on the part of Elected Members, senior managers and staff and all bodies in Cumbria pulling together in co-operation and collaboration.

6. Delivering the EU Strategy

6.1 Detail of Delivery

How the strategy will be implemented is in a separate Action Plan stating what will happen and when and who will lead.

Much of Cumbria's success with EU programmes will lie in the public sector acting entrepreneurially and being enterprising, judging risk against possible gains. This may in some areas represent a significant culture change which will need the ongoing support of senior managers and Members.

6.2 Risks

In making the business case for European engagement for Cumbria we have examined what the risks are of involvement and of non-involvement. In any event, certain aspects of our strategic environment are determined by the European Union. For example, 50% of UK legislation is set in the European Parliament.

The risks for Cumbria of not taking an active part in European policy and programmes include:

1. Losing out financially - missing out on funding and investment opportunities;
2. Becoming more marginalised and peripheralised and consequently not being seen as a key player;
3. Accessing significantly fewer innovation, research and technology opportunities for the public and private sector;
4. Reduced business and market opportunities;
5. Losing out on cultural understanding, celebrating diversity and language learning opportunities;
6. Missing out on economies of scale through collaboration;
7. Missing out on having our say on draft European Union policy and legislation which we then have to implement.

The consequences of Cumbria County Council continuing to be engaged with Europe is the investment in time, communication materials and staffing and Member time, sometimes as an up-front invest-to-gain approach - but these are outweighed by the benefits and the adverse consequences of non-engagement.

If we don't have a clear strategy for Cumbria's EU engagement, we risk engaging in an inefficient and duplicating manner that is not morally or publicly acceptable in a context of rising expectations of effective governance and standards of corporate social responsibility. Ongoing and pro-active partner engagement with EU partners who are prominent and experienced in EU programmes is an essential function – identifying new programme opportunities which add value to Cumbria.

6.3 Resources

The delivery will be resourced using the actions of existing staff and Elected Members in the County Council through a combination of existing budget and EU finance applied for on a grant or competitive basis.

Most of the EU transnational Programmes require match-funding to lever in the EU resources into Cumbria. Depending on the Programme, this can be in a combination of cash or in kind. (In some instances, 'cash' can be staff time only but each programme has tight rules about the extent to which this is possible.)

The delivery of the EU Strategy will be led and managed by the European Policy Development Officer, providing a County-wide service. This will necessitate very close working relationships with stakeholders locally, nationally, with the EU Institutions, other EU Member States – either as Programme partners or on policy and

regulatory interpretation. It also involves influencing the support architecture to the UK Delegation to the Committee of the Regions through the Local Government Association. (LGA).

The County Council European function will be the first port of call for European information, researching, identifying and packaging opportunities, championing Cumbria amongst European Union Institutions and act as ambassador for other Cumbria partners, support lobbying to the European Union Institutions.

Making our case for resources will entail engagement with the Cumbria Observatory through their continued contribution to baseline data, progress and outcome measures to support actions.

The cornerstone of engagement on policy, programmes and partnering will be through the Europe Direct Cumbria service – acting as central intelligence, relaying policy, project and partnership opportunities – facilitating and consolidating strategic contracts between EU partners and Cumbria. Other related Council Services play an integral part as key partners, such as the Cumbria Intelligence Observatory, Invest in Cumbria and all policy leads in Cumbria.

6.4 Communications

It is a mandatory requirement of the Europe Direct contract with the European Commission to disseminate and communicate with people, communities and stakeholders in Cumbria under the Europe Direct brand and to maintain, protect and promote this brand for all communications activity. The brand of Europe Direct is a useful positioning statement and provides better potential for media access, liaison with MEPs and Commission officials.

The implementation of the Strategy will benefit from a European Steering Group to communicate and consider topical EU policy issues and act as a point for increased engagement with EU opportunities.

6.5 Approach to delivering the Strategy – who will be involved ?

The remit of this Strategy goes well beyond purely economic and regeneration activity. In particular we would see the Strategy having commitment and ownership across all Single Community Strategy themes and all council directorates with a clear line of sight about the channels of activity and communication between ourselves and the EU so we can fully exploit all our influencing power and access maximum opportunities across the sub-region - be this legislative, regulatory,

commercial and competitive, policy, workforce/demographic or financial. We will highlight the opportunities for Cumbrian businesses, universities, further education establishments, research institutions and the third sector to link with and learn from good practice elsewhere in the EU. The strategy also aims to help these organisations raise their own profile in the European arena and for the Cumbrian economy to seek supply-chain and research, development and technological opportunities and trade and innovation openings.

Appropriate mechanisms for participation in response to policy consultation, implementation and evaluation will also need to be determined. (including putting forward Cumbrian case studies as good practice examples where appropriate).

6.6 Selection of European Partners for Cumbria

Cumbria engagement in Europe is not limited to action with the formal EU Institutions and indeed many EU programmes can only be applied for as a consortium of EU member states applying together – with a Lead Programme Partner and other Programme Partners. This is because the programme outcomes are about sharing knowledge, research, technology, innovation, intellectual property practices, and/or policy development. Many EU Programmes may have specific parameters for partner choice according to the theme of the Programme or the notion of bringing together developed and less well developed regions. Some programmes will specify geographical limitations to where EU transnational partners come from and others may give higher scorings to applications including new EU member states and/or EU applicant countries.

It is likely that the European Commission will place even more expectation on these kinds of EU partnership bids for funding in the future so as well as judging the value of these collaborations, Cumbria will need to think about where it will proactively source its EU partners from so that it is developing effective networks in readiness for future programmes to fit our plans and objectives.

Our recently gained Waste-to-Energy EU co-operation Project with 7 other Member States through INTERREG4C, fits with the Council and partners objectives and we have also adapted our EU Lifelong Learning programme applications, such as Leonardo Da Vinci, around Council themes on culture, health, children's services, social care, environment and regeneration economic development for the benefit of Cumbria.

Below are some general principles about what we need to aim to get out future collaborations and success depends on this being right, within a clear branding identity for Cumbria.

- The partner(s) demonstrably shares Cumbria's needs and profile and/or is facing some of the same challenges or has overcome some of these challenges;

- There is added value to the County as a result of entering into the Programme and /or partnerships – furthering the priority outcomes in the Council Plan and the Cumbria Single Community Strategy;
- Has some good practice to share with Cumbria;
- Cumbria can in return showcase what it is good at;
- Specific learning opportunities can be demonstrated;
- There is a climate of trust in place that partner will deliver on programme expectations;
- Develop current comparative advantages and develop new opportunities in priority sectors.

6.7 Having Cumbria's say in the European Union

Key lines of lobbying and facilitating access include influencing European Commission officials about the latest thinking on the new generation of European programmes in the lead up to the 2014-2021 EU programming period. Another important area is to the European Parliament around specific issues of relevance to Cumbria.

The chief means to influence the European Union are through the following routes:

- The Europe Direct Cumbria contract (and its sister organisation: Enterprise Europe Network) and through this - directly to the European Commission Directorates-General and other EU Institutions;
- The Committee of the Regions 'alternate' position held by Cumbria with policy support from the European Policy Development Officer;
- The Committee of the Regions Annual Open Days every October;
- Local Government Association European and International Unit;
- MEPs and their offices;
- The Cumbria County Council Cabinet seat and the European Policy Development Officer support on North-West Regional European Partnership (NWREP);
- NWREP European Co-operation Group and Practitioners Group;
- The North-West Brussels Office;
- UK-based National Contact Points for EU Programmes;
- Communities, and Local Government Department (DCLG)
- 4North-West;
- The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) - Minister for Europe;
- Specific-issue delegations organised by Cumbria;
- The British Council;
- Influential 'think-tanks'.

The NW Brussels Office provides some services including an information service, policy awareness, some partner search, assistance with access to EU institutions and help with lobbying and influencing. Because of the unknown future of this NW

Brussels Office as part of the regional architecture, it will be important for Cumbria to create its own routes to access resources and influencing.

The Local Government Association works on councils' behalf to get the best deal possible from the EU - working closely with a full range of stakeholders in Brussels, Whitehall and Westminster to influence future proposals.

7. Performance managing and reviewing the EU Strategy

7.1 CMTis responsible for delivery of the Strategy and the outcomes will be reviewed through CMT meetings annually.

Where related actions already appear in Service Plans, monitoring of the Action Plan feeds information into Performance Plus. Where actions are new, they will either be incorporated into Performance Plus or if they are EU Programmes and contracts they will be monitored by their own EU reporting arrangements and updated to the relevant Programme Board.

7.2 Management of Strategy

Day to day responsibility for leading and managing the Strategy will belong to the European Policy Development Officer in collaboration with the Economic Development Policy Manager.

7.3 Roles

The Corporate Director, Environment will be overall responsible for the Strategy.

7.4 Elected Member Roles

Relevant Cabinet Members and the Committee of the Regions Member for Cumbria will lead the delivery of the Strategy and will be kept briefed on progress.

The Committee of the Regions (COR) Member will keep stakeholders in Cumbria and the region briefed on COR agenda items and the wider EU regional policy context impacting on Cumbria and the NW region, incorporating views sought into her official representation back to the COR meetings – particularly the Commission on Natural Resources (NAT).

7.5 Reporting

The European Strategy is primarily focused on economic and environmental policy and programming areas – however the strategy delivery does involve all Directorates and so annual reporting should go to Corporate Management Team so that the Chief Executive and the Corporate Directors can review their involvement and achievements. It will also report to Cabinet yearly as to what it has achieved through the Cabinet Member for Europe.

7.6 Review of the EU Strategy

Because the EU Strategy supports the current EU programming period and lobbying for resources for the next programming period, it will need to be reviewed in early 2013 unless a change in the business or policy environment brings that timescale forward.

8. Shaping the EU Strategy

8.1 The driver for the Strategy's originally came from the Cumbria Strategic Partnership's (CSP) Economic Theme, identifying a need for leadership and a systematic approach to be taken to our engagement with opportunities in the European Union. The County Council responded to this and commissioned the creation of an EU Strategy.

The EU strategy was therefore subsequently developed through:

1. Consultation and engagement through informal and formal routes, such as facilitated meetings and written responses;
2. Experience gained from advising on and undertaking EU project applications, project management and programme closure;
3. Discussions with the individuals and bodies below – either regarding the Strategy document directly or the identified needs and processes and desired outcomes;
4. Adoption of the Council's template and guidance for writing Strategies.

8.2 Consultation

These contacts below contributed direction and content to the Strategy document and commented on draft documents:

- Cabinet Members for Economic Development and for Environment and Transport

- Committee of the Regions Representation for the North West – Cumbria County Councillor Mary Robinson;
- Internal County Council staff in Directorates, especially the Policy Team;
- Cumbria Economic Development Officers Group (CEDOG);
- Local Government Association International and European Team;
- North West Development Agency European staff (NWDA).

The Environment Directorate Policy Directorate Management Team received and commented on the Draft EU Strategy and contributions incorporated into the document.

8.3 Research

Research while writing the Strategy has come from many sources – (see previous section on 4.5 European, national and regional and local best practice). This has enabled Cumbria to make informed choices about the shape of the Strategy and implementation. The following bodies provided useful documents and/or were available for informal email, telephone or face to face contact or just held general discussions about the nature of engagement with EU matters in Cumbria and shared their experiences:

- Third sector organisations in Cumbria;
- Centre for Regional Economic Development (CRED) University of Cumbria;
- County Councils in Worcestershire, Dorset, Cornwall, Gloucestershire, Cheshire, Lancashire and Sunderland;
- City Councils in Belfast, Leeds and Durham;
- The Scottish Executive;
- Informal discussions with EU programme National Contact Points (NCPs);
- Policy staff at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), the UK Representation and the European Commission and the UK Representation of the European Parliament; the Industry and Parliament Trust and the North-West Brussels Office, European Commission DG Social and employment Affairs;
- UK-based staff at Enterprise Europe Network (EEN);
- North-West European Partnership (Institute of Directors, Trade Unions, Universities Association)
- Various EU Partners and exchanges of experiences with leading academics in the EU Studies field.

The Strategy has also been shaped by visits to the European Parliament; meetings at the Committee of the Regions Annual Open Days on Regional Policy, held in Brussels; meetings with Members of the European Parliament, (MEPs);

9. Action Plan and Appendices

For the Action Plan which is the delivery of the Strategies priorities, please see **Appendix 1**

Appendix 2a



Europe Direct Information Centre 2007-2013

MISSION AND TASKS

The centres' mission is to promote an **informed and active European citizenship**. They are an **entry point** to the Union for the citizens, offering general EU information, referring to specialised information sources, raising awareness and promoting debate. Equally, the centres are an **outreach point** for the Commission, channelling citizens' feedback, cooperating with other active information vectors and assisting Representations with their local activities.

Their related tasks may be divided in **three pillars**:

- i) EDICs provide **information services tailored to local needs** through:
 - offering citizens information, advice, assistance and answers to queries about the European Union's legislation, policies, programmes, and funding opportunities;
 - promoting public awareness of the Europe Direct Contact Centre, Europa website, and other information networks and contact points of the European Institutions.

- ii) EDICs stimulate an informed debate of the Union's objectives, policies and programmes by carrying out **communication and awareness-raising activities** such as:
 - organising events and developing information products for the general public or specific target groups;
 - collaborating with local and national institutional stakeholders;
 - cooperating and networking with local media.

- iii) EDICs are the **Commission's partners at local level** for its initiatives, campaigns and actions throughout the Member State. They cooperate and seek synergies with other Commission networks and contact points, reporting regularly on local trends and issues of interest to the citizens.

EDICs should provide **impartial information on the European Union** and should be neither considered nor used as a channel for disseminating information

unconnected with this mission; EDICs must **inform and communicate in a neutral, factually correct and cross-party way** (F.A. Article 1.6 – Undertakings by the host structure).

Europe Direct grants are subject to **direct centralised management** by the Commission Representations in each Member State, which are supported by DG COMM Headquarters in order to ensure a coherent and standardised management of the network.

The EDIC should be **adequately signposted**, using the Europe Direct visual identity. The opening hours should be clearly announced in a visible place, together with the other contact coordinates (such as e-mail address, telephone and website).

During the **opening hours** the EDIC staff should be available to provide assistance for visitors, answer their questions and guide them in accessing EU information either via Internet or through the free EU publications available at the centre.

The services will be offered **free of charge and on a non discriminatory basis**. The EDIC should **adapt its information services** to the needs of every visitor or group. This means providing the right information products, tailored to the level of expectations, age, language, etc. It should also seek **citizens' feedback** as to the level of satisfaction with the service provided and EU issues relevant at local level.

Appendix 2b

“Europe 2020 Strategy” - A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth

The Europe 2020 strategy put forward by the Commission sets out a vision of Europe's social market economy for the 21st century. It shows how the EU can come out stronger from the crisis and how it can be turned into a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy delivering high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion. To deliver rapid and lasting results, stronger economic governance will be required.

Europe 2020 puts forward three mutually reinforcing priorities:

- a. Smart growth: developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation.
- b. Sustainable growth: promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy.
- c. Inclusive growth: fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion.

To this end, the Commission proposes the following EU headline targets to achieve by 2020:

- 75 % of the population aged 20-64 should be employed.
- 3% of the EU's GDP should be invested in R&D.
- The "20/20/20" climate/energy targets should be met (including an increase to 30% of emissions reduction if the conditions are right).
- The share of early school leavers should be under 10% and at least 40% of the younger generation should have a tertiary degree.
- 20 million fewer people should be at risk of poverty.

These targets are interrelated and critical to overall success. To ensure that each Member State tailors the Europe 2020 strategy to its particular situation, the Commission proposes that EU goals are translated into national targets and trajectories.

The Commission is putting forward seven flagship initiatives to catalyse progress under each priority theme:

1. "**Innovation Union**" to improve framework conditions and access to finance for research and innovation so as to ensure that innovative ideas can be turned into products and services that create growth and jobs.
2. "**Youth on the move**" to enhance the performance of education systems and to facilitate the entry of young people to the labour market.

3. "**A digital agenda for Europe**" to speed up the roll-out of high-speed internet and reap the benefits of a digital single market for households and firms.
4. "**Resource efficient Europe**" to help decouple economic growth from the use of resources, support the shift towards a low carbon economy, increase the use of renewable energy sources, modernise our transport sector and promote energy efficiency.
5. "**An industrial policy for the globalisation era**" to improve the business environment, notably for SMEs, and to support the development of a strong and sustainable industrial base able to compete globally.
6. "**An agenda for new skills and jobs**" to modernise labour markets and empower people by developing their skills throughout the lifecycle with a view to increase labour participation and better match labour supply and demand, including through labour mobility.
7. "**European platform against poverty**" to ensure social and territorial cohesion such that the benefits of growth and jobs are widely shared and people experiencing poverty and social exclusion are enabled to live in dignity and take an active part in society.

These seven flagship initiatives will commit both the EU and the Member States.