

LD208



Cumbria's Economic Ambition

Cumbria County Council's Role in Delivering a
Thriving Economy

Contents

- 1. Foreword**
- 2. Introduction**
- 3. The Economy of Cumbria**
- 4. National, regional and local context**
- 5. Our vision, outcomes, priorities**
- 6. Delivering the strategy**
- 7. Performance managing and reviewing the strategy**
- 8. Shaping the strategy**
- 9. Glossary and appendices**

I. Foreword

Cumbria is truly a place of great opportunity where businesses can grow and create jobs. This strategy supports the aims and ambitions of Cumbria County Council and will help us deliver against our aspiration to create a thriving economy.

At a time of increasingly scarce resources it will help us tackle the issue of reducing poverty through providing a supportive environment that enables businesses to grow and create jobs throughout Cumbria.

We know we have a fantastic environment loved by many, not least the 40 million visitors who come here annually. In order to create jobs and welcome new businesses to the area we need to look at how we can encourage entrepreneurs to recognise Cumbria as the place they want to live in, invest in and locate their business.

The M6 corridor along with the West Coast Main Line provides people and businesses in Cumbria with the opportunity to access a number of major cities including the conurbations of Manchester and Glasgow. Equally these major transport routes provide a competitive advantage, encouraging investment in our area.

We also know that for many businesses our stunning rural environment provides an ideal location and our plans for delivering superfast broadband will assist those businesses to expand in Cumbria and enable them to increase productivity and access opportunities around the world.

A key part of our plans is to ensure that our young people have the right skills to access high quality employment opportunities in Cumbria, enabling them to further their career ambitions locally. Initiatives like our apprenticeships schemes and the new Construction Skills Academy are key to us achieving this.

So, despite the challenges, this is still a very exciting time for Cumbria and I am convinced that this strategy is central to helping Cumbria not only survive but to thrive. It provides an essential focus for the Council, helping us all to build a thriving economy and create jobs for the people of Cumbria.

Councillor Tony Markley
Portfolio Holder Economy and Highways

2. Introduction

The Council Plan recognises the key role that the Council can play in supporting Cumbria's economy to thrive in these difficult times. Although businesses themselves facilitate and support most employment opportunities within our communities, to achieve maximum success, they require an environment that is supportive of and welcoming to the private sector. This document acknowledges that corporately the Council provides a range of services that support and attract business investment. The Economic Strategy will ensure that these services are delivered collaboratively and deliver real value for money for our residents and businesses in order to support the most vulnerable people in Cumbria.

The Economic Strategy will need to facilitate the growth of the business community within Cumbria and through this will support the vision, aims and aspirations held within the Council Plan. To do this will require a clear focus of our limited resources in order to support the suggested economic development priorities. One of the key priorities in the Council Plan is to encourage job creation in order to create a "thriving economy" and tackle poverty amongst our most vulnerable communities. The Strategy identifies how this will be achieved and in doing so the Council will achieve an uplift in business rate income, thereby enabling the Authority to improve the delivery of its services.

The Local Growth White Paper states that local authorities are expected to play an active role in promoting economic growth through the variety of levers it has at its disposal. Changes to the local government finance system, in particular the local retention of business rates, will incentivise local authorities to make job creation a priority. Allowing Local Authorities to retain the increase in nuclear business rates generated locally will strengthen this approach and the Government will be lobbied to agree this course of action. In addition, the New Homes Bonus as well as the introduction of Local Authority funding tools, such as Tax Increment Financing or the Community Infrastructure Levy, will result in rewards for those Authorities that actively facilitate growth.

At the heart of this work is the need to support our local communities and there is no one size fits all approach to this work. Through area planning there is recognition that each locality around the County has specific opportunities and threats to economic growth and development. Our resources and solutions will need to be tailored to individual area's needs and in order to deliver effectively, engagement with local Members and the Local Committees will be essential. Therefore the anticipated method of delivery will need to react to issues with an overarching responsibility at County, Regional and National level as well as building on the current area based support mechanisms.

3. The Economy of Cumbria

Cumbria's economy is clearly linked to wider regional, national and global economic trends. Given the scale and depth of economic problems facing economies worldwide, it is inevitable that Cumbria has also experienced economic difficulties over the last few years. To some degree, the structure of Cumbria's economy, with major employers in the defence and nuclear sectors, has provided some insulation from economic shock. However, Cumbria still faces major challenges to achieve its economic potential.

People & Communities

- A rapidly ageing population structure with 9% fewer young people and 13% more over 65s in the past decade;
- Workplace earnings lower than average in most places, 85% of the UK average overall in Cumbria;
- Above average proportions of part time and seasonal employment;
- Comparatively low rate of JSA claimants (3.2%) now rising and up 20% since 2008;
- 25% plus working age adults claiming benefits in some urban wards;
- Good educational achievements with KS2, 4 and 5 achievements on, or above, the national average;
- Comparatively low levels of young people not in education, employment or training – 4.9% in 2010 (6% nationally);
- Increasing levels of youth unemployment with rates twice that of the adult population;
- A tenth of businesses have skill gaps among their current workforce and almost a third say that availability of skilled staff is a barrier to their business.

Business & Enterprise

- 95% of Cumbrian businesses employ fewer than 20 staff;
- 20 organisations employ a quarter of the county's workforce;
- County vulnerable to decision-making in defence and energy sectors;
- Above average employment in agriculture, manufacturing, hotels/restaurants and construction but below average in business and financial services;
- Twice as many employees in Cumbria work in the advanced manufacturing & nuclear sector as nationally (9.7% v 4.9%);
- The health & social work sector is the third biggest sector, employing just under 30,000 people and contributing £654m in GVA. Employment in the sector has risen by 11% in the past 3 years, at a time when most other sectors have contracted;
- 23% of the county's workforce is employed in public sector organisations, just above the national average of 22%. Copeland is the most public sector dependant local authority in the UK with 50% of the workforce in the public sector (due to the classification of Sellafield);
- Between 2008 and 2010 employment in private sector organisations in Cumbria fell by 3.4%;
- Between 2009 and 2012 employment in local authorities in Cumbria was estimated to have fallen by 9.1% (2,100);
- Long term Gross Value Added (GVA) performance (1997-09) has been poor with Cumbria 34th out of 37 sub regions for growth. Medium term growth (2004-09) was much improved (Cumbria 6th) before dropping back most recently (2008-09) with Cumbria down to 29th out of 37;
- GVA per filled job in 2009 was only 80% of the UK, ranking Cumbria 33rd worst out of 37 sub regions;
- Share of GVA from manufacturing is nearly 23% of all GVA, double the UK average, but is falling. GVA from business services is 16% compared to 27% nationally;
- There were 40.1m visitors to Cumbria in 2011, generating £2.2bn in value and supporting 33,000 FTE posts;

- Business births per 1,000 population are below average but 3-yr survival rates are higher than average.

Infrastructure & Environment

- Housing affordability is an issue in some places with prices more than 7 times household income in Eden and South Lakeland;
- Housing supply and quality varies enormously around the county;
- Rate of new housing development slowing;
- Household growth of 4.2% (9,146 households) is predicted between 2010 and 2020;
- Increases in vacant town centre floorspace 2007-09;
- Appropriate employment land not necessarily located in areas of demand;
- Almost 4 in 10 (38%) of businesses say higher speed broadband is critical to their future business, rising to 45% of businesses within the Lake District National Park;
- Natural environment recognised as amongst the finest in the UK.
- Cumbria has over seven and a half thousand kilometres of roads, seven thousand kilometres of paths and bridleways, three thousand bus stops and many other transport facilities and infrastructure assets to maintain.

4. The national, regional and local context

The Coalition Government has fundamentally changed the economic development landscape with its intention to rebalance the economy through its emphasis on private sector led growth, through encouraging the manufacturing sector, by the creation of Local Enterprise Partnerships as part of the localism agenda and by the introduction of new, competitive funding mechanisms. This creates both challenges and opportunities for the County Council.

Over the last few years, the rate of private sector job creation has not matched the rate at which the public sector has been forced to contract resulting in increasing unemployment. This Strategy recognises that the Council not only can help to create an environment in which the private sector is able to grow, but also needs to provide support to those people who are struggling to find suitable work and are moving further away from the labour market.

The Local Growth White Paper sets out the way in which local authorities are expected to contribute to promoting economic growth. The Government acknowledges that Councils have a wide array of levers at their disposal which can support or inhibit an area's competitive advantage and businesses' ability to compete. Reform of the local government finance system, in particular the local retention of business rates, will incentivise local authorities to make job creation a priority. Other potential funding streams such as the New Homes Bonus and Tax Increment Financing, as well as the use of mechanisms such as joint ventures, investment portfolios and the Community Infrastructure Levy can help Local Authorities drive and support growth in their area.

Through the Council's leadership role, we can set out a strategic framework to encourage economic development throughout Cumbria to help deliver the priorities in our Council Plan. The Decentralisation and Localism Act recommends "power, money and knowledge is devolved to those best placed to find the best solutions to local needs". This gives us the opportunity to take the

initiative and seek innovative local solutions to unlock growth, in collaboration with key local partners.

At a European level a clearer picture is starting to emerge on what the new Cohesion Policy and 2014-2020 Structural Funds Programme will look like. ERDF activity will be targeted on low carbon, research and innovation and supporting SME's with the remaining 20% being spent on social enterprise, regeneration of deprived communities, job creation and business incubators . There will also be opportunities to establish community led local development initiatives. The regulations give scope for local authorities to be involved in the formation and delivery of sub regional programmes but will require concerted lobbying of Government to ensure localism takes precedence over national programmes.

5. Our vision and priorities

The Council Plan 2011-14 has three clear aims:

- Challenging poverty in all its forms;
- Ensuring that the most vulnerable people in our communities receive the support they need; and
- Improving the chances in life of the most disadvantaged in Cumbria.

In order to achieve the aims of the Council Plan, this Strategy has the following vision;

The Council will exploit opportunities that build on the County's strengths and natural assets, and through its leadership, will put in place the building blocks to create an inclusive and prosperous economy.

The Economic Strategy identifies five key priorities for action that can make the greatest contribution to delivering the aims of the Council Plan, which reflect the changes initiated by the Coalition and also meet the challenges highlighted earlier. With these challenges come opportunities which, if capitalised on, can help position the County as a premier business location and contribute towards our vision for Cumbria where we can exploit the county's strengths and builds on our assets and, through our leadership, put in place the building blocks to create an inclusive and prosperous economy.

These actions, which are not in any rank order, will build on Cumbria's assets and focus on the following priorities.

- **The excellent north south communications enjoyed by the main towns along the M6/West Coast Main Line corridor.**
- **West Cumbria's global reputation and expertise in nuclear and clean technologies.**
- **The County's strengths in the growing advanced manufacturing sector, particularly in submarine construction, biopharmaceuticals and LED clusters.**
- **Our world class rural landscape and strong Lake District tourism brand.**

- **Opportunities to improve Cumbria’s workforce skills through increasing apprenticeships, work-related training and through the provision offered through Cumbria’s Education Institutions.**

These Council priorities will support economic growth in Cumbria, and identify the role the Council will play in supporting a resilient and diverse economy in order to facilitate the creation of new jobs. In order to deliver on the agreed priorities, the Council will need to ensure that through its corporate policies, it creates an environment in which businesses feel welcomed and able to innovate and grow. To facilitate this, the Council has a number of key tools at its disposal. This includes its various planning tools, decisions on infrastructure provision, and the responsibility the Council has to negotiate the best possible community benefits package from major development proposals regardless of the sector of business from which they emerge.

The Council’s 5 key priorities for action are:

1. M6 Corridor

Seek out and utilise those opportunities that will support business investment and growth along the M6 corridor, around identified Strategic Employment Sites and the key centres in Carlisle, Eden and South Lakeland.

Key actions:

- 1.1 Facilitate proposals that regenerate and boost the vibrancy of those areas with the potential for growth, particularly town centres, identified in our Area Plans.**
- 1.2 Support both existing and new businesses to grow and create more high value jobs to attract more people to live and work in Cumbria.**
- 1.3 Continue to lead inward investment activity and liaise with existing businesses to facilitate future investment.**
- 1.4 In line with the Asset Management Strategy, seek where possible to use our assets to achieve optimum benefits for the economy in key locations.**
- 1.5 Ensure investment in the strategic transport network is targeted to support the Cumbrian economy and enable new developments to come forward.**

2. Nuclear and Energy Related Developments

Ensure that our local communities derive the optimum benefit from the substantial investment in the Energy /Low Carbon economy through supporting supply chain development, employment opportunities, up-skilling and maximising community benefit contributions. In addition, ensure that Cumbria is able to play a major role in meeting the UK’s energy needs providing energy security and contributing to the low carbon agenda.

Key actions:

- 2.1 Engage effectively in nuclear development and energy related programmes, and seek to influence national policy to secure optimum benefit for Cumbria.**
- 2.2 Proactively work with developers in the Energy sector to secure investment and ensure that, the maximum possible benefit is derived for our communities.**
- 2.3 Facilitate investment in the necessary infrastructure to support the growth of nuclear and energy related industries including through lobbying for further infrastructure investment.**
- 2.4 Work to ensure that local companies can benefit from the supply chain to the nuclear industry and have the necessary skills to bid for a diversified portfolio of contracts.**
- 2.5 Facilitate efforts to encourage Cumbrian businesses involved in the Low Carbon/Renewables sector to grow, innovate and access new markets.**
- 2.6 Identify and support new opportunities to generate economic benefit from sustainable natural resources and household waste.**

3. Supporting Advanced Manufacturing Opportunities

Take advantage of the Government commitment to the Astute and Successor programmes for BAE, and the significant private sector investment by GlaxoSmithKline, to increase the opportunities for local people to access high value jobs, live close to where they work and increase spend in the Barrow and Ulverston areas. Given the importance of the sector Countywide, we will work with key employers to facilitate investment and expansion throughout Cumbria.

Key actions:

- 3.1 Optimise the local benefit of the significant investment in the advanced manufacturing and pharmaceutical industry through strengthening the supply chain and encouraging diversification.**
- 3.2 Work with partners to support the promotion of the Advanced Manufacturing sector as a career to achieve workforce growth and increase high value jobs in Cumbria.**
- 3.3 Ensure the local transport networks and supporting infrastructure are suitable to support the manufacturing industries and local supply chain by securing journey time reliability improvements, reducing congestion and maintaining strategic road, rail and port links.**
- 3.4 Facilitate the development of advanced manufacturing clusters across Cumbria in line with private sector requirements.**

4. Tourism and Rural Economy

Through the Council investment in support of the tourism industry, the roll-out of Superfast Broadband and commitments as the accountable body for a number of rural programmes, encourage the growth of the rural economy of Cumbria.

Key actions:

- 4.1 Ensure that Cumbria Tourism is able to effectively provide support to the industry and optimise its contribution to economic growth across the whole of the County.**
- 4.2 Facilitate investment to improve and sustain a high quality public realm, improve access to jobs and services and enable the County to develop its offer as a world class visitor destination.**
- 4.3 Facilitate the delivery of superfast broadband to over 90% of Cumbria, and through encouraging innovation, improve the productivity and competitiveness of SMEs.**
- 4.4 Continue to secure the use of externally funded rural programmes to support the rural economy to optimise growth.**
- 4.5 Identify how the Council can work with partners to enable the Agriculture and Forestry sectors to maximise their contribution to the economy.**

5. Skills and Workforce Development

Corporately, through a number of the Council's key services, support the creation of high quality learning environments and access to opportunities such as apprenticeships, working with Community Development Centres, schools, colleges and Universities, in order to reduce poverty and help those furthest from the labour market into jobs.

Key actions:

- 5.1 In line with the Raising Participation Age Strategy, provide sufficient high quality learning provision in the right places to ensure children and young people are given the best possible opportunities to contribute to a thriving economy.**
- 5.2 Work with partners and the business community to ensure that training provision is aligned with the needs of businesses and key sectors to support job creation and economic growth.**
- 5.3 Support the expansion of and improvements to Higher, Further and Adult Education institutions to increase high quality provision that meets local economic needs and supports job creation.**

- 5.4 In line with the Council's Anti Poverty Strategy, seek to secure and support initiatives which tackle unemployment and skills deficits where there are gaps in current provision.**

6. Delivering the strategy

The Authority's ability to maximise its contribution to growing the economy can only be achieved through a whole-Council approach.

In order to accomplish this, our delivery of this strategy needs to;

- ◆ **Demonstrate Leadership & Working in Partnership**
- ◆ **Optimise the Use of Our Assets to Deliver Economic Growth**

Demonstrate Leadership and Partnership

Optimise our influence on economic growth for the County and ensure local priorities for Cumbria County Council are promoted. The Council will do this by being an active and influential member of the LEP ensuring adequate support and governance is available to drawdown future funding, lever in private sector investment and lobby for the county's interests in order to help Cumbria to compete alongside the rest of the UK.

Key actions:

- **Work with Local Committees to ensure the delivery of those priorities within the Area Plans that strengthen the economy are supported and delivered.**
- **Be an active and influential member of business related partnerships, including the LEP and wider sub-national and European partnerships.**
- **Actively influence the use of resources by Britain's Energy Coast to deliver Council priorities and ensure transport and other infrastructure investment is given appropriate priority.**
- **Play a leading role in identifying and pursuing potential funding opportunities and ensuring schemes are developed and promoted that are well placed to attract funding.**
- **Develop a standard protocol for negotiating community benefit packages associated with major developments and work with the District Council's to establish a protocol for maximising the use of the Community Infrastructure Levy**

- **Work closely with Local Planning Authorities to ensure transport planning is closely aligned with and contributes to the aspirations of Local Development Frameworks and other spatial and economic plans.**
- **Support the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector to offer employment opportunities for local people and to deliver effective services and meet the Council priorities.**
- **Provide up to date research and intelligence data on the Cumbrian economy to inform and underpin policy and funding.**
- **Influence and where necessary undertake lobbying activity on emerging local, national and global policy.**

Optimise the Use of Our Assets to Deliver Economic Growth

The Council can play a pivotal role in facilitating investment by the private sector through proactive use of council property and transport assets as well as securing opportunities for local benefit from our contracting and procurement processes. This can be supported through its various planning tools, decisions on infrastructure provision, and by providing a high-quality environment that is attractive as a place to work, invest and raise a family. As one of Cumbria's largest employers, the Council also has an important role as an exemplar of good employment practice.

Key actions:

- **In line with the Strategic Asset Management Plan, prepare business cases to ensure a proactive use of our assets to achieve optimum benefits for the economy and to build sustainable communities.**
- **Consider opportunities through mechanisms such as Joint ventures, Investment Portfolios and other emerging financial instruments to support economic growth.**
- **Identify ways in which the Council can support local SMEs to help them improve their ability to secure and deliver Council contracts.**
- **Develop a Transport Asset Management Plan to ensure that the maintenance of roads and other transport infrastructure takes further account of their importance in supporting the economy.**

In setting these priorities the Council recognise that the business community seeks a holistic package of support from the County Council to ensure the provision of an encouraging and supportive environment which will enable them to grow and develop in an approach that facilitates a business friendly environment.

Delivery in Practice

Once agreed the Strategy will be accompanied by a Delivery Plan. The Delivery Plan will outline in greater detail the actions required to implement the Strategy's priorities and summarises the likely outcomes, resources, leads and timescales. It is important to note that the Delivery Plan will be underpinned by the Unit's Equality Impact Assessment.

Whilst this is the Council's Economic Strategy, it can only be successfully delivered by aligning our efforts and resources with a range of key partners. In order to make the greatest contribution towards economic growth we will work with and seek to influence the policies and investment programmes of strategic organisations in the public and private sector.

7. Performance managing and reviewing the strategy

The Economic Strategy is a statement of the approach the whole Council will take to creating the conditions necessary for Cumbria's economy to thrive. The Delivery Plan will provide the detailed information as to the specific activities that will be undertaken as well as those teams responsible and the timescales involved. The Delivery Plan will be complemented by the Economic Development Unit's Service Plan which will further refine the actions, accountabilities, timescales and outputs.

The lifespan of the Strategy and the Delivery Plan is in line with the Council Plan to reflect the need to both plan activities and to coordinate resources effectively. Performance updates will be available on a timely basis depending on the nature of the activity. It will be important to review the content of the Strategy and Delivery Plan on an annual basis to ensure that it is still relevant. If appropriate, either document will be refreshed to continue to meet the aims and aspirations of the Council.

8. Shaping the strategy

The content of this Strategy has been developed following consultation with elected members and officers across Council directorates and through considering the way in which the priorities in the Council Plan can be delivered most effectively.

The Strategy is evidence based, utilising the latest economic data and forecasting and provides a realistic yet ambitious set of priorities that are focussed on enabling the Council to play its role in delivering economic growth. The Strategy also reflects the current thinking of the Coalition Government and thus positions the Council to respond to emerging initiatives and opportunities that can be secured to help us achieve our Economic Ambition.

As recent years have underlined, the economic and political landscape can change quickly. With this in mind, it is important that the Economic Strategy and associated Delivery Plan are live documents that are reviewed annually to ensure that the priorities remain relevant and that teams across the Council are best able to support economic growth.

9. Glossary and appendices

Appendix I – About Cumbria (to be updated)

Geography

Cumbria is located in the North West region of England. The county is bound by the Irish Sea to the west and borders Scotland to the north. 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.

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. Carlisle is the only city in the county. The largest town in the county is Barrow-in-Furness, which is between two and three times larger than the second largest town (Kendal).

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. The World Heritage Site of Hadrian's Wall runs across the northernmost reaches of the county.

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.

Deprivation

Perhaps the biggest issue for Cumbria is tackling the gap between the "best" and the "worst". Overall Cumbria appears to be relatively affluent; 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. 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.

Economy

Employment in Cumbria is mainly based in the manufacturing 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 aims to build on.

Over the last 10 years Cumbria's growth in economic productivity has 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.

Towards the beginning of the decade 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.

Children and young people

Cumbria is home to approximately 108,500 children and young people aged between 0 and 19 years (Office of National Statistics 2010). This age group accounts for 21.9% of Cumbria's total population; which is lower than regional and national proportions of 24.4% and 24% respectively.

Cumbria has 263 primary schools, 21 secondary schools (including Workington Sixth Form Centre), five special schools, and 27 academies. Attainment in Cumbria is generally similar to or slightly above the national average. In the 2010-11 School year 76% of pupils at Key Stage 2 achieved the target level of 4 or above in both English and Mathematics; this is compared to 74% of pupils at a national level. In the same year 56.6% of pupils at Key Stage 4 achieved five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C (including English and Mathematics); this is compared to 57.9% of pupils nationally.

Attendance in Cumbrian schools is equivalent to the national average. In the 2010-11 school year Cumbria had an overall pupil absence rate of 5.9%; which compared to a rate of 5.8% nationally.

In the last 10 years the number of 0-19 year olds in Cumbria has fallen by around 5200 (a fall of 4.57%). 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. It is anticipated that the establishment of Cumbria University may help to tackle this issue in the coming years.

Appendix 2 – Strategic Context for Strategies

The Council Plan sets out our commitment to improving the lives of local people and delivering good quality services that are responsive to local needs and expectations. We will enable local people to have a voice in decisions that matter to them in their local neighbourhood or area; will be introducing new ways of working and decision making within localities; and will ensure that people feel they have more opportunity to contribute to decisions made by the Council.

We 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.

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.

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

These aspirations reflect the outcomes in Sustainable Community Strategy for Cumbria – which the Council is working with partners to achieve. The aspirations we share with partners for the county is for Cumbria to be a place where we work together to energise.....

- safe, strong and inclusive communities
- health and wellbeing throughout life
- a sustainable and prosperous economy
- effective connections between people and places
- world class environmental quality