



**REPORT TO** The Redcar and Cleveland Partnership Board

**REPORT FROM** LAA Manager and Environmental Management Officer

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**TITLE** The Sustainable  
Community Strategy:  
Agreement of strategy  
outcomes and objectives

**DATE** 12<sup>th</sup> December 2007

**CATEGORY** N/A

**DECISION MAKER (S)** The Redcar and Cleveland Partnership Board

**TYPE OF DECISION**  
(Tick applicable box)

**Policy Matter**       **Budget Setting**       **In-year decision**   
**Delegated Decision**       **Information only**   
**Key Decision**       **Date in Forward Plan**

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**1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**  
To update the Partnership Board on the development of the Sustainable Community Strategy, and to ensure that the proposed outcomes and objectives reflect the issues that matter most to local people

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**2.0 ANALYSIS**

**2.1 AIMS AND DESIRED OUTCOMES**

- 2.1.1 To update the Redcar and Cleveland Partnership Board on the development of the Sustainable Community Strategy
- 2.1.2 For the Board to review the recommendations by the Councils Special Main Overview and Scrutiny Committee (SMOSC) on the Sustainable Community Strategy outcomes and objectives

2.1.3 For the Board to agree and adopt the outcomes and objectives for the Sustainable Community Strategy

## 2.2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.2.1 The Redcar and Cleveland Partnership, together with the Council has been developing the boroughs first Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) over the last 12 months, to meet its adoption deadline of December 2007. As set out in the report of September 2006 a Sustainable Community Strategy aims to 'enhance the quality of life of local communities and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in the UK through action to improve the long term economic, social and environmental well-being of the area and its inhabitants'.

2.2.2 The Redcar and Cleveland Partnership published its Community Strategy in 2004 based on a vision to make Redcar and Cleveland 'An attractive place to live, visit, work and invest'. It articulated the main priorities for the borough under six main themes and included a series of objectives to improve quality of life. The Egan Review of 'Skills for Sustainable Communities' in 2004 recommended redefining Community Strategies as *Sustainable* Community Strategies, which go much further in articulating exactly what must be delivered in order to meet the objectives set.

2.2.3 The strategy should be led by a boroughs Local Strategic Partnership, with support from the Local Authority, and should be structured around 6 main areas as follows:

- Baseline current performance
- Analysis of performance and local conditions
- Forecasting
- Action planning
- Monitoring
- Review

The strategy must be grounded in an analysis of the borough's needs, and do four things:

- i. Allow local communities to voice their needs and issues;
- ii. Co-ordinate the actions of the council, and of the public, private, voluntary and community organisations that operate locally;
- iii. Focus and shape existing and future activity of those organisations so that they effectively meet community needs and aspirations;
- iv. Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development both locally and more widely, with local goals and priorities relating, where appropriate, to regional, national and even global aims.

2.2.4 The SCS is less focussed on detailed actions but instead is a high level document that sets out the long-term vision for Redcar and Cleveland. Structured around the four themes, it articulates the Partnership priority outcomes and objectives, together with key tasks to achieve them. It also includes the performance indicators by which we will measure success. Ultimately, the Sustainable Community Strategy should not only set the strategic direction for the LSP, but also for the key service providers in the borough. Thematic Partnerships are responsible for ensuring that robust action plans are in place to show how the outcomes and objectives in the

SCS will be achieved and resources. Local service providers are also required to ensure that the SCS outcomes and objectives are reflected in their own strategic plans and strategies.

Furthermore, over last 6 months links have been with Local Development Framework process to ensure that there is consistency made between the objectives of the LDF and those of the SCS, and the LDF becomes the spatial element of the SCS.

2.2.5 The process to develop the strategy received full support from a range of bodies as part of a consultation exercise between January and March 2007 including the following:

- The Redcar and Cleveland Partnership Board approved the process in September 2006
- Presentations were given to all political groups in January 2007
- All Overview and Scrutinies were consulted in January and February 2007
- A special Overview and Scrutiny Sub Group of 8 Councillors was formed and met prior to May 2007 in order to steer the development of the strategy

2.2.6 The timetable for developing the strategy was also agreed via this process and was as follows:

- June 2007

Agree alignment of priority setting of SCS and Corporate Plan

- August – September 2007

Develop draft delivery plans in Thematic Partnerships

- October – November 2007

Public consultation on priorities

- December 2007

Approve strategy through Scrutiny

- 21<sup>st</sup> December

LSP adopt outcomes and objectives of SCS

2.2.7 Phase 2 of SCS development will run from January to March 2008 and will require all partners including the Council to identify the actions that are required in order to deliver the SCS outcomes and objectives. This stage is being developed as a second phase to allow all organisations time to digest the outcome of the Area Based Grant announcement, expected in December 2007 before committing to measurable actions.

## **2.3 STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT**

2.3.1 Baseline data, analysis and forecasting

The first stage in the development of the strategy was to baseline data and analyse performance and local conditions. This work has been carried out in 2007 and the

information is contained in the boroughs first set of Area Profiles, which are in effect the socio-economic evidence base for identifying priorities.

The Area Profiles allow projections and analysis to be made in order to understand trends in performance under current conditions.

### 2.3.2 Action planning – developing the strategy’s delivery plans

In August 2007, the LSP Board agreed to a process which aimed to integrate the strategic planning processes for the Sustainable Community Strategy, agreeing the new Local Area Agreement, and for identifying priority work areas for inclusion in the Council’s Corporate Plan, and developing a number of key LSP Strategies (e.g. Health and Well Being Strategy; Economic Regeneration Strategy; Children and Young People’s Plan). This integration of processes avoids duplication, ensuring that the final documents are consistent, and clearly demonstrate a ‘golden thread’ running from the Sustainable Community Strategy, through Thematic Partnership Delivery Plans and Strategies and key organisational plans, down to specific action plans.

### 2.3.3 Delivery plan content

During August and September 2007, Thematic Partnerships across the LSP have agreed the outcomes, priority objectives, and begun developing key tasks through comprehensive stakeholder engagement. This process has not started from scratch as the Partnership has already carried out a great deal of work to identify its priorities for improvement, for example through the development of the Local Area Agreement and the review of the Children and Young People’s Plan. This forms a solid basis upon which the development of the SCS can be based.

Concurrently, we have assessed a range of LSP strategies, delivery plans, and the LAA to identify what we understand to be the Outcomes, Priority Objectives and Key Tasks within each of the four themes. These have been included in the delivery plans and Thematic Partnerships have considered them, challenged them, made amendments that they see fit, and agreed a definitive list to be included in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

They are currently considering how success will be measured, and identifying the relevant performance indicators from the LAA outcomes framework. This is being done as part of the process for developing other key strategies/plans.

## 2.4 MEMBER AND SCRUTINY INVOLVEMENT

### 2.4.1 Elected member involvement

During September and October 2007, work was undertaken with Elected Members to ensure that their priorities were reflected in the SCS via member development sessions held on 28<sup>th</sup> September and 3<sup>rd</sup> October, and the invitation to all members to the LSP conference on 12<sup>th</sup> October. Draft plans were circulated via email and hard copies distributed in October to ensure full involvement from members.

## 2.4.2 Scrutiny involvement

Consultations then took place with Area Management Overview and Scrutiny (26<sup>th</sup> September), Children's Overview and Scrutiny (16<sup>th</sup> October), Health Overview and Scrutiny (23<sup>rd</sup> October) and Main Overview and Scrutiny (29<sup>th</sup> October).

The excellent feedback and input via this process helped shape the strategy's outcomes and objectives in four delivery plans which exist based on the following policy blocks:

- Children and Young People
- Healthier Communities and Older People
- Safer Stronger Communities
- Sustainable Communities

Following the involvement of all scrutiny committees, a Special Main Overview and Scrutiny Committee was held on 5<sup>th</sup> December to specifically examine the work undertake to arrive at the outcomes and objectives and to make recommendations to this Board on the appropriateness of these for adoption. This highly successful approach has ensured a thorough and fir for purpose set of outcomes and objectives

Appendix 2 contains the recommendations from SMOSC.

## 2.4.3 Final draft of outcomes and objectives

The outcomes and objectives are attached as Appendix 1 and this is the critical aspect of the SCS. It articulates what the boroughs priority outcomes and objectives are and thus allows all partners to begin developing their key tasks to deliver the objectives of the strategy.

## 2.5 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

2.5.1 Throughout November, the Partnership, together with the Council undertook what is the most comprehensive consultation exercises to have taken place in the borough. The aim was to ensure that the draft outcomes and objectives were right for the borough, our neighbourhoods and our citizens. We also wanted to find out which should be the key priorities. Various consultation methodologies were used to ensure that the process was as inclusive as possible, and the different ways to take part were advertised extensively via the 'Progress, People, Pride' council magazine, the Redcar & Cleveland website, the Partnership website and through press releases. Several additional events were added to the programme as a direct result of comments made by elected members and other stakeholders. In total, we anticipate that over 1500 citizens from all backgrounds will have given us their views by the completion of this exercise.

2.5.2 The programme of consultation has included:

- a) 43 open events were held where residents were asked to fill in an interviewer-assisted questionnaire. These events were held:
  - during workdays and weekends,
  - from early in the morning until late in the evening,

- across all wards in the Borough,
- in Libraries, the One Stop Shop Bus, Area Committees, Leisure Centres and supermarkets

343 residents have given us their views at these events.

- b) 8 closed focus groups for hard to reach groups were held (e.g. people with disabilities, young people, Black and Minority Ethnic groups etc.). This approach provided us with in-depth qualitative data on areas that are important to these particular groups.
- c) An online questionnaire was hosted on the Partnership website. The link to this survey was sent to all employees in Redcar & Cleveland Council and 92 responses have been received up to now.
- d) The consultation questions were also included in the Winter 07/08 Viewfinder Survey, which consults with more than 1500 Citizens' Panel members, residents of the Borough. We are anticipating approximately 1,100 responses from this method.
- e) Interested parties were also able to give their views via email, letter, or a self-completion postal questionnaire (with free-post envelope).

A full report on consultation is attached as Appendix 3

## **2.6 SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL**

In line with government guidance on plans and policies with a spatial element, a Sustainability Appraisal was undertaken on the outcomes and objectives of the SCS, by consultants Faber Maunsell, with the main work undertaken at a multi agency workshop on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2007.

The Sustainability Appraisal report is provided as Appendix 4

<b>3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS</b>
<p>3.1 That the Board note the progress in developing the Sustainable Community Strategy</p> <p>3.2 That the Board note the recommendations by SMOSC on the outcomes and objectives</p> <p>3.3 That the Partnership Board adopt the set of outcomes and objectives to form the basis of continued work on developing the strategy delivery plans</p>

## **4.0 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

### **4.1 PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

Measures of success will be identified for each priority objective. These will become the performance management framework for the Sustainable Community Strategy. 35 of these targets (plus 17 statutory education and early years targets) will be identified as key improvement targets to be included within and monitored through the Local Area Agreement.

#### **4.2 TIMESCALE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

Work will continue with Partners on developing delivery plans and actions to implement the agreed objectives in January 2008, with a proposed date of full adoption of the SCS at the Board meeting on 28 March 2008. It is proposed that the SCS would become active from 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2008 following endorsement by Full Council.

#### **4.3 RESOURCE APPRAISAL**

No additional resource requirements to develop the Sustainable Community Strategy. However, the Strategy will influence the future priorities and resource allocation of the council and partners.

#### **4.4 COMPLIANCE WITH LEGISLATION & REGULATIONS**

	Please tick
Human Rights Act 1998 considered	✓
Crime and Disorder Act 1998 considered	✓
Children Act 2004 considered	✓
Diversity and Equalities Impact Assessment completed	✓

#### **4.5 RISK**

Following the involvement of the Councils scrutiny function we have adopted government guidance, and perhaps more importantly, ensured that the SCS outcomes and objectives are fit for purpose and an accurate reflection of local need.

If these are not adopted, there will be a significant delay in completing the SCS, which could significantly impact upon Redcar and Cleveland's Corporate Area Assessment.

#### **5.0 APPENDICES**

**Appendix 1 – Sustainable Community Strategy outcomes and objectives**

**Appendix 2 – Special Main Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Recommendations report**

**Appendix 3 – Report on consultation**

**Appendix 4 – Sustainability Appraisal Report**

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#### **6.0 INFORMATION SOURCES**

Communities and Local Government (May 2006) 'Preparing Community Strategies: Government Guidance to Local Authorities'.

**Jo Waldmeyer**  
**Policy and Research Manager**

**Paul Taylor**  
**Environmental Management Officer**



**REPORT TO** Redcar and Cleveland Partnership Board

**TITLE** Response to consultation on the Sustainable Community Strategy: Agreement of strategy outcomes and objectives and recommendation to the Redcar and Cleveland Partnership Board.

**REPORT FROM** Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council Special Main Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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**DATE** 6 December 2007  
**CATEGORY** N/A

**DECISION MAKER (S)** N/A

**TYPE OF DECISION**  
*(Tick applicable box)*

**Policy Matter**       **Budget Setting**       **In-year decision**   
**Delegated Decision**       **Information only**   
**Key Decision**       **Date in Forward Plan**

**3.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report summarises the views of Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council's Main Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to the development of the Sustainable Community Strategy outcomes and objectives and makes recommendations to the Redcar and Cleveland Partnership Board.

The issues were considered at a Special meeting of the Main Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Wednesday 5 December 2007 to which all Members of the Council were invited.

**2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

**2.1** A special meeting of Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council's Main Overview and Scrutiny Committee took place on Wednesday 5 December 2007 to hear information relating to the development of the boroughs first Sustainable Community Strategy. Scrutiny Members were presented with information that also outlined the extensive consultation, which had taken place throughout November.

**2.2** Scrutiny Members extensively scrutinised the Sustainable Community Strategy outcomes and objectives. Scrutiny Members were in general fully supportive of the outcomes and objectives put forward and felt that the extensive consultation had

been in general a success. It was felt that the following minor points should be highlighted to the Redcar and Cleveland Partnership Board and taken into consideration when finalising the outcomes and objectives and also taken into account when formulating the delivery plan.

- 2.3 In relation to **Children and Young People – Outcome: Be Healthy**; Scrutiny Elected Members felt that objective ‘To reduce the effects of substance misuse among children and young people’ should, whilst still make reference to substance misuse, explicitly state that this includes both drug and alcohol abuse.
- 2.4 In relation to **Children and Young People – Outcome: Make a positive Contribution**; Scrutiny Elected Members felt that objective ‘Encourage children and young people to engage in law abiding and positive behaviour in and out of school’ should be more positive and read ‘To *ensure* children...’
- 2.5 In relation to **Safer and Stronger Communities – Outcome: A Safer Community**; Scrutiny Elected Members felt that objective ‘To tackle the antisocial behaviour issues of greatest importance in each neighbourhood’ should be more active and read ‘To *reduce* the antisocial ...’
- 2.6 In relation to **Safer and Stronger Communities – Outcome: More Cohesive, empowered and active communities**; Scrutiny Elected Members felt that objective ‘To strengthen the voluntary and community sector’ was an important objective and should be highlighted. It was also put forward that these two very distinct and separate roles of the voluntary and community sector should be enhanced.
- 2.7 In relation to **Healthier Communities – Outcome: Healthier and Longer Lives for all**; Scrutiny Elected Members were pleased to see that objective ‘To help willing individuals desist from harmful drug or substance use’ was included following recommendation of such from the Health and Social Well Being Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.8 On a more general point Scrutiny Elected Members felt that it would be crucial for any parallel strategies of the council and partners to reflect such identified priorities.

#### **4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Redcar and Cleveland Partnership Board note the comments made by the Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council Main Overview and Scrutiny Committee and incorporates such comments into the finalised Sustainable Community Strategy outcomes and objectives.

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Kevin Brown  
Communities Manager

**REPORT TO THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE REDCAR & CLEVELAND PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING ON 21<sup>st</sup> December 2007**

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CAPACITY BUILDING PLAN – UPDATE REPORT**

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

The purpose of the report is to update Members on progress made in implementing the community engagement capacity building plan work plan since May 2007.

The report also outlines how the Government's community empowerment agenda has developed in the meantime, highlights the implications of this agenda, and makes proposals to strengthen community capacity building and empowerment activities.

**2. AIMS AND DESIRED OUTCOMES**

The aim of the report is for Members to agree a number of proposals to support an effective response to the Government's community empowerment agenda.

**3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

**3.1 Community engagement capacity building plan update**

3.1.1 Members will recall that they approved the Community Engagement Capacity Building Plan (CECBP) when they met on 25 May 2007. That plan proposed five work streams to be developed further as part of a four-to-five month work programme to mid-October 2007.

3.1.2 The work programme consisted of the following: -

- 1) The undertaking of an engagement resource review in order to secure the efficient and effective use of partnership engagement resources
- 2) The establishment of community structures for effective engagement to support effective community voices across geographic communities and communities of interest
- 3) The establishment of ways of managing data that support communities and service providers in developing area profiles and local neighbourhood plans
- 4) The establishment of proposals for the enhancement of coordination and joint working on engagement activities across all partnership organisations
- 5) The establishment of innovative engagement best practice tools and methods across the Borough to support innovative engagement work
- 6) Capacity Building Team continues to be responsible for the overall coordination of the work

3.1.3 Members approved a budget of £9,150 for the implementation of the work programme.

3.1.4 This report provides an update on the planning and implementation activities undertaken since then in line with the work programme agreed by Members.

**3.2 Engagement resource review work stream: update**

3.2.1 Following a review of the Redcar & Cleveland Partnership Community Engagement Coordination Group and taking account the development of the CECBP it has been agreed that the group should be strengthened and that a strategic overarching approach to community engagement be developed across the LSP. The group are currently:-

- Undertaking a review of the resources currently being invested in engagement activities including a commitment from organisations to commit people to coordinated consultation practice and resources.

### 3.3 Community structures for engagement work stream: update

3.3.1 Six geographic workshops were organised together with a seventh, communities of interest workshop. Fifty-five representatives from 38 voluntary and community organisations took part.

3.3.2 The workshops highlighted the great range of activity – often taking the form of informal public service – being delivered by voluntary and community organisations, including a great deal of engagement activity with their own communities, as well as joint working with public services and responding to existing engagement opportunities.

3.3.3 Attendees were motivated to continue to respond positively to engagement opportunities, and broadly supportive of the idea of collaborating with other community organisations in their area to establish community-led structures for engagement. However, there was a clear concern on the part of attendees about the capacity of theirs and other community organisations to respond without significant additional support.

3.3.4 The main issues highlighted are summarised below: -

- Supportive of community structure for engagement, but any proposed structure must be inclusive
- Supportive of neighbourhood action planning, but process needs to be resourced
- Administrative and capacity building support required to enable voluntary and community sectors to take up engagement opportunities
- Individual organisations will want to retain independence; need for further consultation with group members
- Proposed structures need to deliver action, rather than being “talking-shop”
- Independent campaigning role of sector not jeopardised
- Separate perspectives of different communities of interest need to be accommodated
- Equal partnership only if engagement process is two-way and communities not passive participants, but are involved in setting agenda, actively raising issues themselves with public services, and involved in strategic planning processes

### 3.4 Managing data work stream: update

3.4.1 The managing data workstream is being co-ordinated by the LSP Data Management Group (formerly Performance Management Group) and their work programme includes all of the area of work identified within the CECBP. The Borough’s first Area Profile has been published and is updated regularly (available from [www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk/statistics](http://www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk/statistics)), and a set of ward profiles are currently being developed. Work around mapping data and data sharing is on-going.

### 3.5 Coordination and joint working on engagement activities work stream: update

3.5.1 Through the Community Engagement Coordination Group a commitment has been made from partners to communicate, coordinate and to collaborate where appropriate all community engagement activity. The group are currently exploring -:

- Establishing a revised Terms of Reference
- Developing proposals to enhance the coordination of community engagement activities including a calendar of consultations both with service providers and with community organisations.

### 3.6 Innovative best practice work stream: update

- 3.6.1 A key tool in developing and sharing innovative best practice and joint working on community engagement will be a new 'Community Engagement Portal' - a website that can be accessed from the Partnership website as well as from the sites of individual organisations. The Portal will include a section for residents and other stakeholders, and a section for researchers/members of staff who are involved in engagement. The residents section will include a consultation database, a calendar of consultation and details of how to get involved. There will also be the facility for people to complete on-line consultation. The researchers section will include detailed guidance on consultation, and a chat room/forum to enable the sharing of ideas and good practice. An estimate for developing this site has been provided, and is £5,000.

## **4.0 Further developments In the Government's community empowerment agenda**

- 4.1 Since Members approved the Community Engagement Capacity Building Plan in May, the Government's drive to place community empowerment at the heart of its improvement agenda has gathered pace, and in future will become still broader and deeper in scope.
- 4.2 The Government has published a number of reports and action plans to further develop this agenda. Of particular importance are: *The Community Development Challenge*, the *Quirk Review*, the Commission on Integration and Cohesion's *Our Shared Future* report, the *Third Sector Review*, and, most recently, *An Action Plan for Community Empowerment*.
- 4.3 A new *Public Service Agreement* focussing on community empowerment, cohesion and the third sector has been published. Local authorities and their partners are being encouraged to prioritise empowerment through Local Area Agreements, and evidence of empowerment will form a crucial part of Comprehensive Area Assessments.
- 4.4 Further piloting of and guidance on the community empowerment provisions of the *Local Government White Paper* is scheduled in 2008. The *National Improvement and Efficiency Plan* to be published in March 2008 will put community empowerment in the mainstream of the Government's public services improvement agenda, with local government's responsibility for empowering local communities likely to be established as part of a concordant between central and local government.
- 4.5 This policy development drive builds on the Government's earlier work developing the community empowerment agenda through its *Firm Foundations: the Government's Framework for Community Capacity Building*, published in December 2004.
- 4.6 The key messages and themes emerging from the Government's community empowerment agenda are: -
- 4.7 Central role of a strong and healthy third sector to the Government's work to build strong, active and connected communities, and transform public services**
- 4.7.1 Central to the Government's thinking on stronger communities is the idea that strong and vibrant communities have the capacity to bring people together to deal with their common concerns by forming and sustaining their own community organisations.
- 4.7.2 The local third sector has a crucial role to play in helping local people to make use of the White Paper's community empowerment provisions, a critical contribution to make to helping to build cohesive communities, and should be a key partner of particularly local government in place-shaping, with third sector representation well embedded into local decision-making areas. The third sector plays multiple roles in transforming public services,

not just by delivering user focussed services, but also as a partner in innovation, in the design of services, and as campaigners for change in the way services are delivered.

#### **4.8 Crucial role of community development practice in advancing the Government's community empowerment agenda**

4.8.1 The *Our Shared Future* report is only the latest Government report to recognise the crucial role of community development in advancing the Government's community empowerment and community cohesion agenda. *The Community Development Challenge* report advocated a step change in levels of recognition, funding and support to community development, and *Firm Foundations* advocated the adoption of a community development approach as a key principle informing community capacity building.

#### **4.9 The continuing relevance of the Government's *Firm Foundations* framework to this agenda**

4.9.1 The Government's *Firm Foundations* framework for community capacity building continues to be the cornerstone of its thinking on community empowerment, particularly the support required by communities if to be able to take up the community engagement opportunities being made available, and so drive public service reform.

4.9.2 The key elements of the framework are:-

- Development of "community anchor organisations"
- Local-action planning
- Better collaboration between organisations supporting community capacity building
- Building up learning opportunities about active citizenship and community engagement
- Workers with community development skills, a meeting space or base or "hub", access to small grants funding, a forum or network that is inclusive, open and participatory, owned by and accountable to the community, and learning opportunities for active citizenship and engagement are the five key factors that must be accessible at neighbourhood or community level if communities are to function cohesively and be empowered

#### **4.10 Support to community anchor organisations**

4.10.1 Community anchor organisations are large neighbourhood-based community organisations, often involved in forms of social enterprise, providing a focal point for local communities and the development of the community sector, delivering services and functioning as intermediaries between external agencies and grass-roots activity.

4.10.2 The Government accepts that many potential community anchors will not have all the elements in place or have the capacity to play the role demanded of community anchors without additional support and investment. The key to developing sustainable community anchors lies with providing asset development and enterprise support to facilitate the expansion of earned income.

#### **4.11 Local-action planning and local charters as tools for empowering communities to set local priorities and shape public services**

4.11.1 Local-action planning is a term the Government uses to describe any process whereby the members of any type of community work together to produce a plan setting out their vision and objectives for their neighbourhood or community, and the actions and initiatives which will help to achieve them, including those actions that a community proposes to take itself, and those actions, that to be successful, depend on influencing public statutory bodies.

4.11.2 *The Local Government White Paper* encourages Local Strategic Partnerships to consider the wider use of local-action planning as part of a strategic approach to community

engagement, and highlights the crucial role that local-action planning processes can play in facilitating the development of local or neighbourhood charters, a key community empowerment proposal being made by the Government.

#### **4.12 Better collaboration in the delivery of community capacity building support**

4.12.1 The Government's view – re-affirmed in the *Local Government White Paper* – is that support for communities to make the fullest use of the range of engagement opportunities being offered by its community empowerment proposals is not currently sufficiently coordinated or targeted to maximise impact.

4.12.2 *Firm Foundations*, *The Community Development Challenge* and *Our Shared Future* all advocate a coordinated strategic approach to community capacity building, with community development as the driver, linking the community development inputs of all providers, forming a strong theme within the Local Area Agreement, located within the Sustainable Community Strategy, and funded adequately through coordinated channels.

#### **4.13 Support for volunteering and coordinated promotion of available active citizen and engagement opportunities**

4.13.1 Volunteering is crucial to strengthening communities, civil society and supporting others. The Government acknowledges that volunteering is not a free good for organisations: investment is required to promote a culture of volunteering and volunteer development. Volunteers make a vital contribution to the direct delivery of public services, and Government wants to engage a wide range of volunteers in the direct delivery of public services.

4.13.2 Opportunities or entry points for people to take on active citizen and governance roles should be better promoted and coordinated, so that more people are recruited and retained in these roles.

#### **4.14 Long-term funding structures a key issue**

4.14.1 Fair and sustainable funding is vital if the third sector is to play a full role. Grants, alongside contracts, have a crucial role, and should be used when supporting the building of the capacity of third sector organisations. The starting point for grant-funding should be three years, unless it does not represent best value. Inappropriately short funding arrangements create inefficiency in local government and lead to financial instability for third sector partner organisations.

4.14.2 *The Community Development Challenge* report advocates funding for community development sufficient to achieve and maintain a major step change in the level of community strengths and empowerment, especially in disadvantaged areas.

### **5.0 The local context**

5.1 Locally, the challenges to be addressed if progress made to date is to be safeguarded let alone further substantial advances made against the Government's developing community empowerment agenda, are as follows: -

#### **5.2 Threat to community capacity building infrastructure locally**

The ability of local support organisations to provide adequate conditions and support for community capacity building is vital. Yet the local context is that, despite much excellent work being carried out, including in support of the development of the recent Statement of Community Involvement and of the Community Engagement Capacity Building Plan, support organisations are fragile, and their long-term future is not secure.

Within Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council -;

- Community development activities – particularly in Area Management (Community Development) and Chief Executive's (Business Planning & Development and Regeneration Services) Departments – will shortly be reviewed across the authority

The Redcar & Cleveland Partnership has continuously supported the Community and voluntary sectors since 2001. The NRF/SSCF 2006/08 programmes alone will distribute around £1.2m to the sectors with a further £470,000 in core grant from the Local Authority over the same period.

- Partnership Community Grants (included in figures above): The Redcar & Cleveland Partnership's Community Fund (£80,000 per annum) and the Voluntary Sector Investment Fund (£100,000 per annum) will distribute around 70 Grants up to the 31 March 2008 when both funds come to an end further reducing community activity in the Borough post 2008.
- The Partnerships Community Skills Programme ends in March 2008, and the project is planned to be mainstreamed into Adult Learning Service: it is likely that fewer free courses, fewer courses for small groups, fewer short courses (half-to-one day), fewer non-accredited courses will be delivered as a result

Within the voluntary sector:

- Redcar & Cleveland Voluntary Development Agency is facing a significant potential funding shortfall in 2008/09
- post 2007/08 DEFRA funding for Tees Valley Rural Community Council is uncertain
- the future of the Community Network is secured only until end March 2008

Funding uncertainty directly threatens the continuance of vital specialist infrastructure support, and the charitable grant-giving sector is unlikely to be able to plug the gap because of the current economic climate.

### **5.3 Community sector capacity varies across the Borough and requires strengthening**

Across the Borough there is considerable variation in the capacity of local community sectors to produce and sustain a sufficient number and quality of independent groups and organisations to provide the variety of activities, interests and networks needed to participate, generate mutual aid, mobilise representatives and active citizens, and deliver appropriate forms of public service, especially when more prosperous areas are compared with areas of disadvantage. The community workshops held over the summer as part of the community engagement capacity building plan's work programme to date have provided new evidence of this. Attendees highlighted difficulties in recruiting and retaining active members and representatives, the challenges they faced in networking and taking joint action with other community organisations, and in responding as positively as they would like to community engagement opportunities

### **5.4 Local small grants programmes have played a vital role, but a coordinated investor approach will maximise impact**

Local small grants programmes, such as the Partnership's Community Fund have had great success in encouraging community action in priority areas. Such programmes are vital and must be continued. Over the Comprehensive Spending Review period, the Government is investing £80million nationally into grass roots activity supporting grass roots community organisations supporting community action and voice and £50million nationally in endowments to local community foundations. A coordinated "investor"

approach – such as has been very recently initiated by local support organisations with the BIG Lottery regional development team to ensure the area gets a fairer share of lotteries funding – should be adopted, embracing all significant grant-giving bodies active locally, in order to maximise impact.

**5.5 Borough does not have a strategic long-term approach to community-capacity building, explicitly informed by Government’s Firm Foundations framework with community development as a driving feature**

Whilst much good work has been done over the past 12-18 months in moving towards a more coordinated approach to community capacity building, the Borough still does not have an overarching long-term strategy linking community development inputs from all providers, and explicitly adopting the framework suggested by *Firm Foundations*. Such an approach will be critical to further sustained development in this issue area.

**5.6 Local-action planning not a feature locally**

Local-action planning, whilst a feature of community empowerment in neighbouring Tees Valley authorities, is not a current feature within Redcar & Cleveland, despite efforts by TVRCC to promote parish planning in the rural areas.

**5.7 Potential community anchor organisations are rare and a number of organisations have struggled or failed in the attempt to successfully make the transition**

The local experience is that there are few organisations currently having the potential to take on the anchor role for their communities envisaged by the Government for what it calls community anchors. Amongst those that have tried some have seen their organisational development stall or even jeopardised their continued existence in the attempt. Substantial and coordinated support informed by a long-term strategy will be required if progress is to be made in this area.

**6.0 Proposed ways forward**

6.1 The following proposals are designed to address the stronger communities’ priorities within the 2008/10 LAA refresh and the new series of Public Service Agreements (PSAs) specifically PSA21 ‘Build more Cohesive, Empowered and Active Communities and overall to further progress the Government’s empowerment agenda. Particularly as both the Partnership Community Fund and Voluntary Sector Investment Fund come to an end in March 2008

1) Support key infrastructure organisations in addressing short-term funding issues and as a partnership, develop a long-term strategy – supported by a funding strategy underpinned by fair and sustainable local funding – to secure the delivery of core support services, which enables them and the local third sector to continue to respond to this community empowerment and agenda. This would include a capacity building element to support groups to make links to sources of advice and support (establishing need; setting priorities; project planning; implementation; and Organisational development), and adopt a coordinated investor approach with grant-giving bodies active locally.

Cost: up to £250,000 annually

2) Continue a small grants programme beyond March 2008.

Cost: up to £120,000 annually (grants)

3) Commission action planning for the five areas of the Borough, with a budget of £10-15,000 for each area to reflect the larger than normal scale than is typically adopted for local-action planning

- in least two area action plans to be completed by September 2008

- the remaining areas to be completed by June 2009
  - build on parish/neighbourhood action planning process by commissioning work to develop five local charters by March 2010 (5 X £10-15,000; 5 X £2,500: £12,500; total: £62,500-87,500)
- 4) Commit partnership resources to developing area-based community networks strengthening networking and joint action between local community organisations and communities, in order to better coordinate support to the community sector at area level, and facilitate community engagement with area-action planning processes, as well as enabling communities to be better able to respond more effectively to engagement opportunities. This will complement the Borough-wide community network. Cost: nil to be delivered as part of work programmes associated with enhanced infrastructure. Timescales: December 2008
  - 5) Build on the work already done and proposed here to develop a coordinated approach to community development, community capacity building and infrastructure development, which links the inputs from all providers and is explicitly informed by **Firm Foundations** and **Our Shared Future**. Timescale: December 2008 Cost: £4,000 to cover production of report etc; the development of the strategy will be delivered as part of work programmes associated with enhanced funding for infrastructure
  - 6) Undertake a review of the potential for the development of Community anchor organisations within the Borough, identifying organisations with the potential to take on this role, their support needs, and develop a long-term strategy, linking into the opportunities being created by Central Government's funding support for this strand particularly over the next three years. Cost: £15,000. Timescale: June 2008
  - 7) Develop a district-wide community development network – Supported by a coordinating group – to facilitate the coordination of community capacity building by the various support organisations and emerging community anchor organisations. Cost: £1,200 annually; other costs to be subsumed within work programmes associated with enhanced funding for infrastructure

The total cost of these proposals is as follows:

<u>2008/09</u>	
Infrastructure	£250,000
Grants programme	£120,000
Area action-planning	£20,000/ £30,000
Strategy development	£19,000
Community development network	£1,200
Total, 2008/09	£410,200/ £420,200
<u>2009/10</u>	
Infrastructure (inc. 2.5% inflation element)	£256,250
Grants programme	£120,000
Area action-planning	£30,000/ £45,000
Area charters	£12,500
Community development network	£1,200
Total, 2008/09	£419,950/ £434,950

<u>20010/11 onwards</u>	
Infrastructure (inc. 2.5% inflation element)	£262,650
Grants programme	£120,000
Community development network	£1,200

Total, annually recurring costs (to include Annual inflation element for infrastructure) at least £383,850

## 7.0 Option Analysis

**Option 1** Do nothing: this means taking no action to secure the long-term infrastructure capability locally, no introduction of local-action planning, not safeguarding a locally-controlled small grants programme or adopting an investor approach with grant providers active locally, not developing an overarching community development strategy for the Borough, and no consideration of the support needs of potential community anchor organisations. Local support organisations will seek to continue to create the conditions for a vibrant third sector locally, without any additional support, and the move towards better coordination will stall.

The adoption of this option will mean that there is very likely to be a loss of infrastructure capability locally, community sector capacity will continue to vary across the Borough, and will in fact deteriorate or be degraded. Locally, the gains made in positioning the Borough to be able to respond to the Government's community empowerment agenda will be threatened, even lost, particularly insofar as they depend on the existence of an active, strong third sector, and no further progress will be made, with negative consequences for Comprehensive Area Assessment performance.

**Option 2** Implement the recommended proposals: as outlined in section 6.1. This will mean that local infrastructure capability will be safeguarded and enhanced within the framework of an overarching community development strategy, maximising impact, local-action planning will become a feature of community empowerment locally, grass roots activity will be well able to access small grant support and will be strengthened. Community sector capacity will grow particularly in areas where it is currently weak, the Borough will be well-placed to make advances against the Government's community empowerment agenda, and this will be reflected in Comprehensive Area Assessment performance.

## 8.0 Recommendation

Members are recommended to commit to securing option 2 as part of the re negotiation of the new LAA.

## 9.0 Reason for recommendation

Option 2 is recommended as it will create conditions for a vibrant, healthy third sector and will enable further substantive progress against the Government's community empowerment agenda, which in turn is crucial to the success of its local government modernisation agenda.

## 10.0 Conclusion

10.1 Much work has been carried out since May 2007 to progress the Community Engagement Capacity Building Plan approved by the Board on 25 May 2007. The Borough is

increasingly well-placed to respond to the Government's community empowerment agenda as a result.

- 10.2 Community empowerment is a Government policy objective that has increasingly come to the fore. Major policy documents published since the Partnership embarked upon the development of its community engagement capacity building plan have given fresh emphasis to the need to support a healthy third sector able to be a key partner locally in place-shaping, in building stronger communities, in transforming public services, in promoting cohesion and integration, and in encouraging social enterprise.
- 10.3 A new *Public Service Agreement* focussing on community empowerment, cohesion and the third sector has been published. Local authorities and their partners are being encouraged to prioritise empowerment through Local Area Agreements, and evidence of empowerment will form a crucial part of Comprehensive Area Assessments.
- 10.4 Key themes emerging from the Government's policy development in the field of community empowerment include: -
- Central role of the third sector
  - Crucial role of community development practice
  - Continuing relevance of the Government's Firm Foundations framework
  - Support to community anchor organisations
  - Local-action planning and local charters
  - Better collaboration in the delivery of community capacity building support
  - Support for volunteering and coordinated promotion of available active citizen and engagement opportunities
  - Long-term funding structures
- 10.5 Issues locally relevant to further progress against the Government's community empowerment agenda include: -
- Threat to community capacity building infrastructure locally
  - Community sector capacity varies across the Borough and requires strengthening
  - Success of local small grants programmes, but a coordinated investor approach is required
  - Borough does not have a strategic long-term approach to community-capacity building, explicitly informed by Government's *Firm Foundations* framework with community development as a driving feature
  - Local-action planning not a feature of empowerment activity locally
  - Potential community anchor organisations are rare and a number of organisations have struggled or failed in the attempt to successfully make the transition to anchor status
- 10.6 Proposals have been developed to support further progress against the Government's community empowerment agenda. These are realistic and include: -
- Develop a long-term strategy – supported by a funding strategy underpinned by fair and sustainable local funding – to secure the core capability of key infrastructure organisations active in the Borough to be able to continue to respond to this agenda (£250,000 annually)
  - Continue small grants programme, including a capacity building element, and adopt a coordinated investor approach with grant-giving bodies active locally (£120,000 annually)
  - Commission action planning and area charters for the five areas of Borough to be completed by March 2010 at a total cost of £62,500-87,500 over two years
  - Commit partnership resources to developing area-based community networks. Cost: nil. Timescales: December 2008

- Develop an overarching community development and community cohesion and integration strategy for the Borough, which links the inputs from all providers and is explicitly informed by *Firm Foundations* and *Our Shared Future*. Timescale: December 2008 Cost: £4,000
- Undertake a review of the potential for the development of community anchor organisations within the Borough, and develop a long-term strategy for this strand. Cost: £15,000. Timescale: June 2008
- Develop a district-wide community development network to facilitate the coordination of community capacity building by the various support organisations and emerging community anchor organisations. Cost: £1,200 annually

## **11.0 References**

- “Community Engagement Capacity Building Plan: Report to the Redcar & Cleveland Partnership Board, 25 May 2007”
- “Firm Foundations: The Government’s Framework for Community Capacity-Building”, Home Office (December 2004)
- “Strong & prosperous communities: Local Government White paper” DCLG (October 2006)
- “The Community Development Challenge”, DCLG (December 2006)
- “Strong & prosperous communities: Local Government White paper: Making it happen: the implementation plan” DCLG (January 2007)
- “Planning Together: Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and Spatial Planning: a practical guide” DCLG/RTPI (January 2007)
- “Making assets work: The Quirk Review of community management and ownership of public assets”, DCLG (May 2007)
- “Opening the transfer window: The government’s response to the Quirk Review of community management and ownership of public assets”, DCLG (May 2007)
- “Our Shared Futures”, Commission on Integration & Cohesion (June 2007)
- “Third Sector Strategy for Communities and Local Government – Discussion Paper”, DCLG (June 2007)
- “The Future role of the third sector in social and economic regeneration”, HM Treasury (July 2007)
- “Letter from Hazel Blears, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to Darra Singh, Chair of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion”, DCLG (6 October 2007)
- “PSA Delivery Agreement 21: Build more cohesive, empowered and active communities”, HM Treasury (October 2007)
- “An Action Plan for Community Empowerment: Building on success” DCLG/LGA (October 2007)

**Engagement Capacity Building Coordination Team  
November 2007**

## **Report for Local Strategic Partnership Board**

**21st December 2007**

### **Redcar and Cleveland Children and Young People's Trust.**

- A Trust Board meeting was held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2007.  
Topics discussed included
  - Integrated Service Improvement Project-1 child, 1 plan, 1 electronic file-all agencies signed a Memorandum of Understanding to work to address this over the coming year.
  - JAR-the need to begin to gather evidence to tell the 'Redcar and Cleveland story'
  - Self Harm Protocol
  - Sustainable Community Strategy/LAA
- The Executive Group has met 6 weekly and advised a rationalisation of existing groups and partnerships that contribute to the children's agenda to integrate them within the Trust Governance and structure. There is a review of existing groups, with the intention to integrate them fully by April 1st 2008.
- The 5 Themed Subgroups, based on the ECM outcome areas, have met monthly. There continues to be good representation from all sectors.  
The groups have been looking at existing priorities for action – based on Children and Young People's Plan, and Annual Performance Assessment areas for development.
  - › All groups have been involved in discussions around LAA and Sustainable Community Strategy.
  - › There are monthly updates on children and young people's participation activity and how we are responding to that.
- Integrated Locality Services –The Integrated Processes Training programme has now begun, being delivered by a multi agency group of trainers and the first 10 courses are full.
  - ›

December Briefing Note  
Safer Stronger Communities Partnership

**Crime reduction comparison November 07 compared to November 06**

Overall crime down 13% (compared to the same month the previous year)

Criminal Damage down 27%  
Domestic Burglary down 34%  
Vehicle Crime down 26% (Theft of and from vehicle)  
Violence down 11%  
Robbery down 83% (this equated to – 5 robberies)

Redcar & Cleveland had a 32% detection rate in November 2007 an increase of 12% on November 2006.

**Criminal Damage**

- Criminal Damage continues to be a major issue for the Partnership. Funding has recently been made available via Cleveland Police Authority.
- Work is continuing with Coast & Country Housing – Processes have been developed to improve the recording of Criminal Damage and this is having a significant impact on the figures.
- All reports of Criminal Damage continue to be visited by a Police Officer

**Partnership Improvement Fund**

- SITV work continuing (PIP monitoring and Co-ordination) PIP making good progress and will soon be refreshed to reflect the National Hallmarks upon which the partnership will be measured
- The Partnership Development Day will be held on the 18<sup>th</sup> December where the Partnership will look at progress and consider how they will deliver of the new priorities. This will be the start of the action planning process for the new Partnership priorities.

**Partnership Strategic Intelligence Assessment**

- The Partnership Strategic Intelligence Assessment is now complete and the Responsible Authorities Group have identified the new priorities which are:
  - Antisocial Behaviour
  - Burglary
  - Drug/Substance Misuse
  - Fire Safety
  - Hate Crime
  - Other Theft (metal theft)
  - Vehicle Crime
  - Violent Crime

Cross Cutting Victim, Offender, Location issues to be discussed at the Development Day on the 18<sup>th</sup> December

**LSP Funding**

- Funding has been made available for the SSCP Manager Post. (Job Description is being developed)
- Domestic Violence – MARAC Co-ordinator post has been appointed and will join the team in the near future. (Based at Redcar & Cleveland Police HQ)

**Home Office Funding**

£25,000 has been made available to R&C re: Violent Crime. A bids has been submitted relating to the following:

- Domestic Violence
- Violence related to the night time economy

## Drugs

- Young People - Currently 72 young people in treatment for drugs, this number increase if those with alcohol are include to over 100. Exceeding target.
- Enforcement and Supply Activity – currently no challenging issues, from April to current date they have recovered drugs with a street value of £201,578 and £68,500 cash. Treatment service to be more involved in encouraging users into treatment.
- Adult Treatment agenda - the Adult Drug Treatment Services is graded amber. Numbers in treatment increased to 638 and on target to reach 684. Currently 78% of clients retained in treatment for more than 12 weeks. Working on increasing retention rates to achieve 85%
- An NTA Review Panel review for the drug treatment services was very favourable.
- The Chair of the Joint Commissioning Group (JCG) will be Simon Dale for the interim period until the new financial year.
- Alcohol – Alcohol Needs Analysis is being carried out by Linda Wright for Redcar and Cleveland.
- Strengthening Communities - CREST (Young Peoples Drug treatment service) evidence for Shine Awards has been submitted and will be judged in Feb 08. A lot of good being carried out with Service users re Second Chance football activities, which will be publicised.