

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Corporate Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 19th April 2010
Report of: Juliet Blackburn
Subject/Title: Cheshire East Sustainable Community Strategy

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 To provide a progress report on the development of the Sustainable Community Strategy, and seek feedback on the emerging priorities.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 To comment on the approach to developing the Sustainable Community Strategy and to identify key issues for inclusion in the Strategy.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 To inform members of the approach being used to develop the Sustainable Community Strategy and to provide the opportunity to raise key issues to be included.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 All

6.0 Policy Implications

- 6.1 The Sustainable Community Strategy provides the framework for all policy development within Cheshire East. It is important that the priorities and ambition set out in the Strategy are translated into delivery through partner agencies business plans and issue based plans.

7.0 Financial Implications for Transition Costs

- 7.1 None

8.0 Financial Implications 2010/11 and beyond

- 8.1 There are likely to be financial implications from delivering the Strategy

9.0 Legal Implications

9.1 None.

10.0 Risk Management

10.1 None

11.0 Background and Options

11.1 The Cheshire East Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) is currently preparing a Community Strategy for Cheshire East. This will set out the vision for Cheshire East to 2025 and our priority actions as a partnership for the next 2-3 years.

11.2 The purpose of a Community Strategy is to set the overall strategic direction and long term vision for the economic, social and environmental well-being of a local area – typically 10–20 years – in a way that contributes to sustainable development. It tells the ‘story of the place’ backed by clear evidence and analysis. The Community Strategy should contain the following key elements:

- the long term vision based firmly on local needs – this will be underpinned by a shared evidence base informed by community aspirations
- key priorities for the local area, based upon this vision which may realistically be achieved in the medium term

11.3 The diagram below identifies the “golden thread” linking the Community Strategy through other thematic and area based planning within Cheshire East.



11.4 Preparation of the strategy began at the first LSP Assembly in October 2009, and it is intended to complete the strategy in June 2010 to be taken to Council in July 2010. A series of events and an on-line consultation are being used to enable service providers, businesses, town and parish councils, community and voluntary groups, and members of the public to shape the strategy. These are summarised in the table below:

23 October 2009	Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Assembly	<i>160 representatives from service providers, town and parish councils, business representatives and voluntary organisations gathered to consider Cheshire East's future</i>
17 February 2010	LSP Executive Board Away Day	<i>Partners considered the vision and priorities for Cheshire East</i>
23 February to 4 March 2010	5 local consultation events in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knutsford and Wilmslow (23 February) - Macclesfield and Poynton (24 February) - Nantwich (25 February) - Crewe (2 March) - Congleton (4 Mar) 	<i>The consultation events allowed people to explore openly the significant challenges and opportunities facing their local communities and to agree priority areas for action</i>
17 March 2010	Town and Parish Councils Conference	<i>Members of Town and Parish Councils met to consider and refine the emerging strategy for Cheshire East</i>
26 March 2010	Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Assembly	<i>The LSP Assembly discussed and refined the strategy for Cheshire East</i>
April 2010	Draft strategy is published for Further consultation	
June 2010	Strategy complete and taken to Council in July	

11.5 The process of developing our new Community Strategy has 3 core elements:

1. Cheshire East in 2010 - what are our defining characteristics and what are the key issues we are facing?

2. Cheshire east in 2025 – where do we want to be and what is our vision?

3. Cheshire East next steps - what are the “must-do” actions for the next 2-3 years to ensure we achieve our vision?

11.6 A discussion document was produced to help partners consider these 3 elements in turn, and was available on the Council's website. Individuals and organisations were asked to respond to the questions posed throughout the document by Friday 19th March. This information was used to inform the LSP

Assembly event on 26th March to which all partners were invited, and where the vision and priorities were to be discussed and refined.

- 11.7 The Assembly was attended by over 130 people who were a good mix of partner organisations, elected Members, officers and town & parish councils. To help inform the discussion, a document was produced which is summarised at the appendix. Whilst the detailed feedback is still being analysed, a number of key issues were raised during the discussion as follows:

Likes

- Ambitious
- Emphasises the power of localism
- Includes increasing service delivery by town & parish councils
- Demonstrates that people have been listened to
- Broad coverage of the issues in Cheshire East
- Balance of priorities feels about right
- Emphasis on young people
- Includes 'stronger' communities

Dislikes

- Needs a snappy, distinctive vision
- No mention of culture (just heritage)
- Needs more emphasis on rural community, particularly farming
- 'Plan for future generations' is too woolly
- Inequalities should be a priority – not just health inequalities
- Need a clear definition on what sustainability means for Cheshire East
- Should be 'leading' on addressing climate change not 'planning'
- Needs more emphasis on inter-generational work
- Must strike a balance between ambition and delivery

Following this event, a draft Community Strategy is now being produced and will be available for further consultation during April and May.

12.0 Overview of Year One and Term One Issues

12.1 None

13.0 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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Sustainable Community Strategy Summary

Our vision for 2025

- *what* we want for the people and places of Cheshire East

- People feel involved in local decisions
- People fulfil their potential
- People live independent, active and healthy lives
- Public services are easily accessible
- Cheshire East is well connected – without the butts
- All our towns are thriving
- The area is cleaner, safer and more beautiful than ever
- We have a stronger, sustainable economy
- We have less impact on the environment

Priorities for action

- *how* we will create our vision for Cheshire East

1. Nurture strong communities

- Give a strong local voice to people
- Support the community to support itself
- Devolve service delivery to the local level
- Improve community safety

2. Create conditions for business growth

- Make the most of emerging growth opportunities
- Be a world leader in broadband implementation
- Make the most of our heritage assets
- Create a climate attractive to business

3. Unlock the potential of our market towns

- deliver unique plans for our unique towns
- regenerate Crewe
- revitalise Macclesfield

4. Invest in our young people

- improve support and facilities for young people
- give young people a voice
- improve the health of children

5. Plan for the needs of future generations

- plan for affordable and appropriate housing
- plan for climate change
- plan for improved transport connections
- plan to protect our heritage and countryside

6. Prepare for an increasingly older population

- provide care and support for those who need it
- help people stay fit and active for longer

7. Drive out the sources of poor health

- tackle health inequalities
- reduce alcohol misuse