

**Meeting: EXECUTIVE**

Portfolio Area: The Leader

**Date: 25 JUNE 2013**

**Council  
Agenda Item: 13**

## **SOSTEVENAGE COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

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### **1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To seek approval of the SoStevenage Community Strategy for recommendation to Council.

### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That the Community Strategy be recommended to Council for approval.

### **3. BACKGROUND**

#### **3.1 The Community Strategy**

- 3.1.1 The last Community Strategy was written in 2007 and needed to be refreshed in order to reflect the changed circumstances in which the Council and SoStevenage are operating.
- 3.1.2 The Community Strategy is the five year plan for the local strategic partnership. It outlines SoStevenage's vision for the town and the objectives needed to get there.
- 3.1.3 SoStevenage is a co-operative partnership and works closely with partners, agencies and residents to get the most out of every pound spent. The new Community Strategy is a mechanism by which the Partnership can embed and deliver its co-operative aims. It provides a strategic framework for partnership working in Stevenage.
- 3.1.4 The strategy outlines the vision for Stevenage: a prosperous town with vibrant communities and healthy people.

### **4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS**

- 4.1.1 A range of different views and evidence were taken into account when writing the strategy including consultation feedback, statistics and data from local

agencies and government, discussions with the Council's Strategic Management Board and Executive and the SoStevenage Executive.

- 4.1.2 The draft strategy went out to consultation from 11 December 2012 until 15 February 2013.
- 4.1.3 Stevenage's residents were consulted on the Strategy at Café Choice on 15 December 2012. Over 50 residents took part in the exercise.
- 4.1.4 The Corporate Policy and Partnerships team consulted on the draft internally with the Leader, all Councillors and staff. It was circulated electronically to all Council Members, Heads of Service and Service Managers.
- 4.1.5 The Corporate Policy and Partnerships team consulted on the draft externally with local partners and key business contacts in the town.
- 4.1.6 The Strategy was hosted on the Stevenage Borough Council website. In total there were six respondents to the email and online consultation.
- 4.1.7 Feedback was generally positive with some comments leading to specific alterations.
- 4.1.8 The paragraph on community safety has been up dated to reflect recent data.
- 4.1.9 The priority 'address financial education and inclusion' priority has been changed to 'help residents manage their money'.
- 4.1.10 The need for work on prevention has been added to the section on mental health.
- 4.1.11 As a result of comments made at the April Executive, the following changes have been made:
- Inclusion of a priority on child poverty
  - Adding local businesses in the section 'Healthy Economy-How things are at the moment'
  - Inclusion of a chart showing the allocation of Local Community Budgets
  - Acknowledgement of Stevenage being designated a Carers' Community.
- 4.1.12 After these changes, the final themes and priorities for the strategy are:
- Healthy economy
    - Improve the local economy and housing
    - Increase skills and employability
    - Help residents manage their money
    - Understand and address child poverty
  - Healthy communities
    - Encourage healthy lifestyle choices

- Support good mental health
- Healthy people
  - Ensure clean and green spaces
  - Help people feel safe
  - Support and encourage volunteering

4.1.13 A 2013/14 action plan is in development to underpin the strategy. It will be monitored by the SoStevenage Executive.

4.1.14 In accordance with the Council's Constitution, as a Budget & Policy Framework item this document was also considered by the Community, Health & Older People Development & Scrutiny Committee on 15 April 2013. That Committee welcomed and supported the Community Strategy and in particular the work of So Stevenage.

4.1.15 It is recommended that Executive agree these changes and approve the final strategy.

## **4.2 Areas of work for Stevenage Borough Council**

4.2.1 Potential leads for the priorities in the strategy have been identified. Stevenage Borough Council has been identified as the lead for 'Improve the local economy and housing' and 'Ensure clean and green spaces'. The 'Help people feel safe' priority will be led by Stevenage's Community Safety Partnership, which is co-ordinated by the council's Community Safety Officer.

## **5 IMPLICATIONS**

### **5.1 Financial Implications**

5.1.1 Implementation of the whole strategy will be resourced through the partnership and the individual partner organisations.

5.1.2 Implementation of the Stevenage Borough Council elements of the Community Strategy will be resourced from existing budgets and officer time. If further resource is required, external funding and resource will be sought.

### **5.2 Legal Implications**

5.2.1 The strategy helps us to address the opportunities and obligations arising from the Child Poverty Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010.

5.2.2 The strategy allows us to discharge our statutory requirement under Section four of the Local Government Act 2000 to prepare and review a sustainable Community Strategy.

### **5.3 Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 5.3.1 An equality impact assessment has been completed for the strategy (see appendix B).
- 5.3.2 The strategy promotes partnership working to help all Stevenage residents. It does not call for any reduction in services. It is therefore not anticipated that it will adversely impact on any one specific group. It should benefit all residents and particularly help those with specific needs like the unemployed or homeless.
- 5.3.3 When all the 2011 census information for Stevenage is available, further work will be done by SoStevenage to understand the needs of residents. This information will be integrated into the 2014/15 SoStevenage action plan.

#### **5.4 Risk Implications**

- 5.4.1 The risks associated with individual objectives will need to be considered throughout the delivery of actions by Stevenage Borough Council and relevant partners. SoStevenage has a strategic risk register which captures the risks associated with the partnership and delivery of the Community Strategy. The partnership regularly monitors and updates the risk register every six months and decides upon appropriate mitigating action.

#### **5.5 Policy Implications**

- 5.5.1 The Strategy complements the Council's existing co-operative approach by encouraging partnership working and community involvement.
- 5.5.2 The Partnership is a formal co-operative partnership and as such will work to the co-operative principles.
- 5.5.3 The Strategy helps to underpin our Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy 2012-15 by clarifying how partners including the voluntary and community sector will work together on key issues.

#### **5.6 Human resources implications**

- 5.6.1 There are no human resources implications.

#### **5.7 Service Delivery Implications**

- 5.7.1 The Strategy impacts on some Council services and will need to be reflected in all relevant Service Delivery Unit planning processes.

#### **5.8 Environmental Implications**

- 5.8.1 Under the healthy communities theme, there is the priority 'Ensure clean and green spaces'. The Council will help to contribute to this priority through the Green Spaces Strategy and the Biodiversity Action Plan.

## **5.9 Communications Implications**

5.9.1 A communications plan will be developed to underpin all the work in the Strategy and the accompanying action plan for 2013/14.

## **5.10 Community Safety Implications**

5.10.1 The 'Help people feel safe' priority will be led by Stevenage's Community Safety Partnership, which is co-ordinated by the Council's Community Safety Officer. The Strategy supports the Community Safety Strategy for 2011-14.

## **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

BD1 - Executive Report – Community Strategy – March 2007

[http://archive.stevenage.gov.uk/archivecommitteeagendas/meetingsagendasandminutes/executive/dnld\\_executive\\_2/28mar07-community-strategy-report.pdf](http://archive.stevenage.gov.uk/archivecommitteeagendas/meetingsagendasandminutes/executive/dnld_executive_2/28mar07-community-strategy-report.pdf)

BD2 - Executive Report – Stevenage 2021 – Our Town: Our Future, September 2007

[http://archive.stevenage.gov.uk/archivecommitteeagendas/meetingsagendasandminutes/200708/executivecommittee0708/dnld\\_executivecommittee0708/13-report-stevenage2021-12sept07.pdf](http://archive.stevenage.gov.uk/archivecommitteeagendas/meetingsagendasandminutes/200708/executivecommittee0708/dnld_executivecommittee0708/13-report-stevenage2021-12sept07.pdf)

BD3 - Council Report – Stevenage 2021- Our Town: Our Future, October 2007  
Stevenage 2021: Our Town, Our Future, The Second Stevenage Community Strategy 2007

[http://archive.stevenage.gov.uk/archivecommitteeagendas/meetingsagendasandminutes/200708/fullcouncil/dnld\\_fullcouncil/03oct07-item11-executive-referral.pdf](http://archive.stevenage.gov.uk/archivecommitteeagendas/meetingsagendasandminutes/200708/fullcouncil/dnld_fullcouncil/03oct07-item11-executive-referral.pdf)

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix A: SoStevenage Community Strategy

Appendix B: Equality impact assessment