
Meeting: Executive

Date: 8 June 2010

Subject: Sustainable Community Strategy

Report of: Cllr Mrs P E Turner MBE, Leader of the Council

Summary: The report sets out the statutory requirement and process adopted by Central Bedfordshire to develop a Sustainable Community Strategy for the area. A copy of the proposed Strategy document is attached as Appendix A.

Advising Officer: Richard Carr, Chief Executive

Contact Officer: Peter Fraser, Head of Partnerships & Community Engagement

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: Council

Key Decision Yes

**Reason for urgency/
exemption from call-in
(if appropriate)** N/A

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The Sustainable Community Strategy supports Central Bedfordshire Council's vision and all of its priorities.

Financial:

There are no specific financial implications relating to the production or publication of the Strategy document. However, the Strategy will be critical in determining future spending and investment priorities for the Council and its partners. Other strategies and priorities will need to be aligned with the key strategic actions outlined in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Legal:

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Action 2007 places a statutory duty on the Council to work with partners to develop a Sustainable Community Strategy that sets out a shared long-term vision and key priorities for the area.

Risk Management:

Risk management is a key part of the service delivery plan for the team and any risks will be managed through this process.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

There are no specific implications for staffing associated with the production or publication of this Strategy.

Equalities/Human Rights:

A key theme supporting the delivery of the partnership's vision and priorities is to tackle inequalities, wherever they may be found. An equality impact assessment of the potential effects of this strategy is being undertaken to establish whether it has a different impact on identifiable groups of people segmented by age, race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion or belief.

A separate evidence base will be published alongside the Strategy which contains details of the wealth of evidence, research, intelligence and information used to develop the Strategy and which will support its implementation and delivery.

Community Safety:

This Strategy supports the Councils priority to tackle crime and reduce the fear of crime.

Sustainability:

The Sustainable Community Strategy has been created with long term sustainability at its core. It sets out a long-term vision for the area and joint agreement on the high-level priorities for action by the Council and its partners. The vision is based on delivering economic prosperity based on sustainable growth. A key strategic priority in the Strategy is "Getting around and caring for a green and clean environment". This sets out how we will protect and enhance our biodiversity, landscape, historical environment, green spaces and parks. It also examines how we will recycle more, reduce CO2 emissions, reduce air pollution and develop sustainable methods of transport.

Summary of Overview and Scrutiny Comments:

- At the meeting of the Customer and Central Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 26 April 2010, it was RESOLVED that the draft Sustainable Community Strategy be supported.
- It was also noted at the meeting that:
 - the draft Sustainable Community Strategy will be submitted to the Local Strategic Partnership for its final approval on 13 May 2010;
 - the draft Sustainable Community Strategy will be submitted to the Executive for its final approval on 8 June 2010;
 - draft Sustainable Community Strategy will be submitted to Council after 8 June 2010.

RECOMMENDATION:

that the Executive recommends that the Council approves the final draft of the Sustainable Community Strategy at its meeting on 24 June 2010.

Reason for Recommendation(s): To ensure the Council meets its statutory requirement to work in partnership to develop a Sustainable Community Strategy for the area. To ensure partners work together to delivery actions against a shared set of priorities and long-term vision for Central Bedfordshire.

Executive Summary

The report sets out the statutory requirement and process adopted by Central Bedfordshire to develop a Sustainable Community Strategy for the area. A copy of the final draft of the Strategy document is attached as Appendix A.

Background

1. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 places a statutory duty on all upper tier and unitary authorities to work with partners to produce a Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) that sets out a shared long-term vision for their area and the key strategic priorities and actions needed to deliver it. The SCS should reflect the wishes of local communities and be based on a robust evidence base.
2. At its meeting on 28 October 2008, Central Bedfordshire Council's Shadow Executive agreed to discharge its statutory responsibilities relating to the Act to the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).
3. In November 2008, Central Bedfordshire's Shadow LSP adopted the Sustainable Community Strategies for South Bedfordshire and Mid Bedfordshire, which were published in June 2008 and January 2008 respectively, and the Bedfordshire county-wide strategy, which was published in July 2007.
4. A commitment was made to develop a new SCS for Central Bedfordshire during the first year of operation of the new unitary authority area.
5. The outcome of producing the SCS is to shape the future of Central Bedfordshire by:
 - (a) setting a collective local vision for Central Bedfordshire that we can all share; and
 - (b) making explicit our priorities for tackling local quality of life issues, which whilst having regard to national government's priorities for public services, must be soundly rooted in a clear analysis of local needs.

Consultations

6. Consultation has been carried out via the LSP Board and Thematic/Statutory Partnership discussions, the Town & Parish Council Conference, Central Bedfordshire Forum, Third Sector Assembly, Bedfordshire Advice Forum, Residents' Survey and Residents' Workshop and presentations to various partnership meetings.

The Strategy

7. Partner and stakeholder feedback confirms there is widespread support for the partnership's vision and key priorities. The vision is for Central Bedfordshire to be:

"Globally connected, delivering sustainable growth to ensure a green, prosperous and ambitious place for the benefit of all"

8. The 8 key priorities which have been identified are:
 - (a) Maximising employment opportunities and delivering housing growth to meet the needs of our communities
 - (b) Ensuring our local people have the skills to prosper
 - (c) Getting around and caring for a green and clean environment
 - (d) Supporting and caring for an ageing population and those who are most vulnerable
 - (e) Promoting health and reducing health inequalities
 - (f) Educating, protecting and providing opportunities for children and young people
 - (g) Keeping our communities safe
 - (h) Nurturing a sense of pride and belonging
9. The LSP Board has suggested that the document should:
 - (a) reflect the priorities of our residents and communities, and be backed up by a strong evidence base;
 - (b) be aimed at key partners and stakeholders, whilst also setting out for residents what we are accountable to them for;
 - (c) be written in a way that enables partners to develop their own strategies and business plans, to ensure alignment with a joint vision and determine their contribution towards the delivery of a set of shared priorities and desired outcomes;
 - (d) be as concise and succinct as possible;
 - (e) set out the strategic direction rather than the operational detail;
 - (f) show the high-level actions that will be taken in the short term, medium term and long term;
 - (g) avoid the use of jargon or acronyms;
 - (h) capture the enthusiasm and positive feedback from the Forum;
 - (i) be energetic, vibrant and confident, and express the delivery of our ambitions; and
 - (j) emphasise the challenges of the growth agenda and the need for a strong economy.

10. A copy of the final draft of the Sustainable Community Strategy document is attached as Appendix A.

Conclusion and Next Steps

11. After 8 June 2010 the final draft of the SCS will go before the Full Council for formal sign-off on 24 June 2010.

Appendices:

Appendix A – draft Sustainable Community Strategy

Background Papers: None

Location of papers: N/A