

Item 4:

**Developing and Delivering the Chester Area Action Plan
for 2011 -13**

1. Chester Area Action Plan

Please see attached paper and appendices

2. Community Engagement Action Plan for Chester, 2011-12

Recommendation:

That the Chester Area Partnership Board approves the attached Chester Community Engagement Action Plan

“Effective engagement with local people and stakeholders plays a key part in our ability to achieve our vision and to deliver good quality services.

It also enables us to ensure that our priorities reflect and meet local needs and aspirations and is fundamental to the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy.”

Cheshire West and Chester Council’s Community Engagement & Empowerment Strategy

What Do We Mean By Community Engagement and Empowerment?

Community engagement can mean different things to different people, different communities and different services and situations. We believe that:

Community engagement is the involvement of communities in influencing the outcomes and decisions that are important to them. It involves local people and groups, stakeholders and public organisations working together to identify issues, needs and aspirations and agreeing an acceptable approach to finding solutions and achieving their aspirations

Community empowerment furthers this by building confidence, skills, and the power of communities to influence and take decisions about services and initiatives that affect them and to design their own solutions.

Engagement takes place at various levels to ensure the most appropriate means for our partners, local people and communities to be involved:-

- **Provide Information** - we will provide good quality and accurate information to support all of our community engagement activity and keep people informed about decisions, services and local events
- **Consult** - we will consult widely to enable partners, organisations, businesses, service users and local people to have a say in decisions at all levels
- **Involve** - we will involve partners, organisations, businesses, service users and local people in decision making and in the work that we do
- **Collaborate** - we will work in partnership with all public agencies and stakeholders to deliver better outcomes for local people
- **Empowerment** - we will provide support, opportunities and resources for communities to identify their issues and concerns and to design and deliver their own local responses.

Audit of Partner's Community Engagement and Empowerment Activity in the Chester APB Area

At its meeting on 19th May 2011, the Area Partnership Board for Chester agreed to audit the existing community engagement activities of all partners as a precursor to the development of an annual community engagement plan for Chester APB.

The audit template which Chester APB partners have completed has in turn been used to inform the production of the attached draft Community Engagement Action Plan.