

Cheshire West and Chester Local Strategic Partnership

General meeting report.

AGENDA ITEM

Report title	Sustainable Community Strategy development and consultation
Description	The process for the production of the Cheshire West and Chester Sustainable Community Strategy
Document purpose	The Sustainable Community Strategy will be the key document for the LSP, setting out the vision for the area, describing how people who live and work in Cheshire West want it to change over time. As such partners are asked to consider the process and timetable for producing the strategy.
Circulation list	Cheshire West and Chester LSP
Decision/Action required	Partners are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Support the process outlined in Appendix A for the production of the SCS;b. Provide support for the evidence gathering and consultation/engagement stages. In the first instance this would involve support for a SCS Working Group.c. Delegate the necessary approvals to the LSP thematic leads group. This would need to include appropriate community representation.
Author	Andrea Mageean
Contact details	Andrea.Mageean@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk Tel: 01244 402400
Publication date	30 th April 2009
Target audience	Cheshire West and Chester LSP
Cross reference	Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act, Planning Together

Report narrative

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Sustainable Community Strategy is the key document for the LSP is setting out a shared vision and shared sense of priorities for the area. Its purpose is to enable Cheshire West and Chester Council, in partnership with other agencies and local people through the Local Strategic Partnership, to discharge its responsibilities for promoting the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area; and providing

community leadership.

The Sustainable Community Strategy will achieve this by:

- setting out a long-term vision for the area based on a robust assessment of local needs and aspirations;
- identifying the priorities that can be achieved in the medium-term through the delivery of the Local Area Agreement;
- establishing a reference point to judge the performance of local public services through the Comprehensive Area Assessment;
- supplying the overarching plan for the preparation of other statutory / non-statutory plans and strategies at a neighbourhood-, local-, sub-regional- and regional-level.

1.2 The purpose of this paper is to outline and gain partner support for how we will produce the SCS for Cheshire West and Chester during 2009.

2. Background

2.1 According to the government (Creating Strong and Prosperous Communities: Statutory Guidance, 2008), the purpose of a Sustainable Community Strategy is to:

2.1.1 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;

2.1.2 provide the story of the local area and ... articulate the longer term ambition, evidence and rationale beyond the focus of a three-year LAA [Local Area Agreement]; and

2.1.3 contribute to sustainable development in the UK.

2.2 The SCS should contain the following elements:

2.2.1 the **long term vision based firmly on local needs** – this will be underpinned by a shared evidence base informed by community aspiration

2.2.2 **key priorities for the local area**, based on this vision which may realistically be achieved in the medium term – these will inform the strategy's delivery agreement – the Local Area Agreement (LAA)

2.3 The SCS needs to take account of other local and (sub) regional plans, specifically:

2.3.1 The Local Development Framework: Local authorities are advised that far as possible they should align the core strategy of the LDF (Local Development Framework) with the Sustainable Community

Strategy. In essence the LDF core strategy is the spatial interpretation of SCS priorities. In more detailed guidance¹ it is advised that coordinating the work of LSPs together with the development and implementation of local planning policy now offers a powerful mechanism for managing the combined public sector and investment resources in local areas – both capital and revenue.

2.3.2 Housing and homeless strategies: housing is seen as being at the heart of achieving social, economic and environmental objectives that shape a community and create a sense of place, and as such they should be incorporated into SCS where possible.

2.3.4 Local and neighbourhood plans: likely to be of value for informing the development of the SCS and/or acting as delivery vehicles for the LAA.

2.4 The starting point for producing a sustainable community strategy is consultation. The council – through its Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) – must consult and seek the participation of each partner authority and such other persons (i.e. organisations and people) as they consider appropriate when preparing or modifying the Sustainable Community Strategy.

2.5 The approved Sustainable Community Strategy will be reviewed annually –the government expects at a minimum that, prior to each annual review of the LAA covering their area, LSPs to review the evidence and the priorities contained within their sustainable community strategy so as to ensure that the priorities still accurately reflect the needs of the locality.

3. Process/timetable issues

3.1 Cheshire West and Chester Council is committed to producing a SCS by October 2009. The timetable attached at appendix A sets out how this might be achieved. This identifies a series of stages, the key components and an initial assessment of linkages with other activities. Two complementary activities can be highlighted at this stage:

3.1.1 The CAA Self Assessment: this shared assessment of the needs and issues in an area (see agenda item 7) is currently being prepared to be completed June/July 2009. This is based on the robust evidence and dialogue which must also inform the scoping stage of the SCS production;

3.1.2 Joint working with planners on engagement/consultation to inform the Core Strategy of the LDF as well as the SCS. This comprehensive programme of activities involving the whole

¹ Planning Together: updated practical guidance for LPS's and planners (2009) Department for Communities and Local Government

partnership framework will take place July-October 2009.

- 3.2 Clearly capitalising on the above synergies would make best use of resources available to collate/evaluate/analyse the evidence, and to engage with partners and local communities. Nevertheless, appendix A outlines an extremely resource intensive process and partners are asked to consider how their organisations can support these activities. In addition to the LSP Thematic Leads Group it may be appropriate to establish a SCS Working group to oversee and support the production and promotion of the SCS.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 Partners are asked to:
- 4.1.1 Support the process outlined in Appendix A for the production of the SCS;
 - 4.1.2 Provide support for the evidence gathering and consultation/engagement stages. In the first instance this would involve support for a SCS Working Group.
 - 4.1.3 Delegate the necessary approvals to the LSP thematic leads group. This would need to include appropriate community representation.

APPENDIX A

STAGES + TIMESCALES	CORE TASKS	LINKAGES / DEPENDENCIES
<p><u>STAGE 1</u> SCOPING APRIL – JUNE 2009</p>	<p>BASELINE INFORMATION GATHERING: Consolidation of existing information sources, and evaluation to identify issues / trends / areas of concern.</p> <p>ISSUES REPORT: Building on baseline information, setting out initial assessment of priority areas / issues for consultation informed by emerging APB Action Planning</p> <p>CONSULTATION / ENGAGEMENT PLAN: Based on the partnership framework of neighbourhood partnerships, community forums, local councils, APBs and thematic groupings, a plan to generate the most effective and comprehensive engagement within available resources.</p>	<p>CAA Self Assessment</p> <p>Places Survey Report</p> <p>Consultation Strategy for Local Development Documents</p>
<p>↓</p> <p><u>STAGE 2</u> INVESTIGATION JULY – OCTOBER 2009</p>	<p>CONSULTATION / ENGAGEMENT Set out in consultation / engagement plan a range of activities and opportunities for community and partners input to inform the ‘story of place’</p> <p>CONSULTATION EVALUATION Consolidating the results of consultation / engagement and considering their implications in the light of existing data sources.</p>	<p>Joint Working LDF Consultation</p>
<p>↓</p> <p><u>STAGE 3</u> CONSOLIDATION OCTOBER – NOVEMBER 2009</p>	<p>DRAFT SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY Draft document seeking to address the issues, concerns and priorities identified. Opportunities for partner input / comment</p> <p>SUSTAINABILITY / EQUALITY APPRAISAL Impact assessments required.</p>	<p>Draft SCS available to help shape CWaC planning and budget cycles</p> <p>Draft SCS presented to LSP 29 October</p>
<p>↓</p> <p><u>STAGE 4</u> LAUNCH DECEMBER 2009</p>	<p>APPROVAL / ADOPTION OF FINAL SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY Formal launch of finalised document. Work with partners to look at how priority areas will be taken forward.</p>	<p>Sustainable Community Strategy launched as part of LSP networking event</p>
<p>↓</p> <p><u>STAGE 5</u> IMPLEMENTATION 2010</p>	<p>DELIVERY LAA as delivery plan: refresh 2010, full review 2011. Additional project work to address priority areas</p> <p>ANNUAL REVIEW Autumn 2010</p>	<p>LAA annual review</p> <p>LAA 2010 →</p>