

MEETING:	CABINET
DATE:	21 JANUARY 2010
TITLE OF REPORT:	SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY (REFRESH)
PORTFOLIO AREA:	CORPORATE STRATEGY & FINANCE

CLASSIFICATION: Open

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To recommend to Council the approval the refresh of Herefordshire's Sustainable Community Strategy covering the period 2010 – 2013.

Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

Recommendation

THAT Cabinet recommends to Council the approval of the refreshed Sustainable Community Strategy.

Key Points Summary

- The Herefordshire Sustainable Community Strategy is a key long-term planning document for improving the quality of life and services in Herefordshire.
- Every Local Authority is required to have a Sustainable Community Strategy which has been developed and agreed with its Local Strategic Partnership. Herefordshire Partnership is the Local Strategic Partnership for Herefordshire, representing local public services, businesses, and voluntary and community sector organisations.
- The current strategy covers the period up to March 2010 and is now due to be refreshed in light of achievements to date and new challenges that Herefordshire is currently facing.

Alternative Options

- 1 There are no Alternative Options every Local Authority is required to produce a Sustainable Community Strategy agreed by its Local Strategic Partnership.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2 To ensure the Sustainable Community Strategy is refreshed and the priorities identified for 2010-2013 are approved by Cabinet prior to adoption by the Herefordshire Partnership.

Introduction and Background

- 3 The original Community Strategy for Herefordshire was formulated and adopted four years ago. The priorities of the refreshed Herefordshire Sustainable Community Strategy need to be incorporated into organisational plans and activities in order to achieve Herefordshire's Vision – "Herefordshire will be a place where people, organisations and businesses working together within an outstanding natural environment will bring about sustainable prosperity and well being for all".
- 4 The Herefordshire Sustainable Community Strategy sets the overall strategic direction and long-term vision for the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of Herefordshire in a way that contributes to sustainable development. It sets Herefordshire in context and offers the distinctive Vision and ambition of the area, backed by clear evidence and analysis (for example the State of Herefordshire Report).
- 5 The 2000 Local Government Act charged local authorities with preparing a local Community Strategy with their partners through a Local Strategic Partnership, and Herefordshire's first version was known as the Herefordshire Plan. The Community Strategy for Herefordshire was subsequently published in 2006 and in recognition of emphasising the importance of sustainability, this refreshed version has been renamed the Herefordshire Sustainable Community Strategy.
- 6 The Strategy published in 2006 highlighted a number of key local issues which led to the formulation of desired outcomes for the County. These were identified as a result of a comprehensive consultation process undertaken during 2005. The Herefordshire Sustainable Community Strategy has been developed from the last Community Strategy and refreshed by looking at the wealth of information gathered since 2005, detailed in background papers, and through consultation with partners.

Key Considerations

- 7 Taking into account the County's key characteristics and all other sources of information a draft list of priorities for Herefordshire has emerged. These have been grouped under the following six themes:
 - Children and Young People
 - Economic Development and Enterprise
 - Environment
 - Healthier Communities and Older People
 - Safer Communities
 - Stronger Communities
- 8 During the process of refreshing the Herefordshire Sustainable Community Strategy three key values emerged. These will be known as guiding principles and will be embedded into the way Herefordshire Partnership works to ensure a co-ordinated long term approach is taken to delivering the priorities of the six themes. The

guiding principles are:

Everyone is Someone

- Value everyone's contribution
- Challenge prejudice and discrimination
- Support people and promote an equitable County

Safeguard our Future

- Value our environment and the future of our young people enough to act now
- Think creatively about the bigger picture, and assess how issues will affect us, the resources and the assets at our disposal
- Develop solutions that build sustainability into our economy, our communities and in the infrastructure and natural environment on which we all depend

Work across Boundaries

- Think, plan, act and share responsibility
- Seek solutions which have mutually positive benefits
- Make new alliances and look beyond the obvious

9 A summary of the aims and priorities of the six themes is detailed below:

Children and Young People

Aim - to improve the lives of children and their families, and enable all children and young people to develop the knowledge, skills and judgement they need to lead a fulfilling life. Priorities to focus activity:

- Children and young people are healthy and have healthy lifestyles
- Children and young people are safe, secure and have stability
- Children and young people achieve educational, personal, social and physical standards
- Children and young people engage in positive behaviour inside and out of school
- Children and young people engage in further education, employment and training on leaving school

Economic Development and Enterprise

Aim- to create an environment for enterprise to thrive, and to enable business growth and prosperity for all. Priorities to focus activity:

- Sustain existing businesses with advice and guidance to minimise job losses and work with partners to support employment
- Develop a more adaptable and higher skilled workforce
- Support businesses and home working through better Broadband services
- Improve business accommodation and employment land quality and availability
- Attract high quality and better paid employment into the County and encourage entrepreneurship and innovation

- Promote Herefordshire as a place with a diverse business base, building on its distinctiveness and heritage.
- Reduce traffic congestion and improve health through integrated transport provision, including opportunity for maximising cycling, walking and public transport
- Encourage businesses to consider the environment and make savings through sustainable working practices

Environment

Aim - to protect and enhance Herefordshire's distinctive environment and address climate change. Priorities to focus activity:

- Reduce waste and increase recycling
- Act to mitigate climate change and its consequences including promoting adaptation where necessary and appropriate
- Protect and enhance biodiversity within the County
- Maintain landscape character
- Encourage investment in high quality streets, public spaces and the built and historic environment
- Assist local communities to identify, retain and develop local distinctiveness
- Protect and improve water resources and the quality of rivers, streams and lakes, and encourage responsible water use
- Promote sustainable land management

Healthier Communities and Older People

Aim - to work with people and their communities to enable them to lead healthy and fulfilled lives. Priorities to focus activity:

- Support smokers to quit, particularly young, pregnant and long-term smokers
- Support people to maintain a healthy weight
- Reduce the level of harmful alcohol use, particularly among young people
- Work with local people to enhance emotional wellbeing and intervene to reduce suicide, accidents and injuries
- Support people with assessed social care needs to live independently in their own homes wherever possible, with accessible services and information they need

Safer Communities

Aim – to work together to make Herefordshire an even safer place to live, work and visit. Priorities to focus activity:

- Further reduce anti-social behaviour
- Further reduce crime through offender management, particularly violent crime and domestic abuse
- Provide community reassurance on anti-social behaviour, disorder and crime so that Herefordshire is a safe County.
- Reduce drug and alcohol related harm
- Promote and deliver increased road safety

Stronger Communities

Aim – to develop stronger, vibrant, more inclusive communities in which people enjoy a good quality of life and feel they have influence over the decisions that affect them. Priorities to focus activity:

- Provide affordable housing and address homelessness
- Ensure vulnerable people have access to a range of housing options, including support and the ability to live independently
- Provide accessible, high quality sporting, cultural and recreational facilities and activities
- Ensure fair access to the services which Herefordshire residents need
- Raise awareness and understanding of volunteering, promoting mutual benefits to the individual and the wider community
- Encourage communities and individuals to participate and influence local decisions which affect them
- Promote a County where people feel accepted, confident and empowered
- Ensure communities are more resilient and recover from emergencies through effective partnership planning and co-ordination

- 10 The Herefordshire Sustainable Community Strategy will be delivered through many organisations, networks, sectors and groups working together as part of Herefordshire Partnership's three tier structure:

Herefordshire Partnership Board - sets the vision for Herefordshire based on a sound understanding of the County, local issues and a responsibility to ensure delivery of efficient, high quality services.

Herefordshire Partnership Management Group – responsible for delivering the Herefordshire Sustainable Community Strategy by ensuring resources are utilised to address the identified priorities.

Herefordshire Partnership Policy and Delivery Groups – six groups (one for each of the six themes) who formulate and commission work to address the priorities in the Herefordshire Sustainable Community Strategy, based on comprehensive information of local need. They report progress on their work to the Management Group.

Community Impact

- 11 The vision and priorities of the Herefordshire Sustainable Community Strategy aim to improve the quality of life and service delivery in all areas of the County. Community engagement is at the heart of the work of Herefordshire Partnership in informing these priorities and driving service improvement in the locality.

Financial Implications

- 12 None. Priorities identified will be delivered from within existing sources of funding.

Legal Implications

- 13 None.

Risk Management

- 14 Delivery of the priorities within the Herefordshire Sustainable Community Strategy through the Herefordshire Partnership will be a key area of assessment for the Comprehensive Area Assessment and as such forms part of the corporate performance management system.

Consultees

- 15 The six Policy and Delivery Groups have been consulted and wider input through their networks has been encouraged. In addition, consultation of the third sector via Herefordshire Voluntary Action and Herefordshire Alliance. Their comments are reflected in the final draft.

Appendices

- 16 Draft Sustainable Community Strategy 2011-2013.

Background Papers

- The State of Herefordshire Report
- Local Development Framework
- The Herefordshire Quality of Life Survey