

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

MONDAY 15 MARCH 2004 AT 2.00 P.M.

Agenda Item
No.

2

STEVENAGE COMMUNITY PLAN

“Stevenage 2021, Our Town – Our Future”

Report of the Assistant Chief Executive

Author: Mike Curtis, Lead Officer for Stevenage – Tel: 01992 556365

Executive Member:- Michael Janes

1. Purpose of report

To present the Community Plan to Cabinet with a recommendation for endorsement (attached).

2. Summary

- 2.1 The Stevenage Community Plan is ambitious but very comprehensive in its approach. Its main objectives are a combination of socio-economic, environmental and physical regeneration issues that are interconnected throughout.
- 2.2 Hertfordshire County Council and its officers have been key players in this process and HCC Strategies and Plans have been incorporated into the document where they facilitate joint-working and specify shared goals and objectives. HCC officers recommendations on the plan itself have been incorporated into the strategy.
- 2.3 Stevenage has kept references to the proposed development to the West of Stevenage to a minimum and through joint-working have agreed suitable wording accordingly.

3. Conclusion

Cabinet is invited to consider endorsing the Stevenage Community Plan.

4. Background

- 4.1** The Stevenage Local Strategic Partnership's Community Plan is led by Stevenage Borough Council but representation comes from all the four sectors and includes 40 partner organisations. **(See Appendix A for list)**
- 4.2** The strategy places great emphasis on the "excellent partnerships working together in the best interests of the town." This can be seen in the aim to strengthen existing partnerships and create new ones which is a feature throughout the strategy.
- 4.3** Stevenage Community Plan is supported by the following strategies :
- Stevenage and North Herts Health Improvement and Modernisation Plan 2002 – 2004.
 - Herts County Council Children and Young People's Preventative Strategy
 - Hertfordshire Supporting People Strategy (2003-2004)
 - Hertfordshire County Structure Plan
 - Herts County Council Biodiversity Action Plan
 - Herts County Council Adult Care Plan (2003 – 2004)
 - Herts Fire Service "Working to Protect – Acting to Save" Strategy
 - Herts County Council Local Transport Plan
 - Herts County Council Road Safety Plan
 - Environment Department Service Plan.

5. The Plan's Priorities

Each section contains action plans or priorities that are very detailed and specific. This is a brief overview of objectives per chapter

5.1 A Prosperous Town

- Create and retain a diverse range of jobs by encouraging and retaining new business in Stevenage and developing new industrial units/business parks
- Create a positive image of Stevenage – locally, nationally and internationally
- Promote a business friendly culture via community enterprise and incubation centres
- Develop local people's skills to meet the needs of the knowledge economy.

5.2 A Town with Strong Communities and Opportunities for All

- Increase community involvement in decision making
- Tackle inequalities and improve access to services offering financial and benefit advice

- Support local voluntary organisations and community groups
- Promote equality of opportunity in developing equality action plans
- Support local voluntary organisations through COMPACT and grant aid.

5.3 A Town that's Good to Live in with Affordable Housing, Sustainable Environment and Excellent Transport

- Provide affordable homes to meet a range of housing needs
- Provide social housing that meets the Decent Homes standard
- Provide clean streets and open spaces
- Promote environmental sustainability – protect and improve the local environment and contribute to national and global environmental issues
- Sustainable transport – improve transport choices and reduce the impact of travel on the environment.

5.4 A Vibrant Town Centre and Thriving Neighbourhoods

- Regenerate the Town Centre
- Preserve the character of the Old Town
- Regenerate Neighbourhood Centres
- Develop New Communities by providing new community facilities.

5.5 A Learning Town that Invests in Young People

- Improve the educational achievement of children and young people by providing high-quality learning opportunities such as nursery education and youth facilities
- Develop joined-up and co-ordinated services to care for health and welfare of all children and young people
- Promote child development through play using a network of play facilities
- Promote life-long learning via adult and community learning.

5.6 A Healthy and Caring Town

- Help people to live longer, healthier lives and tackle health inequalities by health promotion, education and partnership working
- Improve the access to and quality of NHS Treatment and care
- Support vulnerable people by providing care and promoting independent living.

5.7 A Safe Town

- Reduce violent crime, hate crime, domestic violence, drug misuse and drug related crime
- Tackle anti-social behaviour through prevention and enforcement
- Reduce the risk of accidental and deliberate fires
- Reduce the fear of crime.

5.8 A Creative Town

- Increase cultural provision across the arts, museum, sports, parks and library services

- Develop a tourism strategy to increase the number of visitors to Stevenage
- Create a Discovery Centre in the town centre
- Maintain and develop existing Leisure facilities
- Undertake an access audit of all council owned leisure facilities to ensure fair access to all sections of the community.

6. Implementation and Review

- 6.1** Stevenage Local Strategic Partnership has set performance indicators and success measurements which come from national and local sources. The Audit Commissions `Quality of life' ('QoL') and Best Value indicators are used throughout. Other more local targets will be agreed by partner organisations for each theme and will be published in the final version in Spring 2004.
- 6.2** The implementation of the strategy will be monitored by ;
- Stevenage Borough Council's Scrutiny Panels and the Joint NHS Scrutiny Panel
 - Hertfordshire County Council will monitor progress through 'Hertfordshire Together'
 - Stevenage COMPACT
 - Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce.
- 6.3** Stevenage have set up an External Funding Group to co-ordinate funding bids from European, national and charitable trusts and funds.
- 6.4** It is envisaged that partner organisations will integrate action plans into their own strategies, priorities and budgets. This has been assisted by the inclusion of partner strategies into the strategy and comprehensive consultation.
- 6.5** The plan will be reviewed annually in a published report "Stevenage Trends."

7. Public Consultation

The strategy has been developed in consultation with partner organisations and the wider community of Stevenage via :

- Conferences and exhibitions at libraries, business events, council offices
- Residents Consultation Summary booklet delivered to all homes in Stevenage
- Neighbourhood meetings
- Forums - to meet the needs of specific groups such as older people, young people and black and minority ethnic communities.
- Website, radio and newspaper coverage.

8. Internal HCC Consultation

- 8.1** The Simply Done process has been followed very closely via :
- Circulation of the Plan to central receiving officers
 - All responses have been logged and submitted to Stevenage Borough Council officers via a form and recommendations for changes or clarification have been monitored and outcome noted.
 - Two meetings have been held with HCC's Stevenage based managers to discuss the plan in more detail and to clarify objections and support.
 - Stevenage BC have held one-to-one meetings with key HCC officers.
- 8.2** All comments from officers were received and logged as follows :
- Children Schools and Families **65**
Environment **42**
Community Information **2**
Fire Service **7**
Adult Care Services **6**
- 8.3** These comments and recommendations included the following :
- The creation of a bio-diversity plan for Stevenage
 - Greater emphasis on equality actions in particular to address black and minority ethnic and disability issues
 - Creation of a Stevenage Children's and Young Peoples Partnership and the development of a pilot Children's Trust to jointly finance and deliver services for children
 - Withdrawal of comments and specific plans on the development of the area known as West of Stevenage (A1M) and the agreement of wording which would be in line with Hertfordshire County Council policy
 - Clarifying responsibilities for environmental services and realistic and achievable transport objectives.

Appendix A

Stevenage Local Strategic Partnership

Age Concern Stevenage
Caribbean & African Association
Churches Together in Stevenage
Citizens' Advice Bureau
Coreys Mill Lions
CTC – the UK's national cyclists' organisation
East & North Herts. NHS Trust
Federation of Stevenage Tenants Associations (FOSTA)
Fujitsu Services
Hertfordshire Groundwork Trust
GlaxoSmithKline
HAPAS
Hertfordshire Business Incubation Service
Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce
Hertfordshire Connexions
Hertfordshire Constabulary
Hertfordshire County Council
Hertfordshire Police Authority
Intrinsic Technology
Job Centre Plus
The Living Room
MBDA
National Children's Home (NCH)
Neighbourhood Watch
North Hertfordshire College
North Herts. & Stevenage Primary Care Trust (PCT)
Stevenage Community Associations Group
St. John Ambulance
Stevenage Arts Guild
Stevenage Borough Council
Stevenage Business Initiative
Stevenage Council for Voluntary Service (CVS)
Stevenage Gay and Lesbian Club
Stevenage School's Consortium
Stevenage Sports Council
Stevenage Volunteer Agency
Stevenage Youth Council
Stevenage Trades Council
West Anglia Great Northern Railway
West of Stevenage Consortium
World Forum for Ethnic Communities in Stevenage