



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Report to:	Executive
Date of Meeting:	7 April 2008
Report from:	Partnership & Efficiency Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Title of Report:	Review into Community Partnerships
Agenda Item Number:	9 (i)

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 To present the findings of the Partnership and Efficiency Overview and Scrutiny Panel following the review into Community Partnerships as set out in appendix 1.
- 1.2 To seek the support of the Executive to the final review report and the recommendations contained therein.

Recommendation 1

That the Executive is recommended to retain and enhance the current Community Partnerships and that they continue to be supported and developed.

Recommendation 2

That the Executive requests that the LSP develops a communication strategy for the LSP and Community Partnerships to demystify and develop a wider contact and engagement with local people.

Recommendation 3

Ensure that wherever possible meeting dates, agendas and reports are promoted within the public domain prior to partnership meetings.

Recommendation 4

That the Executive requests the LSP develops a 'jargon buster' to ensure that meetings, agendas and invitations remain accessible to communities.

Recommendation 5

That a future mapping exercise of the district be conducted to establish the extent and coverage of parish councils, residents associations,

Community Partnerships and other community groups as an information base for future engagement as part of the People and Place delivery plan.

Recommendation 6

That as part of the People and Place delivery plan a survey be conducted into the variety of Community Partnership membership including the experiences and opinions of current members to further reduce barriers to participation, promote membership and aid greater ownership of any new model of community engagement within the new authority.

Recommendation 7

That the Executive requests consideration is given by the LSP to further investment in the membership of Community Partnerships including training and further support to help local people engage.

Recommendation 8

That the Executive is recommended to lobby the implementation executive cabinet through appropriate representation in relation to issues of decision making powers and financial influence of any future engagement structures in order to encourage community support and remove perceptions of powerlessness.

2. CONSULTATION

- 2.1 In the investigations and preparation of the review report a wide variety of officers, members, partner organisations and voluntary and public sector bodies were consulted.

3. CORPORATE PLAN AND PRIORITIES

- 3.1 The review into Community Partnerships will help contribute towards the authorities' new single priority of People and Place.

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

Financial implications are considered where possible in Appendix 1.

4.2 Legal

Legal implications are considered where possible in Appendix 1.

4.3 Personnel

There are no personnel implications to this report at this current time.

4.4 Diversity

Diversity implications are considered where possible in Appendix 1.

4.5 Risk

Risk implications are considered where possible in Appendix 1.

4.6 Crime and Disorder

Crime and Disorder implications are considered where possible in Appendix 1.

4.7 Data Quality

Every care has been taken in the development of this report to ensure that the information and data used in its preparation and the appendices attached are accurate, timely, consistent and comprehensive. The council's Data Quality Policy has been complied with in producing this report.

4.8 LGR Implications

LGR Implications are considered in the review report at Appendix 1.

5. BACKGROUND, POSITION STATEMENT & OPTION APPRAISAL

5.1 The Partnership and Efficiency Overview and Scrutiny Panel conducted a major review into Community Partnerships. The review began in June 2007 and was concluded in March 2008.

5.2 The purpose of the review undertaken was to investigate the value of Community Partnerships and future challenges to community engagement as well as looking at models of practice in other local authorities.

5.3 The review team undertook extensive consultation involving a wide variety of stakeholders and used various techniques to gain information and evidence to support the recommendations contained in the report. Focus Groups, questionnaires, site visits and discussion groups are examples of the methods used during the review process.

5.4 The review panel visited Gateshead Council who provided their own experiences and outlined their approach to community engagement. The Members in attendance found this visit informative providing a useful

comparison with a neighbouring authority albeit that they differ greatly from Chester-le-Street DC.

- 5.6 The review team gathered a lot of information and evidence throughout the review process and this has been collated and presented in the report attached at appendix 1 of this report.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 That Members note the review.

6.2 That the Executive consider and support the recommendations contained within the final review report at section 10 and summarised at the beginning of this report.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS / DOCUMENTS REFERED TO:

- As set out in Appendix 1.

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