



Chester-le-Street
District Council

REPORT TO: Executive

DATE OF MEETING: 7th July 2008

REPORT OF: Director of Corporate Services

SUBJECT: Implementing the Transition Plan; Developing 'People and Place'

ITEM NUMBER:

1 Purpose and Summary

- 1.1 In March 2008 the council adopted its Transition Plan for 2008/2009. Since that time early progress has since been made on the implementation of plan. The purpose of this report is to update members on progress specifically on the '**People and Place**' Priority and to seek Members agreement to progress made on developing the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plan
- 1.2 So far the following progress has been made. The council has:
- agreed the principles and financial allocations within the 2008/2009 Corporate budget setting process;
 - agreed the '**People and Place**' priorities and four areas of focus as part of the adopted 'Transition Plan';
 - set up the four action learning sets and appointed leads, Executive support and sponsors;
 - provided guidance and support to leads;
 - Executive has agreed the delivery plan by the action learning set leads;
 - carried out a launch event on 13th May 2008
 - worked with Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to undertake a workshop in May;
 - agreed to a single '**People and Place**' Scrutiny Panel with a task and finish approach to undertake work to support the delivery of the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plan which had its first meeting in June;
 - Agreed a Draft '**People and Place**' Scrutiny Work programme
 - agreed an approach to monitoring and reporting progress to the Executive on the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plan of which this report addressees
 - agreed an approach to delivering the '**People and Place**' Personal Profile for all employees and launched the project.

- Commenced time lining and crosscutting work to re-evaluate the scale and practicality of delivering the **'People and Place'** Delivery Plan;
- Set up a resource centre and a programme of weekly member engagement opportunities to be commenced in early July.

1.3 With specific regard to the **'People and Place'** Delivery Plan specific progress has been made on developing the high level proposals and details of proposals are set out in Appendix 1.

1.4 Members are recommended to:

- 1) Note the progress to date on implementing the Transition Plan;
- 2) Note the progress made in respect of individual progress and comment on the issues raised

2. Consultation

2.1 Executive Members, the Chief Executive, Directors, relevant Service Team Managers, Action Learning Set Members (including external stakeholders) have been engaged in the development of the **'People and Place'** Delivery Plan and its implementation to date.

2.2 No other consultations were considered necessary at this stage including external consultations or engagement.

3. Transition Plan and People and Place Priority

3.1 The Transition Plan, in effect, replaces the Corporate Plan 2007/2010. The Transition Plan includes a schedule of proposals from the previous seven priorities which ought to be and can be achieved in the remaining life of the council.

3.2 The council's choice to move towards a single priority of **'People and Place'** priority was considered as part of the budget setting process and forms a firm part of the Transition Plan. This report tracks progress to date and puts forwards proposals to take forward the delivery of the **'People and Place'** priority.

3.3 The Delivery Plan content indented in the appendices in this report address all four areas of the **'People and Place'** priority focus i.e.

- Partnerships for Futures;
- Investment in the Town Centre;
- Strengthening Partnerships; and
- Neighbourhoods

4. Implications

4.1 Financial implications and value for money statement

The Transition Plan takes account of the 2008/2009 budget process. Specific resources have been made available for both the contribution to setting up the new organisation and the implementation of the '**People and Place**' priority. It is considered that the council has properly reviewed its priorities in the light of Local Government Re-organisation and its abilities to deliver services during the transitional period. The view is taken that in doing so the council will achieve value for money in a year of significant challenge. In delivering '**People and Place**' resources may need redirecting during the forthcoming year. Action Learning Set leads and relevant Executive members are responsible for the allocated budgets to deliver the four strands of the '**People and Place**' priority

4.2 Local Government Reorganisation Implications

The Transition Plan and the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plan is the council's response to the challenges it faces in the final year of its existence. It is considered that the plan commits the council to working within its capacity to provide human and financial resources to help establish the council while delivering 'Business as usual'. It is considered that the Plan meets the guidance and recommendations provided by the Audit Commission set out in their Annual Audit and Inspection Letter. The subject of this report is principally progress against this plan and specifically the '**People and Place**' priority. It is not considered that the subject matter of the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plans at this stage requires any consultation or approval of the County Council because the proposals have been part of the budget process. Should potential resource issues change e.g. further unbudgeted resources caught within the direction occur then appropriate consultation with the County Council will take place.

4.3 Legal

The Transition Plan includes a factual statement of legal guidance to managers and Members. This remains under preparation and will be added to the Plan when complete. It is considered that the Transition Plan provides vehicle to enable the council to work within its legal powers during the transition period.

4.4 Personnel

How the council supports its employees through the transition process is a key part of the Plan. The Transition Plan revises the Organisational Development Strategy commits the council to supporting its employees through the process and helps them take advantage of opportunities that will occur in the new authority. A key part of this is the development of a '**People**

and Place' Personal profile for all employees. It is important to note that the Transition plan and the **'People and Place'** Delivery Plan are both living and developing documents and will be reviewed as a result of consultations undertaken and progress made. The approach to **'People and Place'** is through an 'action learning set approach' which has been a key tool used to deliver the council's improvement programme over the last three years. A key risk to delivery of business as usual next year is the capacity of the organisation to deliver. The council is faced with depleting human resources and account will be taken as to the ability of the council to deliver by regularly reviewing the strategic planning documents.

4.5 Other Services

The Transition Plan and the **'People and Place'** priority have implications to all services delivered by the council.

4.6 Diversity

There are no specific diversity issues in respect of the Transition Plan. The Plan does not replace the Equality Plan which will continue to be implemented through the lifetime of the council. In terms of developing In the **'People and Place'** Delivery Plan, action learning set leads are having regard to ensuring the projects are fully inclusive and projects regarding engagement with otherwise excluded groups and social cohesion are included within the delivery plan proposals.

4.7 Risk

There are clear risks to the organisation in failing to continue to maintain and improve on its progress in its remaining year. The council remains committed to improving its services although it faces difficult capacity challenges through the transition period. The council will be undertaking a strategic risk assessment once the delivery plans in relation to **'People and Place'** have been developed. A key risk to delivery of business as usual next year is the capacity of the organisation to deliver. The council is faced with depleting human resources and account will be taken as to the ability of the council to deliver by regularly reviewing the strategic planning documents. The timelining and cross cutting work currently being undertaken is intended to help evaluate the councils ability to deliver on its **'People and Place'** priority while continuing to deliver improving services to communities within the District.

4.8 Crime and Disorder

It is not felt there are any specific implications of the report on Crime and Disorder. Actions agreed through the delivery of the **'People and Place'** priority include proposals to positively address crime and disorder issues.

4.9 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, valid, reliable, timely, relevant and complete. The council's Data Quality Policy has been complied with in producing this report.

4.10 Other Implications

The report does not relate to a key decision. It is considered that the information will be communicated to the community and stakeholders by inclusion on the web-site. The Transition Plan has already been made available to staff and Members through the intranet and a web site is being developed. The Transition Plan has been made available to the County Council. An Intranet site for 'People and Place' has been established and work is being undertaken to update the council's own website to communicate the new priority. Should Members adopt the delivery plan progress towards achieving the '**People and Place**' priority will be significantly promoted and communicated. A '**People and Place**' brand has been developed and this will be used to co-ordinate, communicate and celebrate achievements in the coming months. Appendix 1 includes achievements that need to be communicated and celebrated and work is ongoing with the Communications Team to ensure that this happens.

5. **Background, Position Statement and Options Appraisal**

5.1 As a result of Local Government Reorganisation Chester-le-Street will cease to exist as a council from April 2009. In order to set a framework as to how the council will conduct its business during this final year a 'Transition Plan' has been approved by the council in March 2008 The Transition Plan aims to:

- state the Council's aims, objectives and priorities during the transition period;
- build on the councils learning and continue its improvement programme;
- set out revised corporate activity and funding arrangements for transition period;
- clarify corporate transition programme management arrangements;
- identify how we will support and motivate and support staff through the process;
- set out the values and principles by which the Council will operate during transition; and
- establish terms of engagement with 'County Durham Council' Change Programme

5.2 In doing so the Transition Plan incorporates a review of the Corporate Plan 2007/2010. It also takes account of the 2008/2009 budget process and provides a summary of the budget agreed. It sets out the council's new single

priority of **'People and Place'**. The Plan includes the council's Corporate Improvement Plan following its learning through Comprehensive Performance Assessment last year. The new priority of **'People and Place'** is being implemented through an 'Action Learning Set' approach, an approach which has brought the council significant success as part of its improvement journey to date. The Plan includes proposals to develop delivery plans to secure sustainable change to the people and places within the district and customer focused outcomes which can be used to influence the agenda of the new unitary council.

5.3 This Transition Plan is the overarching plan for Chester-le-Street District Council during the transition period, and as such sets out how services and projects will be facilitated, delivered and resourced. It is a rationalisation of the Council's Corporate Plan (incorporating the Best Value Performance Plan) 2007-2010, published in June 2007, and associated Medium Term Financial Plan, Organisational Development Strategy and Corporate Improvement Plan. As such, it represents the Council's contribution to the Districts Sustainable Community Strategy, the Local Area Agreement and the Strategic Vision for County Durham

5.4 The council has already made progress in implementing the plan which is summarised as follows. The council has:

- agreed the principles and financial allocations within the 2008/2009 Corporate budget setting process;
- agreed the **'People and Place'** priorities and four areas of focus as part of the adopted 'Transition Plan';
- set up the four action learning sets and appointed leads, Executive support and sponsors;
- provided guidance and support to leads;
- Executive has agreed the delivery plan by the action learning set leads;
- carried out a launch event on 13th May 2008
- worked with Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to undertake a workshop in May;
- agreed to a single **'People and Place'** Scrutiny Panel with a task and finish approach to undertake work to support the delivery of the **'People and Place'** Delivery Plan which had its first meeting in June;
- Agreed a Draft **'People and Place'** Scrutiny Work programme
- agreed an approach to monitoring and reporting progress to the Executive on the **'People and Place'** Delivery Plan of which this report addresses
- agreed an approach to delivering the **'People and Place'** Personal Profile for all employees and launched the project .
- Commenced time lining and crosscutting work to re-evaluate the scale and practicality of delivering the **'People and Place'** Delivery Plan;
- Set up a resource centre and a programme of weekly member engagement opportunities to be commenced in early July.

- 5.5 In terms of the delivery of the '**People and Place**' priority the Action Learning Sets have been working with Executive Members to develop and implement Delivery Plans. This remains work in progress and the delivery plans are continuing to be developed. Progress to date in the four Action Learning Sets. Key issues are as follows:

Partnerships for Futures

- All projects are on target
- Financing bid being tracked
- Executive Director appointment making progress
- First Board meeting has taken place and second will have met before the Executive
- Partnerships for the futures can be communicated internally now and externally when further work has been undertaken
- Next step is to undertake scoping work for the types of projects the scheme will deliver

Investment in the Town Centre

- All projects are on target
- Programme of events is progressing well
- Work on the Business Improvement District is slow
- Work on research on the future of the market is the subject of a scrutiny review which will be supported by consultancy advice.
- Permission has been granted to install 20 banners around the town
- Work is underway with the Business Association with regard to the locator boards
- Tests are about to take place on extended canopies and cover sheets at the market
- The Town Centre Development Manager requires some support to submit a bid for the Business Improvement District
- The success of events in the Civic Heart require communication and publicising

Strengthening Partnerships

- Proposals have been rationalised
- Only the Community Cohesion project is behind target and this project is being re-assessed
- Clear progress in terms of Youth Forum and Women's Achievements project
- Potential for a Town Council and Federation of Residents and Community Groups need to be put on hold as a result of imminent

Boundary Committee Review, although still a relevant Scrutiny Review project

- Work is to be undertaken to investigate whether the County wide Federation is a viable alternative in the light of local government re-organisation
- Need to firm up and provide clarity on the Community Cohesion project and resources available to achieve it.
- Action packed Futures event now cancelled by partners, need to consider feasibility of smaller event in Civic Heart
- Need to communicate and engage on key projects such as Youth forum and Women's Achievements.

Neighbourhoods

- All projects are on target
- Significant work has commenced with schools on Local Democracy Week and Respect and Anti Social Behaviour projects
- Need to communicate that ASB Questionnaires are now being used as best practice sub regionally and a local pupil has produced a DVD on ASB
- Timetable for Action packed Futures project is being re-assessed

5.6 It is still early days in the delivery of People and Place. However, a significant amount has already been achieved in setting up the Action Learning Sets, developing and rationalising the delivery projects and implementing the projects agreed. The delivery plan has always been a living document and has had to cope with change e.g. the impact of the Boundary Committee Review on some of the Strengthening Partnerships projects. There are few emerging problems. There is a need to consider how support can be given to the Town Centre Development Manager to develop the bid. This ought to be initially considered at Corporate Management Team

6. Recommendations

6.1 Members are recommended to:

- 1) Note the progress to date on implementing the Transition Plan;
- 2) Note the progress made in respect of individual progress and comment on the issues raised
- 3) That Corporate Management Team consider how the Development of the Business Improvement District Bid can be supported

- 7. Background Papers/Documents referred to**
- 7.1 Transition Plan March 2004
 - 7.2 Corporate Plan 2007/2010 – June 2007
 - 7.3 Budget reports to Council dated 28th February 2008
 - 7.4 Report to Executive 12th May 2008

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16th June 2008
Version 1.0

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Appendix 1



Chester-le-Street
District Council

'People and Place' Action Learning Set Monthly Monitoring Report

ALS Ref	ALS 1
'People and Place' Theme	Partnerships for Futures
Milestone and outcome achievement	<p>LSC Co-financing bid (funding roll out December 08) & TWCR business case for Single Programme (funding roll out September 08) funding being tracked.</p> <p>Job description/person specification drafted for Executive Director.</p> <p>Report on Hanlon Skills Register is being taken to CMT on 23 June and then to Executive to make recommendations on implementation of Hanlon Skills Register database for the district to track learners and unemployed individuals into employment. The database could potentially support Partnerships for Futures activity.</p> <p>Budget plan devised.</p> <p>Action learning set team in place.</p> <p>First board meeting took place 21 April. The following outcomes were achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consensus on objectives for Partnerships for Futures activity. • Delivery structure agreed – Enterprise Agency to host and manage project • Budget devolved from Chester-le-Street District Council to Enterprise Agency. • Interim chair/vice chair agreed.
	<p>Second meeting organized for 24 June. The following items require board decisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement of the budget • Agreement of the job description/person specification for Executive Director and approval to advertise. Nominations required for interview panel. <p>The board will also be provided with papers on Hanlon Skills Register and potential funding to support Partnerships for Futures activity. A presentation will also be delivered by the Executive Director of the Esh Group on the Fit 4 Employment Project to look at best practice. Nominations will also be sought for Chair/Vice Chair</p>

Actions behind target and remedial measures proposed	N/A
Issues to be resolved and who by	N/A
Successes to communicate and celebrate	<p>Both public and private sector support has been gained for the project, with the following organisations agreeing to sit on the board to guide and provide strategic oversight to Partnerships for Futures. Board members consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beamish Museum • Durham County Cricket Club • Enterprise Agency • Hermitage School • New College Durham • Ambic Ltd • Chester-le-Street District Council <p>The initial establishment of the project could be promoted internally through team talk/intranet. Once further development work has taken place and a clear framework is in place for delivery of Partnerships for Futures it can be promoted externally.</p>
Comments	<p>Partnerships for Futures is progressing in line with the delivery plan.</p> <p>Arrangements to establish the operational structure of the project are now in place and is supported by both private and public sector partners.</p> <p>The next steps will be to undertake scoping work for the types of projects Partnerships for Futures will deliver and recruitment of an Executive Director.</p>



‘People and Place’ Action Learning Set Monthly Monitoring Report

ALS Ref	ALS2
‘People and Place’ Theme	Investment in Town Centre
Milestone and outcome achievement	<p>The programme of events is now progressing well and reactions from members of the public are very positive. Every event draws shoppers and families to the civic heart as we had hoped – a series of photographs from the last event may be found on www.northeasteventphotography.co.uk later this week.</p> <p>Work to develop a Business Improvement District is slow – but a presentation will be given to representatives of the town’s Business Association on Monday 23 June. Discussions have taken place between the Town Centre Development Manager and the Director of Director of Corporate Services to look into the possibility of using capital monies to assist in this piece of work and employ a consultant or an assistant on a temporary contract to progress this work. Nevertheless a database is being developed with the assistance of the Business Association and it is hoped to produce the first stage of background work to develop the BID.</p> <p>Work to Research the Future of the Market has moved on and a consultancy company has produced a proposal to support the work of Scrutiny. This work will address key questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which are the top performing Market Towns? • What do the best do? • What do the traders think? • Is the perceived decline in market performance a local phenomenon? • Are ‘traditional’ markets elsewhere suffering from prevailing economic forces; such as the credit squeeze? • In times of perceived economic difficulties markets should offer better value for money, what affect does the presence of discounters such as Aldi and Wilkinson’s have on the market? • What are the factors that are recognised to appeal to shoppers? • Should the public sector continue to manage what is a private sector activity? • Which companies run private markets and where? • How do they compare? • How does the relationship between such operators and local authority landlords’ work? • What rental could be raised from a relationship with a private sector operator?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the sustainability of Chester-le-Street's market in the medium and longer term (five or ten years time)? • Suggest a way to maximize the investments that have been made and to increase profitability? • What decisions do this and the new unitary authority need to make in the light of the research findings? <p>Work on dressing the town with banners is progressing well. Permission has now been granted to install 20 banners around the town. This will then be followed up by work with the private sector to encourage them to sponsor more banners. Eduardo is designing the banners using the festival and People and Place logos.</p> <p>Work to install locator boards is also progressing – representatives from the Business Association are working to cleanse a database that was provided by the council to develop the BID. This is augmented by another database that they obtained from the Post Office. These will be collated and compared to establish a Town Centre Business Database, which will be used to populate the maps that will be placed in the locator boards. A spec has been produced and estimates received to manufacture the plinths upon which the 'welcome to Chester-le-Street' castings will be placed. These will be discussed with the Business Association on 23 June.</p> <p>The council has conducted some work to extend canopies and provide better sheeting for market stalls. 10 extensions to market stalls have been manufactured to test whether they would be viable and address the concerns of market traders. The health and safety aspects of these need to be tested and the Council's Health and Safety Team will become involved when the Market Supervisor returns from sick leave.</p> <p>A supplier of footfall counters for the front street has been identified and a proposal has been received. This will provide data for five years. Ian Herberson has been asked to decide whether capital funds can be used for this project – otherwise it cannot be delivered.</p> <p>Town Centre Development Manager is working with Lumalite to supply some new lights for the Xmas tree. The council has worked with Lumalite previously to supply the new Christmas lights for the front street. A meeting will take place in July to obtain estimates as well as progressing plans for this year's events.</p> <p>The project to use coloured paving slabs or adhesive signs leading from Riverside to the town centre is on hold pending some estimates – there will be agreed to test the viability of these.</p>
Actions behind target and remedial measures proposed	All projects seem to be progressing well but some assistance is required to develop the BID.
Issues to be resolved and who by	CMT to consider support for bid production

Successes to communicate and celebrate	The success of the events that have been provided in the civic heart.
Comments	N/A



'People and Place' Action Learning Set Monthly Monitoring Report

ALS Ref	Action Learning Set 3
'People and Place' Theme	Strengthening Partnerships
Milestone and outcome achievement	<p>Youth Forum - Officer and member group in place. - Clear plans for a way forward.</p> <hr/> <p>Women's Achievements - Project Group and Steering Group in Place. - Defines project plan and budget requirements. - Key activities, roles and responsibilities determined. - Article published in District News.</p> <hr/> <p>CLS Sports and Activity Network established outside ALS.</p> <hr/> <p>Action Packed Futures – Riverside event is being reconsidered as a smaller event in the Civic Heart as part of Town Centre project.</p>
Actions behind target and remedial measures proposed	<p>Community Cohesion – Resourcing of project - Julie Underwood to work with the Leader to identify possible external resource.</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Issues to be resolved and who by	<p>Community Cohesion requires additional resource or Plan B (Mythbusting) – Julie Underwood – 20th June.</p> <p>Potential for a Town Council – currently on hold until after the review of the Boundary Committee in June – Chris Potter.</p> <p>Federation of Residents and Community Groups on hold until outcome of Town Council is considered and whether the County Durham Federation is considered as an alternative – Jorge Lulic</p> <p>Action Packed Futures – Consideration of an alternative event in Civic Heart – Andy Stephenson.</p>
Successes to communicate and celebrate	<p>Clear priority for projects (Youth Forum, Women's Achievements, Strengthening 3rd Sector and Community Cohesion)</p> <p>Progress with Youth Forum – discussions leading to an established group of council officers and a clear way forward.</p> <p>Women's Achievements project underway – a steering group being formed and an article in District News published inviting women of</p>

	Chester-le-Street to take part.
Comments	<p>The Youth Forum project is being raised with the County Council and the Local Children's Board to recognize this approach and support it in the long term.</p> <p>The Youth Forum project will be prepared in the forthcoming weeks to start engaging with local schools directly after school holidays.</p>



'People and Place' Action Learning Set Monthly Monitoring Report

ALS Ref	ALS 4
'People and Place' Theme	Neighbourhoods
Milestone and outcome achievement	<p>Local Democracy Week – Initial meeting with The Word undertaken. Initial contact and feedback with local secondary schools in support of LDW.</p> <p>DIY Neighbourhoods Toolkit- Best practice research now being undertaken</p> <p>Chester in Bloom – work to commence in August</p> <p>Respect & Anti Social Behavior – 4500 questionnaires now distributed to secondary school pupils. Questionnaire now adopted by Durham Constabulary as a best practice and being used across the county. Fyndoune School has now allocated timetabled 1hr session for ASB led by Council staff. Initial DVD for pupil engagement has been produced by a local pupil</p>
Actions behind target and remedial measures proposed	There are no actions behind schedule
Issues to be resolved and who by	None
Successes to communicate and celebrate	<p>ASB Questionnaire used as best practice sub regionally.</p> <p>A local pupil has developed and produced a schools based ASB communication DVD which will be adopted by Durham Constabulary</p>
Comments	<p>Action Packed Futures event is now cancelled and the delivery of associated sustainable living project to be undertaken by Andy Stephenson remains uncertain.</p> <p>Agreement and allocation of the project budget is to be finalised on 19th June.</p> <p>A review and revision of the overall timetable has been undertaken with associated team members.</p>

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