



Chester-le-Street
District Council

REPORT TO: Executive

DATE OF MEETING: 4th August 2008

REPORT OF: Director of Corporate Services

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

ITEM NUMBER: 7

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 is the second
- 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 commenced a programme of weekly member engagement opportunities 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 identified 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 help 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 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 commenced a programme of weekly member engagement opportunities 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 and key issues are as follows:

Partnerships for Futures

- All projects are on target
- Expression of interests submitted for LSC co-Financing funding
- Job description/person specification for Executive Director and Budget Plan approved by the Board.
- Recruitment and selection on target for end of July 2008.
- The Operational Plan and Terms of Reference will be agreed at the August Board meeting
- On-going work is taking place to implement a database to support Partnerships for the Future activity

Investment in the Town Centre

- Programme of events continues to progress well
- Successful Veterans Day event held 5 July 2008
- Events programme developed into a leaflet to be distributed to households in town centre wards and community centres
- A presentation was given to representatives of the town's Business Association who were in favour of developing a Business Improvement District and Town Centre Master Plan.
- Research on the Future of the market has begun with the company interviewing market traders and customers and a scoping report will be presented to Scrutiny on 30 July 2008.
- The Banners for dressing the town have now been designed and are awaiting approval from the company, prior to being erected.
- An updated town centre database is awaited from the Business Association in order to complete the locator boards
- Work to extend canopies and provide better sheeting for market stalls will continue as soon as possible

- Meeting held with supplier to obtain an estimate for new Christmas tree lights
- The Town Centre Development Manager requires some support to submit a bid for the Business Improvement District

Strengthening Partnerships

- Part time resource secured to help co-ordinate the Community Cohesion project
- Good progress made with the Women's achievements project, including first meeting held
- Dinner organised for the key partners for the Strengthening the third sector project
- A Forward Plan to be established for the Community Cohesion project detailing how the 3 communities will be engaged
- A briefing report has been prepared regarding the County Durham Federation of Residents and Community Groups
- A scrutiny task and finish group is to be established for the Potential for a Town Council project to consider the appetite for a Town Council and to investigate potential costs
- A briefing paper is to be produced regarding the development of outdoor facilities at Sacriston as part of the CLS Sports and Activity Network project
- A clear process needs to be developed for the Women's Achievements project

Neighbourhoods

- All projects on target
- Significant work undertaken with schools on Local Democracy and Respect & Anti-Social behaviour projects including agreement of costs
- Initial draft publication being developed for the DIY Neighbourhoods Toolkit
- Parish Council engagement regarding Chester in Bloom to commence in August 2008

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 but these are being addressed. A resource has been secured to help co-ordinate the Community Cohesion project but there is still a need to consider how support can be given to the Town Centre Development Manager to develop the bid.

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

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
- 7.5 '*People and Place*' Action Learning Set Monthly monitoring reports

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15 July 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>Expression of Interest submitted to 14-19 Increasing Participation in Employment, Education and Training Action Group submitted for LSC Co-Financing Funding.</p> <p>Expression of Interest submitted to New College Durham for LSC Co-Financing Funding for Priority Sector Routeways.</p> <p>Approval of job description/person specification for Executive Director by board. Recruitment and selection on target for end of July.</p> <p>Budget plan agreed by board.</p>
Actions behind target and remedial measures proposed	
Issues to be resolved and who by	
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 though 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>Board has agreed that project team can begin drafting operational plan, which will be agreed at August board meeting. Terms of reference to be agreed at August board meeting.</p> <p>On-going work taking place to implement database to support Partnerships for Futures activity.</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. The events programme has been developed into a leaflet, which will be printed this week and distributed to households in town centre wards. Copies will also be distributed to community centres and other outlets. The Veterans Day event on 5 July was very successful despite inclement weather.</p> <p>Work to develop a Business Improvement District continues to be slow. A presentation was given to representatives of the town's Business Association and other leading business people, including the manager of Tesco and Mr Gordon Brown. They were in favour of developing a BID and a Town Centre Steering Group; which will also consider the Town Centre Master Plan. However direction about the terms of reference and purpose of the group in relation to the master plan is needed. No progress has been made regarding the use of capital monies to assist in this piece of work. A database is still being developed with the assistance of the Business Association.</p> <p>Work to Research the Future of the Market has begun and the company has started its research by interviewing market traders and customers. A scoping report will be presented at the next scrutiny committee meeting on 30th July.</p> <p>Work on dressing the town with banners The banners have now been designed and are ready for the approval of the company, which will erect them.</p> <p>The Business Association has yet to provide the updated database of town centre businesses, which is required in order to complete the map, which will be housed in the locator boards.</p> <p>Work to extend canopies and provide better sheeting for market stalls will continue 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. Awaiting confirmation that capital funds can be used to complete this work.</p>

	<p>A meeting has taken place with Lumalite to supply some new lights for the Xmas tree and they will supply an estimate.</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 – the viability of these needs to be tested.</p>
Actions behind target and remedial measures proposed	All projects seem to be progressing well but some assistance to develop the BID would be appreciated.
Issues to be resolved and who by	
Successes to communicate and celebrate	The success of the events that have been provided in the civic heart.
Comments	



'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>Part-time resource secured to help co-ordinate the Community Cohesion project. Alan Kay will be working with Julie Underwood</p> <p>Women's Achievements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First meeting of the Project Group. - Discussions regarding categories of women's achievements (Women at War, Sporting achievements, etc) - End product of the project agreed (hardcopies and electronic copies of archives, past and present stories, written documentation, video, photo's, website). - Possible branding discussed (e.g. What Wonderful Women) <p>Dinner organised for the key partners for the Strengthening the 3rd Sector project.</p>
Actions behind target and remedial measures proposed	
Issues to be resolved and who by	<p>Community Cohesion (Alan McKay) – To set out a forward plan detailing how the 3 communities will be engaged.</p> <p>Federation of Residents and Community Groups – To provide a briefing report for the Leader regarding the County Durham Federation of Residents and Community Groups – 18th July 2008</p> <p>Potential for a Town Council – set up a scrutiny task and finish group for the Town Council project to consider the appetite for a Town Council and to investigate the set up and running costs.</p> <p>CLS Sports and Activity Network – To produce a briefing paper to consider the project to develop a business case and plans for the development of outdoor facilities at Sacriston – 18th July 2008.</p>
Successes to communicate and celebrate	<p>Resource secured for Community Cohesion Project.</p> <p>First meeting of the women's achievements project group. Website URL secured for WhatWonderfulWomen.co.uk</p> <p>Dinner set up at Lumley Castle on 10th July with Chester-le-Street CVS, the Bridge Group and Durham and Chester-le-Street Enterprise Agency to consider strengthening this partnership.</p>
Comments	Clear process needs to be developed for the Women's Achievements project to set out how this will actually be achieved.



'People and Place' Action Learning Set Monthly Monitoring Report

ALS Ref	ALS 4
'People and Place' Theme	Neighbourhoods
Milestone and outcome achievement	Local Democracy Week - Initial meeting with The Word undertaken. Initial contact and feedback with local secondary schools in support of LDW. Costs for developing the actions agreed
	DIY Neighbourhoods Toolkit - Initial draft publication being developed
	Chester in Bloom - Parish Council engagement to commence in August
	Respect & Anti Social Behavior - All costs for actions have been agreed
Actions behind target and remedial measures proposed	There are no actions behind schedule
Issues to be resolved and who by	
Successes to communicate and celebrate	
Comments	The team members are quietly developing and delivering their given projects.