



Chester-le-Street
District Council

REPORT TO: Executive

DATE OF MEETING: 1st December 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 sixth
- 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 has been developed. The Transition Plan has been made available to the County Council. An Intranet site for 'People and Place' has been established and work has been 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

- On-going development of Hanlon Skills Register to support the project
- Sub-project proposal to be developed for training academy at Ambic
- Research of recruitment agencies being undertaken to identify if this would be a beneficial option for recruitment of the Executive Director
- Job description will also be circulated to appropriate organisations to advertise the post as a secondment

Investment in the Town Centre

- The multi cultural celebration focused on Divali held 25 October 2008 was a great success despite being cancelled at lunchtime due to bad weather
- Christmas Lights to be switched on 22 November 2008 accompanied by a mass sing - along
- Meeting held between the Leader, Chief Executive and Town Centre Development Manager to discuss the development of the BID
- Finance for development of BID has now been released and the process to recruit an assistant has commenced
- The final draft of the research report on the 'Future of the Market' considered by the Task and Finish group on 17 November 2008
- Locator board maps designed and presented to Business Forum meeting on 12 November 2008
- Monies allocated for Footfall counters used to purchase new timers for Christmas Lights and installed in November 2008.

Strengthening Partnerships

- What Wonderful Women website is now live
- A significant number of stories of women's achievements stories have been collated and filming is underway
- Nomination forms for membership of the Youth Forum sent to local schools and groups and 7 completed forms returned
- Publicity for the Youth Forum undertaken via local newspapers, Council website and Leisure & Community Centres
- Action Packed Futures event to take place on 13 December 2008
- Initial collation of information regarding Third Sector organisations complete
- Meeting held on 12 November 2008 to agree the way forward for Third Sector project
- Durham Sport have commenced research work and begun a programme of consultation meetings for the Sports and Activity Network
- Grange Villa hosted first meeting of 3 community centres on 17 November 2008
- ICT support Service Level Agreement's ready to be signed by the community centres

Neighbourhoods

- One more live performance to be undertaken as part of the Local Democracy week activities
- Feedback on the activities has been well received and 'Who runs this Place' workshop generated great support from Elected Members and Senior Managers
- Local case studies are being developed to highlight aspects of community involvement in neighbourhoods
- Daffodil bulbs have been planted in all parished areas as part of the Chester in Bloom project
- Location of seating arrangements and tree planting due to be completed by mid December 2008
- Anti-Social Behaviour Event held at Riverside on 23 October 2008 was successful and well attended
- Work on ASB questionnaire and other related projects successfully continuing

5.6 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 plans are living documents and built to cope with change. The Community Cohesion Officer, responsible for implementing the Community Cohesion project under the Strengthening Partnerships Action Learning Set has given notice to terminate his employment and the authority is currently giving consideration to the replacement of this position. Alternative options are also currently being explored to recruit the Executive Director as part of the Partnerships for Futures project and recruitment for an assistant for the Town Centre Development manager has commenced.

5.7 Successes to celebrate include performances by the Solent people's Theatre on 'Who runs this Place', bulb planting in the parishes, Anti-Social Behavioural Event at the Riverside, filming and completion of website for What Wonderful Women, 7 completed nominations received for the Youth Forum, initial data collection for third sector organisations complete and ICT support service level agreements ready to be signed by the community centres.

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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14 November 2008
Version 1.0

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'People and Place' Action Learning Set Monthly Monitoring Report

ALS Ref	Action Learning Set 1
'People and Place' Theme	Partnerships for Futures
Milestone and outcome achievement	On-going development of Hanlon Skills Register to support the project. Sub-project proposal to be developed for training academy at Ambic.
Actions behind target and remedial measures proposed	Appointment of Executive Director – recruitment agencies are to be researched to identify if this would be a beneficial option and job description to be circulated to appropriate organizations to advertise the post as a secondment.
Issues to be resolved and who by	Jenny Johns
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	



'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</p> <p>Plans for October included an honest food festival on 18th but this had to be cancelled due to lack of take up from traders and due to being let down at the last minute by a marquee company.</p> <p>The multi cultural celebration focused on Divali on the 25th was a great success; large crowds were drawn to the civic heart to be entertained and educated about Diwali and it's significance to the Hindi community and other religions.</p> <p>Unfortunately the event had to be cancelled at 1300hrs because the wind started to gust at over 50mph. The emergency evacuation plan was instigated and the sheets on the marquee were removed within 5 minutes. The stewards and Town Centre Development Manager safely encouraged the public and performers walk from the civic heart to South Burns until the area was safe. However again the rain started up and it was decided to cut our losses and end the event.</p> <p>The Christmas Light Switch On event will take place on Saturday 22 November involving 5 local school choirs and singers from Chester-le-Street Civic Chior, Churches together and others. A mass sing-along is planned, led by a group from Birmingham – Beautiful Black Voices. The Chairman of the Council will make a speech and the lights will switch on at 1630hrs. Singers have been asked to bring hand torches so that they can spread light around the civic heart when the lights are switched on. It will be (hopefully) the largest public singing event seen in Chester-le-Street.</p>
Milestone and outcome achievement	<p>Work to develop a Business Improvement District has moved on a little</p> <p>A meeting took place between the Leader, Chief Executive and Town Centre Development Manager to discuss the direction of the terms of reference and purpose of a private sector led Steering Group and it's purpose relating to Town Centre Master Plan.</p> <p>Finance for developing the BID has now been released and the process to recruit a part-time temporary assistant has begun by consulting and communicating with businesses across the town centre. An inaugural meeting of a Town Centre Forum and BID Steering Group will take place when political membership has been decided.</p>

Milestone and outcome achievement	Work to Research the Future of the Market . The final draft of the research report will be delivered on Monday 17 November. This will be taken to the Task and Finish Group to use during a facilitated discussion, so that Members recommendations and comments can be recorded and added to the report.
	The locator board maps have been designed and were presented to the business forum at its meeting on 12 November. The planning application has been made and we will soon learn whether we can go ahead with the installation. So far no objections have been made.
	The money set aside for footfall counters will be used to purchase new timers for the Christmas lights, which were at the end of their safe working life. They were installed throughout the town centre during the first week of November.
Actions behind target and remedial measures proposed	None
Issues to be resolved and who by	
Successes to communicate and celebrate	
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>What Wonderful Women's Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A significant number of stories have been collated regarding women's achievements throughout Chester-le-Street district. - Filming of women's achievements stories is now underway. On course to be completed by the end of November. DVD planned to be ready by end of December. - Article planned for next issue of District News to further identify women of achievement throughout the district. - Further work required to prepare hard copies of stories for presentation within ring bound files and electronic CD versions. - What Wonderful Women website now live (www.whatwonderfulwomen.org.uk/)
	<p>Youth Forum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nomination forms for membership of the forum have been sent to local schools and local groups working with young people throughout the district. - So far 7 completed nomination forms have been received regarding joining the forum. - Nominations process open until 21st November. - Press release sent to local newspapers and published on council website. - Poster for encourage joining the Youth Forum to be sent to Leisure and Community Centres across the district. - First meeting of the forum will take place after 21st November. - Youth forum project team considering other methods to encourage take up, including going into school assemblies, building stalls in local schools and putting in place incentives for young people.

	<p>Action Packed Futures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The event has been re-scheduled for December 13th at the Civic Heart. Original event for 18th October cancelled due to problems with the hire of the marquees. - The event is planned to include :- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o A local food and sustainable use theme. o Working with Northumbrian larder, there will be a cookery demonstration throughout the day using local produce. o High quality local producers will have stalls selling their wares and there will be general sustainability advice available. o Planning to have an environmental magician holding three to four shows. <hr/> <p>Strengthening the Voluntary/Community Sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initial collection of information regarding 'not for profit' organisations in Chester-le-Street District complete. - Next meeting organised for 12th November to begin next stage of work to identify examples of best practice within 'not for profit' organisations throughout the district. - Further work required to produce specific case studies of best practices in 'not for profit' organisations. - Best practice examples will be grouped in themes to fit with the directorate responsibilities of the new unitary authority. - Further work required to identify methods in which the best practice 'not for profit' organizations will be promoted to the new unitary. One method will include the 'Handing over the Baton' document. <hr/> <p>Sports and Activity Network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Durham Sport has commenced background desk research on the project at Sacriston to build a strategic case for the development of sporting facilities. Durham Sport have begun a programme of consultation meetings with various stakeholders/interested parties. <hr/> <p>Community Cohesion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning application now made to the authority regarding the Grange Villa changing facilities. - Current Community Cohesion Officer; Alan McKay has gave notice to terminate employment. The authority is considering a replacement to this position. - Grange Villa hosting first get together meeting of three centres (Sacriston, Grange Villa and Pelton Fell) on 17th November. - Further work being undertaken to set up a community allotment at Stella Gill and extending credit union to Lilac House and Pelton Fell. - ICT support service level agreement ready to be signed by community centres; Sacriston; Grange Villa and Chester-le-street CVS. Further SLA planned for Lilac House once ICT provision is in place. - Further development undertaken on the online booking systems.
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Actions behind target and remedial measures proposed	Content needed to build the Sacriston Community Centre website.
Issues to be resolved and who by	Decide on replacement to Community Cohesion Officer position.
Successes to communicate and celebrate	<p><u>What Wonderful Women's Project</u></p> <p>Filming underway for What Wonderful Women.</p> <p>Significant material collated for women's achievements project.</p> <p>Website for What Wonderful Women now live with first stories being published.</p> <p><u>Youth Forum</u></p> <p>7 completed nominations received so far, for Youth Forum membership.</p> <p><u>Strengthening Voluntary/Community Sector</u></p> <p>Initial data collection of 'not for profit' organization in Chester-le-Street complete.</p> <p>Clear way forward agreed to raise profile of best practice 'not for profit' organizations in Chester-le-Street district to the new unitary.</p> <p><u>Community Cohesion</u></p> <p>ICT support agreements for Grange Villa, Sacriston and Chester-le-Street CVS ready to be signed.</p>
Comments	



'People and Place' Action Learning Set Monthly Monitoring Report

ALS Ref	Action Learning Set 4
'People and Place' Theme	Neighbourhoods
Milestone and outcome achievement	Local Democracy Week - this project has 1 more live performance to undertake in early December. The feed back on undertaken activities has been well received and the 'Who runs this Place' workshop generated great support and participation from Elected Members and Senior Managers
	DIY Neighbourhoods Toolkit - A draft toolkit booklet has been developed and is being reviewed. Local case studies are being compiled to highlight aspects of community involvement in neighbourhoods
	Chester in Bloom - 100 000 daffodil bulbs have been planted in all Parished areas. Locations of seating arrangements and tree planting will be timed to completion by Mid December
	Respect & Anti Social Behaviour - The ASB event held at Riverside 23 rd October has been successful and well attended. Work on ASB questionnaire and subsidiary mini projects are successfully continuing
Actions behind target and remedial measures proposed	There are no actions behind schedule and all projects will be delivered by Mid December as per the project plan
Issues to be resolved and who by	-
Successes to communicate and celebrate	Who runs this Place Bulb Planting ASB Event
Comments	