

Review of the Sustainable Community Strategy

Report of Gordon Elliott, Head of Partnerships and Community Engagement, Assistant Chief Executive, Durham County Council

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide the Health and Wellbeing Board (H&WB) with an update on how work is progressing on the renewal of the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and identifying cross thematic priorities across the County Durham Partnership (CDP).

Background

2. The SCS, as agreed by all partners through the CDP and by the Council at the Full Council meeting on 24th March 2010, is the overarching strategic plan for the county and is a 20 year document that should be reviewed every three years. The extent of recent changes has increased the significance of this.

Approach

3. All partners recognise that it is important to have an SCS as it is the single strategic plan for the county that shows how all partners across the County are working towards shared priorities and how this will make a difference.
4. The CDP Board held their annual away day in September 2012 and re-affirmed the Altogether Better Durham vision and the five priority themes as the right framework on which to build going forward. The Board also agreed the key areas to be covered by the new document. Following the away day, an initial timeline was developed, agreed and aligned to thematic partnership reviews. A presentation was given to all five thematic partnerships where each agreed an appropriate way forward and nominated an officer to liaise with the CDP team to progress this.
5. It was acknowledged that the proposed approach should take into account the timings of the proposed thematic reviews. Other important issues to consider were the election of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the health reforms, particularly the establishment of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Also, new and emerging data available following the Census 2011 will be released at various intervals throughout the year. The Local Elections that took place in May 2013 were also an important factor as engagement of Elected Members is important to this process.
6. Since the SCS 2010-2030 was agreed in 2010 the landscape has changed significantly. The General Election in May 2010 saw immediate implications for the County Durham Partnership and all partner organisations but this was only the start of the changes. Significant reduction in resources has meant changes to services which have then had, and continue to have, a collective impact on local communities. These have been further compounded by the wider economic situation.

Thematic Partnerships

7. At a thematic level, since 2010 there have been changes to some thematic priorities (SCS high level objectives). Changes to the overarching objectives for Altogether Healthier are shown below:

Altogether Healthier

Health and Wellbeing Partnership Plan/SCS 2010	Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013/17
Improve life expectancy	Children and young people make healthy choices and have the best start in life
Reduce health inequalities	Reduce health inequalities and early deaths
Improve mental health and wellbeing of the population	Improve the quality of life, independence and care and support for people with long term conditions
	Improve mental health and wellbeing of the population
	Protect vulnerable people from harm
	Support people to die in the place of their choice with the care and support they need

8. Where priorities have changed for other thematic partnerships, such as the Safe Durham Partnership, these will be reflected in the Sustainable Communities Strategy.
9. It is important that the SCS has a consistent whole strategy approach and is not simply a repeat of the five separate thematic strategies. In doing this there are some issues that will need to be addressed by thematic partnerships, for example, it is important for thematic partnerships to see where their objectives fit with the work of others, not only for cross thematic working but also in light of the collective impact of reductions or changes to services.
10. Other issues will also need to be addressed, for example, there appears to be a disproportionality of objectives across the five thematic areas and an inconsistent presentation of the importance given to addressing inequalities. These types of issues need to be considered so that a consistent way forward can be agreed for the SCS.
11. These are the types of issues that will be discussed with thematic partnerships over the next few months to enable the first draft of the SCS to be completed and discussed with partnerships.

New features of the SCS

12. In addition to the changing landscape and the five priority themes there are a number of new sections of the SCS that will show how the partnership is maturing and bringing greater benefits. The added value of the wider networks with the Voluntary and Community Sector, Local Councils, Faith communities and the Armed Forces will be a key part of the renewed document. Also, building on the strengths within local communities (an asset based approach) is something that, moving forward, will become more important as all partners look to realise efficiencies.

13. It was recognised, following discussions during the development of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS), that the social determinants of health need to be the responsibility of all parts of the CDP in order to address them properly.
14. Public Health colleagues are currently identifying any cross thematic priorities where there is an impact on the social determinants of health. As part of this a gap analysis is being undertaken in the form of a thematic mapping exercise with the purpose of beginning dialogue and debate around potential crossovers and areas for joint work based on good practice.
15. Following discussions at the County Durham Partnership Board on locality arrangements and how we look at key issues within the County at a sub county level through census data and other statistical analysis, five sub county geographies have been determined and agreed for use in the SCS. This has led to a new piece of work being developed that will offer a sub county view on what life is like within the county, at the five agreed geographies, and will give all partners the option to shape and target their work differently. This new Strategic Partnership Analysis will be a new feature in the SCS.

Next steps

16. A detailed project plan is being developed and will be shared with all thematic partnerships within the next two weeks.
17. In order to be able to develop CDP priorities that will make up the SCS Action Plan moving forward, work will be carried out with the thematic partnerships in order to be able to focus on the priorities and outcomes that will have the biggest impact.
18. The H&WB, along with all thematic partnerships, is key to developing these priorities and outcomes and optimising the opportunity offered through the renewal of the SCS.

Recommendations and reasons

19. The H&WB is asked to
 - Agree the approach for the review of the SCS
 - Agree to receive further updates as appropriate.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance - None

Staffing - None

Risk - None

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty - The actions set out in this report aim to ensure equality and diversity issues are embedded within the working practices of the CDP.

Accommodation - None

Crime and Disorder - Altogether safer is the responsibility of the Safe Durham Partnership.

Human Rights - None

Consultation - The County Durham Partnership framework is a key community engagement and consultation function of the Council and its partners. The recommendations in the report are based on extensive consultation with AAP partners and the establishment of a Sound Board to progress the recommendations and will continue this consultative approach.

Procurement - None

Disability Issues - None

Legal Implications - None