



Priority places: addressing inequality in Guildford Borough

Surrey County Council Local Committee for Guildford

9 December 2009

Key Issue

This paper is an annual update on the work to tackle inequality in Guildford Borough.

Summary

Addressing disadvantaged neighbourhoods through community development work in North Guildford has continued over the past year. In addition, the Surrey Strategic Partnership has identified Westborough as a priority place because of the significant levels of disadvantage faced by the community. This has refreshed the approach of the partner agencies working together in Westborough. At the same time, a network of agencies is continuing to meet quarterly in Ash to address issues of disadvantage in the community.

Officer Recommendations

The Local Committee is asked to:

- a) note and endorse the progress made in North Guildford and Ash.
- b) continue to use the resources at its disposal to promote the development of stronger, more self-reliant communities in Guildford.
- c) comment on the challenges facing partnership work in North Guildford and Ash.

1 Introduction and background

1.1 Guildford Borough is, in the main, an affluent area. Residents are largely healthy, enjoying well above average life expectancy, and people are generally well educated, highly skilled and well paid. However, there are pockets of significant deprivation.

1.2 The Index of Multiple Deprivation provides a measure of deprivation based on factors such as income, employment, health, education, housing and crime. Parts of Stoke and Westborough are within the most deprived national quartile. Ash also has pockets of deprivation. Annex 1 sets out the most disadvantaged parts of the Borough based on the 2007 Index of Multiple Deprivation.

1.3 Compared with the rest of Guildford Borough these communities have lower incomes, a higher percentage of residents with no qualifications, poorer educational achievement, as well as higher than average levels of crime and disorder. A higher proportion claim job seekers allowance and incapacity benefits. The relative levels of wealth of the surrounding communities compounds the disadvantage.

1.4 There is a history of effective partnership working in Guildford's most deprived wards. This has taken a range of different forms. In 1996 £140,000 of funding was secured through the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) for a four year 'Quality and Education' project in Westborough ward. This funding was matched by contributions in kind and cash from the principal partners: Guildford Borough Council (GBC), Surrey County Council (SCC), Surrey Training Education Council and Guildford Diocese.

1.5 In 2000 Surrey County Council approved a 'Self Reliance' policy. Under this banner work in Stoke and Westborough continued with an emphasis on children and education, but it also encompassed wider community needs and provision.

1.6 In 2002 a multi-agency project led by the Health Authority established a Healthy Living Centre in North Guildford using lottery funding. This funding ended in 2007. Surrey PCT, Guildford Borough Council and Surrey County Council, including through the use of Member allocations, have sustained community development worker posts in Stoke and Westborough over the past two years up to March 2010. However, this has become increasingly difficult to sustain and has tended to reduce the essential focus from frontline community support.

1.7 The community development workers work with individuals, community groups and the voluntary sector to build stronger communities, by developing more active citizens working together to tackle their own problems. Their work is guided by a group that is chaired by a member of the local community and has representation from the Surrey Primary Care Trust, SCC and GBC, as well as local voluntary, community and faith groups.

1.8 A strong network of agencies has continued to meet quarterly in Ash to share information, coordinate delivery and build relationships. The Police, Guildford Borough Council and Surrey County Council are all represented, as well as a range of voluntary, community and faith groups. The Ash Network has developed an action for 2009/10, focusing on improving youth provision, adult learning and links with the traveller community.

2 Achievements

2.1 In partnership with the community, as well as the voluntary sector and faith groups, we have achieved some real improvements in these communities. These include:

2.2 At Guildford Grove Primary School attainment at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 has steadily improved since 2002. At the same time, the number of children on Child Protection Plans has decreased. This is the result of specific interventions, for example the employment of a Home School Link Worker, and close working with the Spinney Children's Centre and other agencies.

2.3 The number and range of activities for children and young people in Stoke and Westborough has increased, for example with the establishment of the 'Our Place' youth group in Bellfields and the Youth Café in Westborough.

2.4 The level of crime and anti-social behaviour has fallen. For example, the number of recorded crimes in Westborough between April and December 2008 reduced by 19.8% compared to the equivalent period in 2007.

2.5 The Place Survey (2009) suggests that more people living in Stoke, Westborough and Ash Wharf feel that they can influence decisions affecting their local area, compared with the Surrey and Guildford averages. This is a testament to our approach of working with the local community.

2.6 Whilst we have achieved some real improvements through targeted projects and interventions, these communities remain more deprived than the rest of the Borough. It requires long term, sustained and targeted investment in these areas to reduce the level of disadvantage.

3 Priority Places

3.1 The Surrey Strategic Partnership recognises the need to support partnership working across the county in deprived areas. Consequently, it has identified four priority places across the county that suffer from significant levels of disadvantage. These are:

- Stanwell North, Ashford North and Stanwell in Spelthorne
- Maybury and Sheerwater in Woking
- Westborough in Guildford
- Merstham in Reigate and Banstead.

3.2 The work to deliver countywide and local priorities and Local Area Agreement (LAA) targets means that these areas will be subject to multiple interventions by countywide and local partners. It recognises the exponential hardship and impact for individuals and communities where there are poor outcomes in more than one of the seven domains of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (as set out in Annex 1). As such, to improve individual's life chances, to prevent duplication and to maximise impact, the Surrey Strategic Partnership recognises the benefits of coordinating work across services in these places.

3.3 This means that there will be a particular focus on taking a comprehensive view of existing public service activities in each area and looking at how joint working can result in better and more targeted services.

3.4 The intention of the former self-reliance policy and the current approach has been to ensure that locally sensitive projects and interventions become embedded in mainstream service delivery. However, in reality this has not always been the case. The 'priority places' approach will look at how we can use mainstream resources more effectively. It also has a strong preventative agenda, anticipating and avoiding problems at an early stage, targeting services to prevent expensive interventions later on.

3.5 The Delivery Management Group of the Surrey Strategic Partnership, which consists of senior officers from across the partner organisations, has pledged to visit all of the priority places. They will be visiting Westborough in February 2010 to assess what is being done and what more can be delivered.

3.6 The Guildford Local Strategic Partnership is leading on the work in Westborough. It is currently developing a long-term strategy, pulling together all of the work being undertaken by partner organisations individually and together. This will be circulated by February for discussion with, and then endorsement by, the Delivery Management Group.

4 Challenges

4.1 Partnership working in North Guildford and Ash is facing a number of challenges and issues:

4.2 Funding for the two community developments workers is only secured until March 2010. In total, approximately £71,000 is needed. For the year 2010/11, the PCT has pledged £10,000, Guildford Borough Council and Surrey County Council are yet to confirm what funding they will contribute. £25,000 has been secured from the South West Surrey Voluntary Grants Panel. The partners have also submitted a bid to the Big Lottery Reaching Communities Fund for four years funding for community development workers. The outcome of this will not be known until early 2010.

4.3 If lottery funding is granted and the current postholders retained, Surrey PCT who currently hosts the workers, will not be prepared to continue when they split the commissioning and provider functions within the Trust from April

2010. TUPE regulations to match the terms and conditions of the staff mean that a statutory organisation would be most suitable. Discussions are ongoing between the partners on this issue.

4.4 Receipt of lottery funding would assure additional funding for community development work for 4 years, however, the coordination and planning of the respective mainstream work of partners to tackle the inequalities over the longer term, remains key to the future work. Partners on the Delivery Management Group recognise the importance of this, and that it has not always been effective to date.

4.5 Whilst Westborough has been identified as a 'priority place', for many of the agencies working in the area it is an artificial distinction not including Stoke ward as a priority place, because the two wards share many of the same of challenges. At the moment the members of the Surrey Strategic Partnership are still defining what it means to be a 'priority place' and what each partner will offer.

5 Consultations

5.1 All of the projects in North Guildford are based on the principle that residents need to be engaged and involved in setting and delivering on a local agenda. The community development workers have been key in ensuring that this approach is adopted.

6 Implications (financial & value for money, equalities & diversity and crime & disorder)

6.1 Prevention work through co-ordinated ability in priority areas represents value for money to a range of public agencies, for example health, social care and community safety.

6.2 The approach supports vulnerable and less advantaged residents so that they can take opportunities for accessing employment and the benefits of living in Surrey. It also has regard to the needs of particular groups, e.g. ethnic minorities, older people and disabled residents.

6.3 The work aligns to the leader of the County Council's pledges to:

- Enrich: the lives of our residents through a consistently high standard of education, with access to diverse and comprehensive cultural activities.
- Enable: those who are vulnerable and need help:
 - to remain living in the community
 - to develop the life skills and receive the support they require
 - to feel secure in their environment
 - to be able to realise their full potential.

6.4 Community safety tends to be a priority for residents and an effective presence and local response through neighbourhood work and panels

contributes to the promotion of stronger, more resilient communities, which in turn have increased confidence in resisting crime and anti-social behaviour.

7 Conclusion and reason for recommendations

7.1 The work in North Guildford and Ash is undertaken to empower individuals and communities to develop local solutions to the problems that face them, and address a number of key issues for public services.

7.2 Statutory partners and other strategic partners such as the voluntary, community and faith sector are key in also developing a co-ordinated, long term, planned approach to their mainstream activity. Communities reasonably assume that co-ordination and targeted mainstream activity underpins our work in priority places. This is an important next phase of work.

7.3 The Local Committee and the local Members, in particular, have invested in many specific projects in these neighbourhoods and the support of Members is highly valued. The Local Committee is asked to give its support to the work of the partners to promote the importance of sustained, co-ordinated work in all services planning and resourcing in the priority communities.

8 What happens next

8.1 The Guildford Local Strategic Partnership will continue to lead the work on disadvantaged communities in the Borough. The Local Partnerships Team will convey the Local Committee's views to those agencies involved in the 'priority places' approach and other relevant work.

Officer:	Chris Williams
E-mail:	christopher.Williams@surreycc.gov.uk
Telephone number:	01483 517336

Annex 1 Results for the most deprived lower level super output areas in Guildford from the 2007 Index of Multiple Deprivation. Ranked out of 32,482 in England and 709 in Surrey (1 is most deprived).

	IMD 2007	IMD 2007	IMD 2004	Income	Employment	Health Deprivatio n And Disability	Education Skills And Training	Barriers To Housing And Services	Crime And Disorder	Living Environment
Ward and Super Output Area	Rank in England	Rank in Surrey	Rank in Surrey	Rank in Surrey	Rank in Surrey	Rank in Surrey	Rank in Surrey	Rank in Surrey	Rank in Surrey	Rank in Surrey
Westborough 012D	7756	4	2	4	18	10	2	475	2	317
Westborough 012C	11437	21	34	38	33	49	15	665	4	124
Stoke 007D	11564	22	9	49	53	54	13	206	42	58
Stoke 007C	11892	24	5	17	28	30	9	409	58	520
Ash Wharf 010C	12533	28	18	44	29	27	5	450	143	507
Ash Wharf 010D	13763	40	31	45	60	65	47	189	18	411
Westborough 009B	14171	44	30	76	73	58	10	639	17	290
Stoke 007A	15064	51	63	71	56	73	28	160	135	512
Friary and St Nicolas 013C	15430	55	28	133	8	22	532	620	39	8
Worplesdon 005E	15684	60	68	50	59	72	39	481	73	373
Westborough 012B	15929	66	81	68	57	39	25	704	103	377
Stoke 007B	16694	71	58	90	91	62	31	281	155	383