



**PRIORITY PLACES:
ADDRESSING INEQUALITY IN GUILDFORD BOROUGH**

7TH DECEMBER 2011

KEY ISSUE

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

SUMMARY

Residents, the voluntary, community and faith sector, as well as statutory partners have continued to work in Guildford's developing communities to address inequality in the Borough. The Westborough Strategy has provided a strong foundation for a set of focussed interventions. In Stoke a 'Planning for Real' exercise has been undertaken to identify the concerns and aspirations of local residents. Whilst in Ash a 'Community Street Team' of volunteers has successfully engaged local volunteers positively with young people.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Local Committee is asked to:

- i. note the progress made in implementing the Westborough Strategy and Action Plan;
- ii. comment on the proposals regarding the future direction and priorities of the Westborough Strategy and Action Plan;
- iii. note the progress made towards agreeing an Action Plan for Stoke arising from the Planning for Real exercise;
- iv. continue to use the resources at its disposal to promote the development of stronger, more self-reliant communities in Guildford.

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL COMMITTEE (GUILDFORD) ITEM 7

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, not all of Guildford's communities benefit from the opportunities the Borough provides.
- 1.2 The Index of Multiple Deprivation, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Health Profiles, Heat Maps and many other sources provide 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. Annexe 1 sets out the most disadvantaged parts of the Borough based on the 2010 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. A four year 'Quality and Education' partnership project was launched in Westborough ward in 1996. This was followed by in 2000 by Surrey County Council's '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. In 2002 a multi-agency project led by the Health Authority established a Healthy Living Programme in North Guildford using Big Lottery funding.
- 1.5 NHS Surrey and Surrey County Council in partnership with the boroughs and districts are tackling inequalities in geographical areas by the introduction of a 'priority place' model. Priority places are areas within which data tells us that residents experience inequality and deprivation relative to the rest of Surrey. Westborough in Guildford has been identified for reasons of Health and Wellbeing, Children and Young People and Economic Development issues.

2. ACHIEVEMENTS

- 2.1 In partnership with the community, as well as the voluntary sector and faith groups, some real improvements in these communities have been achieved. The following paragraphs set out what has been achieved in the past year.

3. PARTNERSHIP WORKING IN WESTBOROUGH

- 3.1 The Surrey Strategic Partnership (SSP) identified Westborough as one of four priority areas of the county based on national, regional and local data

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL COMMITTEE (GUILDFORD) ITEM 7

sources. There is a history of partnership working in north Guildford and the priority places work has been an opportunity to refresh our approach to supporting this developing community.

- 3.2 The Local Strategic Partnership agreed the Westborough Strategy in July 2010. It was recognised at the time that the associated action plan would need to be refreshed annually. The Stoke and Westborough Action Group (SWAG) has been monitoring the implementation of the strategy on behalf of the LSP. The updated membership of the group is attached at Annexe 2.

4. WESTBOROUGH STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2010-11 ANNUAL REVIEW

- 4.1 The attached annual review at Annexe 3 identifies that, whilst there is more work to be done to support this developing community, there have been numerous successful interventions made over the last year as a result of the strategy.
- 4.2 Whilst partnership working has been ongoing in north Guildford for a long time, there is no doubt that some initiatives and interventions have been put in place over the past year because Westborough is a priority place. However, the strategy has not significantly changed the way in which public services work together, or more fundamentally, how they work with the community.
- 4.3 As part of the preparation of the initial strategy and action plan and through ongoing discussions with local councillors, community representatives and frontline workers, it has become clear that they would wish to be increasingly engaged in delivering the required outcomes. This is to be welcomed.
- 4.4 Therefore, as the action plan that accompanies the strategy is refreshed, the emphasis needs to be changed from being focused on public services putting in place interventions to developing an approach that is much more led by the community. Greater importance needs to be placed on developing a coherent set of actions that the community and partners will deliver together. This is not to say that the plan should not include actions by individual partners. However there needs to be a better balance between short-term one-off actions and longer-term changes to way that the public sector and the community interact.
- 4.5 In addition, the refreshed plan also needs to include more robust performance measures so that we can more clearly demonstrate that the work we are doing is having a positive impact in supporting this developing community.
- 4.6 As the way in which public services are delivered continues to change, we must be mindful to keep a focus on the impact that changes will have on our developing communities. Partners have made a long-term commitment to working with the community in Westborough and momentum needs to be maintained.

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL COMMITTEE (GUILDFORD) ITEM 7

4.7 A programme of community engagement has been developed to involve residents and local groups in the preparation of a refreshed action plan. This will focus on how partners can work with the local community to address the priorities of the Westborough strategy, as set out below, and support residents in developing solutions to other concerns:

- Improving skills and employment opportunities
- Improving the health of residents and reducing inequalities
- Supporting children, young people and their families
- Increasing community pride, confidence and cohesion

4.8 The engagement process was launched on 18 October 2011 with two resident's workshops in and will continue with questionnaires and focus group work up until January 2012. The intention will be to submit a new Westborough action plan to the meeting of the LSP Board on 24 January 2012 for approval.

5. PARTNERSHIP WORKING IN STOKE

5.1 The needs of people living and working in Stoke ward are very similar to those people from neighbouring Westborough. The 2010 Index of Multiple Deprivation reinforces this. Historically, partnership working has always considered north Guildford as a whole. The Stoke and Westborough Action Group believes that the LSP should adopt a more coordinated approach to working in Stoke.

5.2 The Planning for Real exercise that has been running in Stoke is currently being concluded and an action plan is being finalised. SWAG would like the LSP Board to take ownership of the action plan and to provide a commitment to implementing the actions contained within it. As with the Westborough Strategy, SWAG would be responsible for monitoring its implementation locally.

5.3 The Planning for Real action plan will be delivered to the LSP at its meeting on the 24th January 2012. Thereafter work will begin with local people to find the best way for statutory agencies, faith, voluntary and community partners to work together to achieve its goals.

5.3 A strong network of agencies, including Members, 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.

5.4 One of the key priorities of the Network has to ensure that young people living in Ash are playing a positive role in the local community. Members of the group are concerned about some incidents of low level crime and anti-

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL COMMITTEE (GUILDFORD) ITEM 7

social behaviour carried out by a minority of young people, as well as a broader negative view of young people living in Ash.

- 5.5 In response a small working group has been established, with a secretary and a treasurer, to work with Surrey County Council's Services for Young People to develop a 'Community Street Team'. This is a group of volunteers who will carry out detached youth work. Similarly to the Street Angels in Guildford Town Centre, they will proactively go out onto the streets of Ash and talk to young people. The volunteers will receive training in basic youth work, best practice and safeguarding, to enable them to engage confidently with young people. Volunteers will wear clothing and an ID badge to identify them as a member of the Team.
- 5.6 The aim of the work is to promote mutual respect between adults and young people and to build a stronger sense of community. Whilst many adult members of our local communities understand the role they play within society many of our young people don't and this can leave them feeling alienated. The Community Street Team will work with such young people to help them understand that it is their right to also participate in the life of their local community in ways that enhance and enliven them.
- 5.7 The Street Team have built up participation locally and have recruited 18 volunteers altogether, with an age range of 20 to 60+. Recently, local surveys which are conducted every six months have revealed 'Young People' as an issue was no longer at the top of the list as the main concern for the community.

6. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

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

7. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Local Strategic Partnership supports developing self reliance and long term sustainable initiatives.

8. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 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.

9. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The partnership approach supports vulnerable and less advantaged residents so that they can take opportunities for accessing employment and the benefits of living in Surrey.

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL COMMITTEE (GUILDFORD) ITEM 7

10. CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 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 to address a number of key issues for public services. 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.
- 10.2 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.

11. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

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

CONTACT OFFICER:

Carolyn Anderson, Community Partnerships & Committee Officer, SCC
01483 517336
Carolyn.anderson@surreycc.gov.uk

Annexes x3

Background Papers:

Guildford Local Strategic Partnership, Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2026, October 2009.