



**OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE
(RUNNYMEDE)**

**Making A Difference: Runnymede's Sustainable Community
Strategy and Corporate Plan**

26 February 2010

KEY ISSUE

This report is for information only.

It provides an update on progress with Runnymede's Sustainable Community Strategy *Making A Difference*, adopted in 2009.

SUMMARY

The report outlines the two key themes and five priority areas in *Making A Difference* and describes current projects to deliver the strategy.

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1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 *Making a Difference* is the second Community Strategy for Runnymede. This document builds on the success of the first strategy – ‘*A Community Strategy for Runnymede*’ – developed in 2002 to improve the borough for those who live, visit and work here. Legislation in early 2007 placed on local authorities a duty to produce a Sustainable Community Strategy, with a stronger focus on long-term social, economic and environmental benefits. Like the original Community Strategy, this document was to set out key local aspirations and concerns and draw together Runnymede’s main long-term priorities.

2.0 Consultation and evidence gathering

- 2.1 The first Community Strategy, published in 2002, was the result of extensive consultation with residents, businesses, statutory organisations, and voluntary and community groups. While many of the issues identified then remain relevant, a refresh exercise was undertaken to ensure the new strategy continued to reflect local priorities.
- 2.2 Using Runnymede’s first Community Strategy as its base, over the spring and summer of 2008 Runnymede Borough Council carried out a series of evidence-gathering and consultation exercises to begin to develop *Making a Difference*. Significant inputs to this process included a survey of the Council’s Residents’ Panel, Safer Runnymede’s Community Safety survey (June 2007), and the Surrey-wide Community Survey (November 2007), in addition to Surrey’s own Sustainable Community Strategy, the county-wide Local Area Agreement and the new National Indicator set.
- 2.3 A clear set of recurring themes and common priorities emerged on analysis of these consultations and other inputs, which were further refined at a Local Strategic Partnership stakeholder event. *Making a Difference* should therefore as closely as possible express the priorities of the local community.

3.0 Delivery of community priorities

- 3.1 *Making a Difference* identifies two major themes – Healthier and Safer Communities, and Prosperous Communities – setting out the long-term focus for the Local Strategic Partnership. Within the Healthier and Safer Communities theme, there are five priority areas:
- Maintaining clean and safe streets
 - Increasing access to health and social support facilities
 - Supporting vulnerable people
 - Promoting sports and leisure facilities
 - Supporting communities

Within the Prosperous Communities theme, there are the following seven priorities:

- Increasing access to decent housing
- Identifying and implementing solutions to traffic congestion
- Supporting and promoting local businesses

- Revitalising town and village centres
- Safeguarding and increasing job prospects
- Protecting the natural environment
- Promoting the sustainable use of resources

3.2 Runnymede's Local Strategic Partnership is responsible for monitoring delivery against these priorities, and has established task groups to deliver those aspects of the strategy that can only be achieved through partnership working at a local level. Specific local targets are captured in task group action plans and, where appropriate, these are linked to Local Area Agreement targets and National Indicators.

3.3 The development of the Sustainable Community Strategy coincided with a need to update Runnymede Borough Council's own strategic priorities, and *Making a Difference* was subsequently adopted as the Council's corporate plan. The Council sets out a delivery plan against the aspects of the strategy for which it has responsibility in each of its Committee Service Plans, which are reviewed every six months.

4.0 **Current projects**

4.1 Projects and activities being taken forward by the partnership in Runnymede include:

- i) **Encouraging responsible vehicle use:** The Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership is publicising all partner actions taken to tackle driver behaviour locally (e.g. Road Safety Awareness Day, Drive Stay Alive event and new DVD).
- ii) **Improving the street scene:** Six town centre orderlies have been introduced in the main town centres, which have had a positive impact on the overall street cleansing process.
- iii) **Promoting healthy lifestyles:** The Runnymede Smokefree sub-group has made a successful bid for Tobacco Control funding for a social marketing project to reduce smoking in targeted wards.
- iv) **Enhancing opportunities for adult learning:** The Community Learning Partnership is producing publicity targeted at the most deprived areas in the borough. Outreach work is taking place in key areas.

4.2 A more detailed update on progress against *Making a Difference* was reported to Runnymede Borough Council's five main service committees in November 2009. These reports are available with the committee papers on the Council's website.

5.0 **Links with Standing up for Surrey – Surrey Strategic Partnership Plan**

5.1 The ten priorities expressed in the Surrey Strategic Partnership's 'Standing up for Surrey' plan (the county-wide Sustainable Community Strategy) have a great deal of overlap with those being pursued in Runnymede locally. For instance, the following priorities have close links with Runnymede's strategy:

- E. Improve the global competitiveness of Surrey's economy through sustainable growth, underpinned by appropriate infrastructure
- G. Help people in Surrey to achieve more sustainable lifestyles
- H. Achieve better standards of development to deliver more social, environmental, and economically sustainable benefits
- I. Improve public confidence in the ability of public services to keep Surrey safe, prepare for emergencies, and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour
- J. Strengthen local communities through targeted public and voluntary sector activity, active citizenship and work to tackle inequalities

5.2 This overlap takes effect through joint working within local partnership groups. For example, the Surrey-wide priority to encourage healthy lifestyles is delivered in Runnymede by the work of the Health and Social Care task group. Similarly, the Surrey-wide priority to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour is delivered through Runnymede's Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership. A strategic county-wide overview is taken by the Surrey Strategic Partnership.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 The Audit Commission's recent Comprehensive Area Assessment report concluded that the borough has a clear view of its priorities and there is good partnership working to improve things for local people. There is however potential for closer integration of the delivery of *Making a Difference* and *Standing up for Surrey*. The Council has initiated a Service Review Programme that is aimed to transform Runnymede's service delivery and achieve savings of £1-1.5million. In due course this will help to inform a review of *Making a Difference* and partnership working in the borough.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Housing and Community Services Committee papers, 5 November 2009
 Leisure and Environment Committee papers, 17 November 2009
 Planning Committee papers, 18 November 2009
 Economic Development Committee papers, 19 November 2009
 Corporate Management Committee papers, 26 November 2009