

Item 7

Annual Report on Self-Reliance.

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL'S
LOCAL COMMITTEE (SURREY HEATH)**

8th December 2004

KEY ISSUE:

The progress of self-reliance work and projects in two relatively high need wards in Surrey Heath.

SUMMARY

The Surrey County Council Self Reliance Policy identifies the high need areas across the County, and within each Borough, Members are also invited to decide on whether to promote any additional local activity to promote self reliance. The report describes the progress of ongoing work in St Michael's and Old Dean. The purpose of the report is to inform Members of recent activity and gain Member's support for new developments in the St. Michael's project.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Surrey Heath Local Committee ;

1. discusses and notes the progress made
2. notes the progress of the Old Dean Advice Centre, and that a full report on the future plans will be brought to the next Local Committee.
3. supports the developments of the St Michael's project as outlined in para 13.

INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

1. The County Council's corporate plan – "Making Surrey a Better Place" includes a policy of promoting self – reliance for disadvantaged groups.
2. Although the vast majority of people in Surrey have a relatively high quality of life, there are pockets of deprivation across the County. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) statistics are compiled by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) using a range of data including Census data and a range of more recent sources of statistical information. The IMD illustrates the location of these pockets and the relative severity of the deprivation experienced by different communities.

3. Using the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) both the Old Dean and St. Michael's have seen improvements since 2000. The Old Dean has seen a reduction of 9% in its IMD score and St Michael's has seen a reduction of 4%. Although, it must be born in mind that the area relating to the St Michael's project is smaller than the area covered by the statistics and so further improvements in the smaller project area may be masked.
4. Surrey County Council has five identified major self-reliance projects in North Guildford, Preston, Sheerwater and Maybury, Court and Ruxley, and Leatherhead North. In addition, Members have been asked to review the high need areas in their Borough and decide on whether to promote any self – reliance initiative locally. In Surrey Heath, the pockets of relative deprivation are Old Dean and St Michaels, and Members through the Local Committee have supported the work as follows in these two areas.

ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

5. In Surrey Heath, two projects have been underway for some years now, in two wards, Old Dean and St Michaels.

Old Dean:

6. The Old Dean Advice Centre (ODAC) has now been running for a year. The idea was first thought of in 2001 and was set up as a three year project to run from 2003 – 2006 with plans that, following evaluation, if successful, to seek to identify ways the project could carry on. Due to unforeseen legal negotiations that ODAC did not open until November 2004 and the Community Development Worker, Kim Nicoll, has been in post now for six months.
7. Usage of the ODAC has increased dramatically with the Community Development Worker in post. Average numbers of users are up to approximately 140 per week from just 20 – 30 in the first few weeks. This includes attendance for courses, open sessions such as coffee mornings, Police, housing and Member surgeries as well as for smaller meetings held by Children's Services, Domestic Violence outreach and other user groups e.g. Attention Deficit Disorder support group. The calendar of events and activities for November is included in Annex A.
8. The rent for the ODAC has been secured from the Safer Surrey Heath partnership until November 2007 and the running costs have been secured from the pooled Members Allocations until November 2007 as well. The next steps to securing the sustainability of the project are already underway. The Management Committee (made up of local representatives, with support from officers from Surrey County Council, Surrey Heath Borough Council and Peerless Housing Group) are exploring the possibility of registering the ODAC as a charity. A full report on the future plans for the ODAC will be brought to the next Local Committee meeting.

St Michaels:

Background information on the St. Michael's project can be found in Annex B.

9. This project has been financially supported by the main 3 partners, Surrey County Council, Surrey Heath Borough Council and Peerless Housing since it started in June 2000, and the present funding is secure until 31st March 2006. In the current year partners each contribute £3,000 to the project.
10. Following initial successes, including some of the activities as annexed, a common agenda whereby community representatives want to continue to work together has not been identified. As such, the project has achieved it's original aims, however it has not sustained these, primarily due to this community wanting to lead their own lives, with any participation being minimal. Many local residents work and view their homes as a safe haven from the days activities and so do not wish to be involved in wider community activities.
11. The area is still in need of support from local agencies and providers, and as can be seen, there remains a commitment to a range of services, and the partnership are advocating a realignment to better meet the needs of local people. Both local residents and the partnership consider The Flat would be better used as a home for a local family. This will mean that funds will not be used for rent and running costs of The Flat but can be put directly into front line projects for the area. A wider partnership group including the Police will be set up to take forward work designed to specifically support this area - e.g. the Youth project outlined in the Members Allocations report. Members are asked to support this development.

CONSULTATION

12. Consultation is key to both projects. There are regular consultations by both paper and face to face interviews with the community in both St. Michael's and the Old Dean.
13. A new consultation will be carried out on the Old Dean in the next month.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

14. The St. Michaels' project is funded until March 2006.
15. The ODAC is funded until November 2007. A programme to manage this project's sustainability, with ongoing financial stability will be required for its continuation. This work is being undertaken, and a full report on the future plans for the ODAC will be brought to the next Local Committee.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

16. At the heart of the work being undertaken is the approach of ensuring the developments in both areas are sustainable by the local community and services involved.

CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

17. It is hoped that the broad approach to community development in both areas will have a positive impact on community safety and the crime and disorder concerns of local people.

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

18. All Self Reliance projects will be run with regard to equalities implications. The building being leased for the ODAC is fully accessible.

LEAD/CONTACT OFFICER: Jane Biscombe

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 01276 800269

BACKGROUND PAPERS: None

St Michael's project – background

During 1999, the following agencies met to evaluate the situation in this location: Surrey County Council - including Surrey Heath Children's Services, Library Services, Youth Development Service, Life Long Learning, Surrey Heath Borough Council, Surrey Heath Housing Association, Surrey Police and local health visitors. All agencies pooled ideas, expertise and local experience during discussions and indicated varying levels of commitment to this community project, which relates to Surrey Avenue, Avenue Sucey, and Southway, within St Michael's ward. The group agreed that it would work to raise the profile of services available, and encourage the use of mainstream services.

Within this small geographical area, there are 124 properties with a housing profile of 1, 2, or 3 bedroom flats, of which Peerless Housing owns the vast majority, a few are privately owned. Most tenants who live in this area initially view this as a stop gap to a house, however, the reality is that Housing priorities have changed, and the certainty to move on to a house is not a guarantee.

A flat was identified at 35 Surrey Avenue and a Community development Worker employed by Peerless. One of the key tasks for the Community Development Worker was to support the setting up of a Resident's Association to empower local people and give them a voice to input into the running of the project. In January 2004, an annual plan was introduced as an improvement in measuring the results in relation to service delivery.

The Original Action Plan Aims:

- ◆ Employ on a part-time basis a Community Development Worker to oversee and manage the day to day needs at a local level, from June 2000 – October 2004.
- ◆ Meet the needs of the relatively high concentration of single parent families
- ◆ Address the lack of recreational facilities for the relative high numbers of young people
- ◆ Increase the current low take-up of services, including health, library services, and the traffic/access issues
- ◆ To increase the sense of community spirit and involvement, by supporting the continuation of the Local Residents Association.
- ◆ Improve the physical environment by reducing graffiti damage to property and improving the landscaping, following a consultation process.
- ◆ To develop meaningful ongoing consultation with local residents and to feed resident's views into the Strategic Area Plans.
- ◆ For the Community Development Worker to inform and manage resident's expectations for the future.

The following groups have operated from the Flat during the past 12 months:

- Young Parents Group
The Young parents group used the flat as a second base in Surrey Heath from the spring of 2004 to September 2005. The group were a

victim of their own success, with the numbers increasing to such an extent, where professionals were concerned regarding the health and safety with the increase in numbers. With great sadness the decision was taken to relocate to the Old Dean Youth Club as a temporary measure, whilst another location is sought.

- The Literacy Group and Numeracy Group
These groups can move on to additional courses and support offered by Adult and Community Learning.
- Surrey Women's Aid
- The Youth Club
The youth club has now ceased to operate due to budgetary pressures. A proposal for a short courses to support the young people in this area is included in the Members Allocation report.

Earlier in the year, it became clear that the Residents Association was not viable, as many of its former members had moved away, and sadly the remaining residents were not interested in continuing with its work. However, the managing group instigated an Annual Survey of local residents in consulting to ascertain their views on what was being hosted at The Flat. This was carried out during the summer and concluded in October 2004, and its findings led to the partnership hosting a wider meeting with all interested parties and user groups of the community flat.

Following a meeting in October 2004 it was agreed that, learning from experiences to date, the role of the community worker would better meet the needs of the area by co-ordinating activities as opposed to offering an enabling role. This would continue to offer the resource of the flat to outside organisations and agencies who wished to offer a service provision to this area. This meeting resulted in an Annual Plan for 2005, this is included at the end of this annex.

Initiatives have been undertaken over the past 4 years in an effort to engage with the local community include:

- Social and community events such as street parties and fun days,
- Planning for Real events,
- Additional consultations,
- Provision of free courses and learning opportunities e.g. basic skills, first aid, DIY,
- Mother and Toddler groups,
- Specific Youth consultations,
- Regular tenants meetings.

ST. MICHAEL'S PROJECT
ANNUAL PLAN
JANUARY – DECEMBER 2005

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|---|---|----------------|
| 1. Newsletter | Copies of newsletters to be sent by email to Chris, Jane and Jayne at the time of distribution. | Monthly |
| 2. Audit | of all activities within St. Michael's ward with contact Names and details of projects. | End June |
| 3. Young Parents Group | To support with admin duties and assist with the ongoing day to Day management, relating to the crèche and the bank account. | |
| 4. Youth Club | To work with the Youth Workers who deliver this service on a Monday evenings, and discuss the possibility to expand the service to a Wednesday evening fulfilling the need of the area. | Ongoing |
| 5. Training | Actively pursue the training opportunities for:
a. Computer Group
b. Literacy/English
c. Start-up Numeracy | September |
| 6. Annual Survey | To be completed during September/October, to be discussed in greater detail. | |
| 7. Stakeholder Meeting | Chris, Jayne and Jane to plan and hold a stakeholders meeting on 19 th May 2005. | |
| 8. Health & Safety | To undertake a Health & Safety Risk Assessment of the flat.
In hand with Jayne and Chris. | Urgent |
| 9. Local Providers using the St Michael's Community Flat | Work with and encourage other external Agencies to utilise the available facilities at the flat. The aim is to add another two regular bookings per week. | September 2005 |