

**REPORT TO:** Council

**DATE:** 22 July 2009

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director Corporate and Policy

**SUBJECT:** Mid-term Review of the Sustainable Community Strategy

**WARDS:** Boroughwide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To present an updated Sustainable Community Strategy for adoption.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION**

**That amended Sustainable Community Strategy is adopted.**

## **3.0 BACKGROUND**

Local Authorities are required to prepare and implement a Sustainable Community Strategy. We are expected to work with partners through the Local Strategic Partnership to agree priorities and to engage and involve local communities. The current Sustainable Community Strategy was adopted in 2006. It contains a long-term vision with clear objectives and targets for the period 2006-2011. Since it was prepared a number of changes have taken place making it necessary to conduct a mid-term review of the Sustainable Community Strategy. This is an update, not a complete revision. Recent perception surveys and the revised State of the Borough Report (2009) confirm that the underlying vision and priorities from 2006 remain relevant. Widespread engagement has therefore not been undertaken for this mid-term review. However, in 2010/11 work will commence on a full review and roll forward of the strategy with wide engagement, linking up with work being done on the Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

The main objectives of this mid-term review were:

- i. To explain what our existing vision statement means – what will Halton be like in 2025 if we are successful? The statutory guidance on the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 requires that a Sustainable Community Strategy should include a long-term vision for the area.
- ii. To review the indicators and targets for each priority. Since the current strategy was produced the National Indicator set and LAA targets have been introduced. The aim is to have a single coherent

set of indicators and targets in the Sustainable Community Strategy which encompasses both LAA targets and key local targets.

- iii. Incorporate the Housing and Homelessness Strategy (a requirement of the Statutory Guidance referred to above)
- iv. To ensure that appropriate cross-cutting targets are agreed, covering social inclusion, cohesion, equalities and closing the gap.

#### **4.0 WAY FORWARD**

The attached draft of the mid-term review has been drawn up following consultation with partners and approved by the Halton Strategic Partnership Board. It has also been considered by the Policy and Performance Boards during the current cycle. Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board recommended the addition of a local indicator relating to children and young people's satisfaction with parks and play areas. The recommendations of the Policy and Performance Boards were reported to Executive Board on 18 June. (with the exception of Employment Learning and Skills Policy and Performance Board which did not meet until 8 July 2009). Executive Board recommended the to Council that the strategy be adopted subject to the inclusion of the local indicator referred to above. This indicator has now been included under the Children and Young People's priority in the revised strategy appended to this report. Any further recommendations from Employment Learning and Skills Policy and Performance Board will be reported orally. In accordance with the constitution and legislation, the revised Sustainable Community Strategy has to be adopted by full Council.

#### **5.0 CONCLUSION**

The opportunities and challenges facing Halton are well-known. The Sustainable Community Strategy sets out the steps we need to take to bring about real improvement and how we will measure progress. The Local Area Agreement is a set of targets agreed with Government which reflects the Community Strategy. The mid-term review is an opportunity to bring these together in a single coherent document.

#### **6.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The Sustainable Community Strategy is the primary policy document for the Council and its partners who have a statutory duty to have regard to it.

## **7.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

The delivery of the Strategy will require the application of resources by all the partners in Halton, and consideration of impact on priorities is already part of the Council's budget setting process.

## **8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

The Community Strategy sets out our priorities for Children and Young People, Employment Learning and Skills, Healthy Halton, Safer Halton and Urban Renewal in Halton.

## **9.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

The key risk to the revision of the Strategy is lack of consensus. This is mitigated by consulting partners and Policy and Performance Boards.

The risks to delivery of the Strategy are set out in the Partnership Risk Register.

## **10.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

Addressing inequality is a key theme in the Strategy.

## **11.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION**

The 2006 Sustainable Community strategy needs updating to take into account changes to the National Performance Framework, including the Halton Local Area Agreement, and recent statutory guidance.

## **12.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

The following options were considered:

1. To leave the strategy unchanged. This would result in the need to monitor performance against two different sets of targets and would not be compliant with statutory targets
2. To conduct a full review of the strategy. This was rejected because the Strategy was only adopted on 2006 and a full review would be premature.

## **13.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE**

The strategy will take effect following its adoption by Council.

## **14.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

None.