

networkfareham Board Meeting Tuesday 3 June 2008

Item 4 Briefing Paper Sustainable Community Strategy Progress Report

INTRODUCTION

1. At the last Board meeting on 4 March 2008, Members received a paper relating to the development of a new Sustainable Community Strategy(SCS). The paper set out a suggested format for the strategy and described the next steps in its production. It set out the issues networkfareham will need to consider in developing the strategy and included a draft of the first three sections of the strategy comprising the introduction, a picture of Fareham and a draft vision.
2. The purpose of this paper is to report on progress since then and to outline the steps that are being taken to enable the Board to consider a draft strategy at its next meeting in September.

FEEDBACK FROM WORKSHOPS

3. Since the Board meeting in March, two workshops have been held. The first of these was intended to enable all of the lead officers of the thematic partnerships to develop a better understanding of the overall LSP picture. It covered the role of the LSP, partnership working and how the work of the thematic partnerships link into the SCS and Local Area Agreements. The main conclusion from the workshop was that networkfareham has the right structure in place in terms of the role of the Board and thematic partnerships. It also concluded that the SCS will need to identify all issues that need to be addressed for the area regardless of whether the LSP and its thematic partnerships has the power or resources to tackle them. It emphasised that the LSP, using the SCS as a sound evidence base, has an important lobbying role to play in order to influence regional and sub-regional strategies etc.
4. The second workshop comprised lead officers and one other representative from each thematic partnership and considered a paper outlining the issues and priorities so far identified for inclusion in the SCS. There was general agreement that these were correct but there was also considerable discussion on additional issues and priorities which needed to be taken into account. In particular, the workshop was valuable to all concerned because it demonstrated the linkages between the different themes and as a result, threw up a number of ideas about the nature of the SCS and how it should develop.

A DRAFT VISION

5. The second workshop also considered alternative approaches to a vision statement. One approach was to adopt a vision which emphasised that Fareham was already a pleasant place in which to live and that the future aim should be to maintain and enhance the current situation. This is broadly the approach which is enshrined in the draft vision contained in the draft introductory chapters for the SCS considered at the last meeting.
6. The second approach, and one which the workshop favoured, was more radical, and was aimed at developing Fareham as a centre of excellence. Based on the comments made at the workshop, the following statement has been drafted for consideration by the Board.

Our vision is to improve the quality of life for all current and future residents and to aspire to a future Fareham which is widely recognised as a centre of excellence and a great place in which to live, work, invest or study.

7. This overall vision could be backed up with a secondary statement of aims along similar lines to the first approach. These aims could be supported by identifiable targets relating to each theme and could be as follows:

In order to achieve our vision our aim is that by 2020 or earlier, Fareham is a borough where people:

- **Feel safer**
- **Are decently housed in homes they can afford**
- **Are fitter and healthier**
- **Have better access to well paid jobs**
- **Live in a more sustainable, greener and cleaner environment**
- **Are able to enjoy better quality open space and leisure provision**
- **Feel more involved in the community.**

8. The Board is asked to consider whether they wish to adopt a statement of vision and aims along these lines and ask for the views of the community as part of the consultation process.

THE NATURE AND FORMAT OF THE STRATEGY

9. At its last meeting the Board considered the format of the SCS. Although it felt that it should be a concise document, it should not be too vague. Its ambitions, aims and objectives needed to be fairly broad, but also needed to be rooted in reality, based on firm evidence with realistic and achievable targets.
10. The suggested format was therefore:
 - An Introduction which describes the purpose of a Sustainable Community Strategy, how it has developed and what it hopes to achieve.

- A picture of life in Fareham at present including the main characteristics of the Borough and its population and how these might change over time.
 - **networkfareham's** 2020 vision for the future of Fareham.
 - A description of the seven themes previously identified, including the key issues for each theme, where we are now, where we want to be and the priority actions needed to get there.
 - A summary Action Plan.
11. Following discussions at the workshops this format is still proposed, but further consideration has been given to the nature and purpose of the document. In one sense it needs to be a “strategy of strategies” which summarises in one place the issues and priorities which relate to the Borough. It will draw on the existing strategies and plans of the Borough Council and its partners and it will influence and inform future strategic decision making by all of these partners. It will ensure that all agencies in Fareham, not just the Borough Council, work towards the overall vision and aims which it has articulated. It will also act as a lobbying tool aimed at influencing wider regional, sub regional and national agencies to take on board the issues and priorities identified in Fareham.
 12. However, it is also considered that it should also be more than just a summary of strategies and that it should avoid merely re-iterating priorities which are set out in more detail elsewhere. In this sense, it should add value to these strategies. It can do this, by making sure that all agencies are working together with a common vision and that they recognise that some of the individual issues with which they are dealing are cross cutting and have an impact on and a relationship with those of other agencies. The Action Plan which accompanies the strategy will need to concentrate on these issues.
 13. It will be crucial to recognise that the SCS is a not just a Fareham Borough Council strategy, but is a dynamic strategy for Fareham for which **networkfareham** takes overall responsibility. Some of its targets will be able to be achieved by Fareham Borough Council alone whereas others can only be achieved by other agencies working in partnership with the Borough Council. Some may only be able to be achieved through the Borough Council and **networkfareham** exercising their influence on other external organisations.

ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

14. One change that has taken place since the last meeting of the Board is that the Planning and Sustainability Partnership has been redefined and renamed the Environment and Transport Partnership. The primary purpose of the Partnership was to ensure that the Local Development Framework (LDF) was consistent in its vision and able to deliver the key spatial objectives of the SCS in line with the principles and requirements of national, regional and sub regional planning policy. To do this it would need to consider issues, options, preferred options, proposals and draft policies for each plan within the Framework.
15. However, it has become apparent that, the development of the LDF

needs to sit alongside the development of the SCS, rather than being one element of it. In this context, an important point to consider is that the LDF is seen as the spatial expression of the SCS and is therefore at a higher level and is relevant to all of the thematic partnerships, rather than having a particular relationship with one of them. LDF matters need to be reported to all of the partnerships as they will all have a role to play in informing the progress of the LDF in their particular areas of expertise.

16. At its meeting on 13 May, the Partnership agreed to change its name, terms of reference and membership to reflect a change of emphasis away from the LDF and more towards issues concerned with protecting and improving the quality of the environment, improving transport infrastructure and congestion and moving towards a more sustainable borough.

CONSULTATION ON THE STRATEGY

17. It is proposed to bring a paper on the consultation process for the strategy to the next meeting. The consultation process could include some or all of the following.
 - Launch of the process with a mini conference of all LSP members
 - Publication of the draft SCS on the Fareham Borough Council website inviting comments from the general public.
 - An article in Fareham Today describing the main themes of the SCS and drawing attention to the website.
 - Place the SCS on the agenda of Community Action Teams exploring the possibility of interactive voting on priorities.
 - Use the Citizen's e-panel.
 - Hosting events which target key groups of citizens. This could include older people via the Older Person's Forum, but it would also be worthwhile making a special effort to consult with young people, perhaps using the annual Youth Conference.
 - Host a number of roadshows at key locations in the Borough.
 - Place the SCS on the agenda of key meetings with partner agencies.
18. Members of the Board are invited to comment on these suggested consultation methods.

NEXT STEPS

19. It is suggested that the next steps in the development of the strategy, with a view to it being adopted in early 2009, are as follows:
 - Draft a mini vision statement for each theme, together with a draft chapter on issues and priorities for consideration by each thematic partnership over the summer months.
 - Pull this together into a draft SCS for consideration by the Board at its meeting on 9 September and at the Council's Executive meeting on 6 October.
 - Draft a paper on proposals for consultation on the SCS for consideration at the 9 September meeting
 - Undertake public consultation during the period October 2008 to

January 2009.

- Report on progress to the Board at its meeting on 2 December.
- Redraft the strategy for final approval in March 2009.