

**Cheltenham Borough Council****Social and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee –****5<sup>th</sup> March 2003****Cheltenham Strategic Partnership – Draft Community Strategy  
for Consultation****Report of the Assistant Director Policy and Public Relations****1. Summary and recommendation**

1.1 The Local Government Act 2000 placed a statutory duty on the council to ensure that a community strategy is prepared for the borough and that it is developed in partnership through a local strategic partnership. The Cheltenham Strategic Partnership Executive has produced a draft strategy following consultation on the key issues. It is now consulting on the draft strategy with groups and organisations in the town.

**1.2 I therefore recommend that:**

1.2.1 **the committee consider the draft strategy and identify whether there are any changes they would wish to make to the document, and that these comments should be passed to the Cheltenham Strategic Partnership Executive for consideration along with other responses from the consultation.**

**2. Introduction**

2.1 The Local Government Act 2000 gave councils a new duty in relation to community planning. It was recognised that local councils in their roles as community leaders should facilitate a partnership with others to address the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area.

2.2 The Cheltenham Strategic Partnership Executive has been meeting since last May, and has consulted with Viewpoint, stakeholders and the public to identify the needs of the town. Using this work they have developed a draft community strategy for which they are now seeking comments. The council as a key partner and key delivery agent needs to satisfy itself that the strategy reflects the needs and aspirations of Cheltenham. There will be an additional chapter developed which clearly identifies how the thematic partnerships and individual organisations will respond to the strategy.

2.3 The council will need to reflect the community strategy within its own corporate plan which will be developed later this year, and will identify how the council proposes to address the issues identified within the strategy which impact upon the council.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 Our town, our future provided a useful starting point for the development of the community strategy. This had been produced following significant consultation and had cross party support. The vision within the community strategy is based on the themes identified within Our town, our future.
- 3.2 The viewpoint panel were consulted on the themes and two stakeholder events have been held to explore issues in more detail. In addition a public consultation event at the town hall also set out the themes and asked for public comment.
- 3.3 The draft community strategy has been written by the Cheltenham Strategic Partnership and copies of the draft document have been sent to the 500 plus stakeholders on the database. In addition a special section has been placed on the council's internet site to ascertain public responses and copies have been placed in libraries, reception, area offices and neighbourhood resource centres.
- 3.4 The consultation process is two fold. Firstly to identify whether there is general agreement to the vision and aims and objectives, particularly to see whether there are any gaps. Secondly members of the partnership are now working with key delivery agents and the thematic partnerships to identify actions they propose to take to meet the delivery of the community strategy. This will involve identifying targets and key performance measures. This information will be included within a separate chapter in the final document.
- 3.5 The council is one of the key partners and is being consulted on the content of the document. Although the community strategy is part of the councils policy framework it is actually a strategy which belongs to a partnership and ultimately it will be for the partnership to approve its content.

### **4. Implications**

- 4.1 **Financial** There is a budget to produce the strategy and support the partnership for this year. Financial implications arising out of delivery of the community strategy will be addressed as part of the corporate planning and budget setting processes. There maybe a need to redirect resources in line with spending priorities identified in order to achieve the outcomes of the strategy.
- 4.2 **Legal** Section 4 of the Local Government Act 200 places upon the council a mandatory requirement to prepare a community strategy for its area in consultation with such parties as the council deems appropriate and with regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state. The strategy must be viable as it has to be considered when the council wishes to exercise its economic, social and environmental well being powers.

- 4.3 Personnel** Human resource implications arising out of delivery of the community strategy will be addressed as part of the corporate planning and budget setting processes. HR implications will, however also become clearer as implementation of the vision behind the community strategy begins to take effect at an operational level and therefore over a period of time. There may, therefore be a need to redirect staffing resources in line with spending priorities identified in order to achieve the outcomes of the strategy. The council's recognised trade unions, with a genuine interest in the delivery of local services are also being consulted upon the content of the community strategy and will have an opportunity to raise any issues which they consider may have an impact upon staff within the council. Officers within the Policy and Public Relations division support Cheltenham Strategic Partnership and this will need to be taken into account when determining other key priorities for the division.
- 4.4 Equal opportunities, social justice and anti-poverty** The community strategy has these issues at its heart. Specific implications arising out of delivery of the community strategy will be addressed as part of the corporate planning process.
- 4.5 Environmental** The community strategy has these issues at its heart. Specific implications arising out of delivery of the community plan will be addressed as part of the corporate planning process.

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<b>Background papers</b>	-
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<b>Accountability</b>	Leader of council
<b>Scrutiny Function</b>	All