

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: 10 JUNE 2014
title: RIBBLE VALLEY COMMUNITY STRATEGY – UPDATE
submitted by: CHIEF EXECUTIVE
principal author: DAVID INGHAM, PARTNERSHIP OFFICER

1 PURPOSE

1.1 This report provides committee with an update on the development of a Community Strategy for Ribble Valley and the delivery of Partnership Priorities

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objectives – The Community Strategy and its associated action plans form the basis of the sense of place and common vision of the communities in the Ribble Valley
- Corporate Priorities – To be a well managed authority
- Other Considerations – None

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Local Strategic Partnership for Ribble Valley was formed in 2002 and developed its first community plan that year. A new Sustainable Community Strategy was developed through 2007 and published in December 2007. The Partnership Board underwent a restructuring in 2008 to ensure that it was fit for purpose to deliver the objectives of the SCS. The Strategic Partnership Board was stood down in the summer of 2012 and its functions absorbed into Council activities. The Partnership Officer role has continued to deliver against the SCS with work now delivered by two officers on a job share basis. The current SCS runs to 2013 and consideration needs to be given to a mechanism to identify and provide a clear focus to partnership working going forward to reflect Council and Community priorities.

3 INFORMATION

3.1 Attached to this report at Appendix 1 is a preliminary review of the major issues for Ribble Valley that have evolved from the Sustainable Community Strategy 2007-2013.

3.2 The next steps are to work with members, communities and partners to create initiatives that will be sustainable and achievable. These will be reported back to members in the form of a Community Strategy for 2014-2019 with associated action plans, outcomes and time scales.

3.3 Also attached at Appendix 2 is a review of the actions currently being undertaken within Partnership Working.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

- Resources – Resources for the work are contained within existing budgets.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – No implications identified.
- Political – Partnership working is a key component of delivering a wide range of community aspirations.
- Reputation – Partnership working interfaces with a wide range of local groups, public bodies and other organisations. The success of the Council's partnering enhances the Council's reputation.
- Equality & Diversity – The proposals would include measures to promote equality and diversity.

5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

- 5.1 Endorse wider consultation and engagement to inform preparation of a strategy and relevant action plans.

DAVID INGHAM
PARTNERSHIP OFFICER

MARSHAL SCOTT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

BACKGROUND PAPERS (2)

For further information please ask for David Ingham, extension 4549

Ribble Valley Draft Community Strategy 2014-19 Discussion Document

Introduction

Ribble Valley has produced several Community Strategies which covered the period 2002-20013. These documents were compiled after extensive community engagement and reflected the issues that the people of the borough felt were important to them at the time.

The proposed Community Strategy for 2014-19 will naturally follow on from that work, and provided a complementary document for the Borough outlining key objectives across a range of topic areas. Action plans can then be developed to address issues of concern to the community. This strategy will be initiated by the Borough Council through a consultation with committee chairs with further input from other councillors, parishes, partners and community groups. It is anticipated that the strategy and associated action plans will be refreshed and discussed and ratified annually by the Borough Council's Policy and Finance Committee.

The **Purpose** of the Community Strategy is to:

1. Support our Communities in articulating their hopes, needs and priorities
2. Focus the actions of all public, private, voluntary and community organisations operating locally
3. Create a working document that sets objectives and allows reports on direction of travel
4. Help the Council identify its corporate priorities
5. Encourage partnership working

The Vision

The current Vision for Ribble Valley is stated as:

'An area with an exceptional environment and quality of life for all; sustained by vital and vibrant market towns and villages acting as thriving service centres meeting the needs of residents, businesses and visitors'

Major Issues for Ribble Valley

The remainder of this document outlines a proposed set of areas where objectives and outcomes can be developed.

The list is not exhaustive and is meant as a start point for consideration.

Housing

- Provision of Affordable Housing in the district. There is also a hidden homeless problem particularly amongst young people within the district and a lack of suitable housing for older people in the villages whilst the district features significantly high in the ranking for households who are experiencing fuel poverty

Next Steps:

Some progress has been made in producing a strategy, which will effectively provide decent and appropriate accommodation for local older people.

A plan to deliver affordable homes and a control on the development of housing in the district remains a priority.

Methods of tackling fuel poverty are still not established in the Borough.

The main remaining issue is a lack of suitable housing for residents to down scale to in the villages and the incentive to do so.

Facilities

- Rural Isolation impacts upon many of the issues highlighted within the Strategy and the provision of and access to facilities and services, for young and old alike, remains a priority.
- New initiatives that will result in increased outreach to the villages are needed.
- Need to identify sustainable office space.
- There are many volunteers working in Ribble Valley, often in an informal way, and whilst there is no central “recruiting” of these, each group in the district seems to do particularly well in attracting the help they need.
- The Play Alliance still has the potential to be a vehicle that could collectively improve the sustainability and maintenance of existing play provision.

Next Steps:

There is an opportunity to formalise community aspirations and find a way of informing Parish Councils and other partners to bring the social capital of Ribble Valley communities.

Education and the Economy

- Whilst the education resources and results in the Ribble Valley Schools are excellent and a high proportion of students move on to further education, there is still a lack of vocational training provision for 16-19 year olds in the Borough.
- Opportunities must still be available for businesses to develop in the area, through continued business support and the encouragement of entrepreneurship and enterprise in the district.
- Tourism and in particular food, heritage and green tourism initiatives need to be developed
- The existence of a successful culture of social enterprise in Ribble Valley will also lead to further opportunities which may in turn support the sustainability of the communities.

Next Steps:

With 80% of Ribble Valley 16 year olds having to go outside the borough for their further education it is vital that smaller innovatory pilot schemes be developed for vocational learning and the development of employment opportunities in the district.

Renewed emphasis on business innovation and support is required

Health and specifically Older People

- There is now a need to align the priorities between the Ribblesdale Locality of the East Lancs CCG, other neighbouring and overlapping CCG groups of GPs and the reformed Public Health Grouping under the County Authority. These priorities will hopefully be relevant to the specific needs of Ribble Valley residents.
- At present just under half of the Ribble Valley population is fifty years old or over. This is the third highest level in the County and one in three of those have a long term limiting

illness. The higher life expectancy in our locality and the higher than average growth in population for the area predicts that in 2025 the population in Ribble Valley of an age above 50 will be significantly higher than neighbouring areas and above the national average.

- Rural Isolation and Loneliness

Next Steps:

The Healthy Valley project has improved the accessibility older and disadvantaged people have to local services through the use of village halls and the mobile resource (STAN). This needs to be developed.

The longer-term future around funding essential refurbishments to community centres and support of the voluntary sector should be considered.

Community Safety

- Maintaining low levels of crime in the district
- Improving awareness and education around road safety issues
- Reducing the incidence and impact of alcohol abuse amongst young people

Next Steps:

Important to maintain Community Safety group as a forum

Local Democracy

- Introduction of new mechanisms to strengthen local democracy and allow people to have a greater say in local decision making
- Neighbourhood Planning

Next Steps:

Drive for more interest in Parish Councils ahead of 2015 elections and thereafter improve partnership between communities and Council

Encourage and facilitate more groups to come together to prepare Neighbourhood Plans

Environment

- Improved access to the country side through footpaths, bridleways and organised walking, horse riding and mountain biking
- Increase the opportunities for public transport through the communities and parishes
- Promote waste reduction and recycling
- Work with the private sector to evaluate schemes that result in positive changes in energy use and pollution minimisation
- Encourage the promotion and protection of Industrial Archaeology and Historical sites

Next Steps:

Work with communities and partners to create initiatives that will be sustainable

Community Strategy Actions 2014

Subject	Issues to be addressed	Tasks	Work being done
Housing	Provision of Affordable Housing		
	Housing for homeless young people		One of CYPT priorities
	Suitable housing for older people		
	Reduce fuel poverty		Part of Year of Health and Wellbeing 2013/14
Facilities	Improve access to services and facilities in rural communities	Maintain links with villages, and in particular community & village halls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Made contact with all villages & working with them where a need has been identified via a 'Village Audit' process
	Increased outreach activities in villages	Work with villages to develop the services they need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Created a data set of village publications/communication methods for each village
	Support for voluntary sector via office rental at RVBC		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Explained the support on offer to help them to realise their local needs ✓ Improved website presence for community facilities via new RVBC website ✓ Developing a Village Halls network to share best practice and 'bulk buying'
	Support for groups to recruit volunteers	Work with One Lancashire Volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Liaison where needed
	Use the Play alliance to improve the sustainability & maintenance of play areas		Refresh and formalise Play Alliance membership
Education & Economy	Increase opportunities for vocational training for 16-19 year olds in the borough	Develop innovatory pilot schemes for vocational learning & development of employment opportunities	Developing links with colleges and other providers in Ribble Valley
	Business support	Support & encourage enterprise & entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Working with community initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Revisit allotments project
		Develop support for social enterprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Supporting communities who are interested in managing community assets ✓

Community Strategy Actions 2014

Subject	Issues to be addressed	Tasks	Work being done
	Tourism – develop:	Food	
		Heritage	
		Green	
Community Safety	Maintain low levels of crime	Maintain & support the safety partnership	✓ Involvement in the CSP
	Improve education & awareness around road safety		Road Safety Forum
	Reduce alcohol abuse around young people		Priority within CSP
Health & older people	Align work with Ribblesdale CCG (& those other CCGs which fall into RV – BwD and Central Lancs)	Work with groups to align outcomes	Regular contact with Kirsty Hamer - ✓ Partnership network ✓ Direct work with groups ✓ Encourage uptake of CCG grants ✓ Building links with BwD & Longridge CCG contacts
	Plan for the support needs of an ageing population	Work with village halls & community centres to facilitate essential improvements	✓ Engaged with Senior's Forum as an important partnership with the older community members ○ Working to raise awareness via promotion & re branding ✓ Work with Public health – specifically Sandra Fox ✓ Continue to develop Dementia friends via a series of events over the summer ✓ Working with partners: Age UK, CVS & others who support older peoples' priorities ✓ Support for the 'Access for All' group
		Support the voluntary sector in the villages	✓ Visit all RV villages & understand any issues and support needs ✓ Assist with sustainability & funding
	Address issues around rural isolation & loneliness	Work with older people's groups inc Seniors' Forum to develop plans	✓ Working with 50+ assembly & the PhD project around loneliness ✓ Developing a 'Good Neighbour' project to direct services and volunteer support to rural areas

Community Strategy Actions 2014

Subject	Issues to be addressed	Tasks	Work being done
Local Democracy	Introduce new mechanisms to strengthen local democracy	Encourage interest in parish councils	
	Neighbourhood Planning	Facilitate groups to develop neighbourhood plans	✓ Supporting villages where asked to do so
Environment	Improved access to the countryside	Footpaths & bridleways	
		Organised walking	✓ Stepping out programme
		Horse riding	
		Mountain biking	✓ New cycle routes developed & promoted
	Promote waste reduction & recycling	Look at energy efficiency	✓ Working with community buildings to reduce energy bills via projects to improve insulation, and energy generation opportunities
	Increase opportunities for use of public transport		✓ Opportunities identified to better inform pass holders about use of public transport (via Seniors' Forum)
	Encourage the promotion & protection of industrial archaeology & historical sites		Heritage Alliance meets annually to share projects
	Work with communities & partners to create sustainable initiatives		On going community/schools food growing project