

## Community Planning Overview in West Devon

Report of the Community and Strategy Officer

***Please note this recommendation is subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.***

**Recommendation: It is recommended that the Committee notes the position regarding Devon County Council involvement in Community Planning and Development work in West Devon.**

### 1. Context

The County Council is involved in a wide range of multi-agency and partnership working in West Devon. This report seeks to provide an overview of the County Council's formal involvement in the work of the West Devon Local Strategic Partnership and related community planning activity, and in the context of the work of the Devon Strategic Partnership and Devonwide Local Area Agreement.

### 2. Devon Strategic Partnership/Local Area Agreement

The Devon Strategic Partnership comprises public, private, voluntary and community sector organisations, all working together to improve the quality of life for those who live, work in and visit Devon. Their focus is on delivering real improvements to the issues that matter most to the people of Devon; working towards a joint vision to be "England's greenest county with strong local communities that are prosperous and welcoming with an excellent quality of life and a sustainable future".

Many of the most challenging issues which face us, such as tackling social exclusion or rural deprivation have the characteristic that they are complex. They cannot be tackled by one agency or group and many of the traditional ways we have tackled problems are becoming out of date. For that reason, Local Strategic Partnerships sit at the heart of improving services and thereby improving the quality of people's lives. District LSPs take a strategic view of how to tackle issues facing their area. The DSP, by working with the districts, can address the issues that are common across the county, and can be more effectively dealt with at that level, to the advantage of all.

Local Strategic Partnerships were introduced by Government in 2000 as a non statutory way of working on partnership. Since then their role has been strengthened, and whilst they are still technically non statutory, it is mandatory to develop and deliver a Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement in partnership and nominated partners have a Duty to Cooperate in this process. The County Council is the Accountable Body for the Local Area Agreement, but it cannot deliver it other than in partnership. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and its accompanying statutory guidance spelt out the role of the LSP more clearly than ever before.

Each of the districts in Devon also has a LSP that tackles issues facing their area. When developing the Sustainable Community Strategy for Devon, the priorities of each of the district Local Strategic Partnerships were considered as an important factor. Working in partnership and improving quality of life can be done at many levels – parishes can best address some problems, others need partnership working at the district level, still other issues can only be effectively tackled at a county wide level. In this way the District LSPs and the Devon Strategic Partnership can complement each other in the work they do. Further work to join up the work of the DSP and District Local Strategic Partnerships is planned for the next year.

### **3. West Devon Local Strategic Partnership**

The Local Strategic Partnership for West Devon meets quarterly and is responsible for overseeing the development and delivery of the West Devon Sustainable Community Strategy. Led by West Devon Borough Council, this multi-agency partnership fulfils the role and functions described for the DSP, but in relation to the West Devon district area.

Issues discussed at the last meeting included the Place Survey 2008/09 and the Sustainable Communities Act 2007. Minutes of the meetings are posted on the West Devon website at <http://www.westdevon.gov.uk/cat.asp?cat=2542>

Councillor McInnes, as Leader of the Borough Council, chairs the LSP.

### **4. Local and Parish Community Planning**

Within the district area, other community planning activity takes place on a more local basis, for example through parish plans and also action plans developed through the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative Tracking progress in the development and production of all these local plans has been made easier by the creation of a database – Communities in Action - that all local plan groups can use to upload their plans and potential project ideas for wider circulation. As parishes upload their plans onto the database it becomes a powerful source of information accessible to Members and agencies to help inform them about emerging community priorities from the local level.

Members may find it a useful source of information about what local community planning activity has taken place. The database is hosted at: - <http://syd.paribus.co.uk/cia/index.do>

### **5. Devon Town Profiles**

As part of the work undertaken to better understand community needs and aspirations, profiles have been developed for 28 local areas, recognising the physical make up of the county and the important role many market towns play as the hub for the small and scattered communities in their respective hinterland.

The footprint for each area has been shaped through taking account of local travel plans, shopping catchment areas, the extent of the local learning community and the areas designated for regeneration support through the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative. Whilst for analytical purposes each area has a firm boundary, it is readily accepted that local people may not agree with the specific boundaries in all cases. Having said that, these profiles do provide a starting point for a local discussion about the needs and priorities of these local areas. Since the production of the initial profiles, population projections to 2021 have been produced as well as a mosaic lifestyle analysis for each area.

Profiles can be accessed on the web at:

<http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/councildemocracy/neighbourhoods-villages/devontownprofiles.htm>

Edward Chorlton

**Electoral Divisions: All in West Devon**

Local Government Act 1972

List of Background Papers

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Background Paper	Date	File Ref.
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None		
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