

Report of the Director of Place to the meeting of Executive to be held on 6 November 2018

V

Subject:

Stronger Communities Strategy and Delivery Plan

Summary statement:

Executive is asked to consider the draft 'Stronger Communities Strategy' and Delivery Plan, produced by the Bradford Stronger Communities Partnership.

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Portfolio:

Neighbourhoods & Community Safety

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Corporate

1. SUMMARY

Executive is asked to consider the draft 'Stronger Communities Strategy' and Delivery Plan, produced by the Bradford Stronger Communities Partnership.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 An independent 'Stronger Communities Partnership' Chaired by Bishop Toby Howarth, Bishop of Bradford has been formed to develop Bradford's Stronger Communities strategy and a delivery plan for the district. The Partnership comprised a wide network of individuals and organisations from across Bradford district with a track record of working on cohesion and integration initiatives. This was supported by a smaller 'Steering Group' comprised from the wider Partnership to 'drive' work on the strategy. The Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods & Community Safety and Cllr Sinead Engel were represented on both the Partnership and Steering Group.
- 2.2 The Stronger Communities Partnership's strategy and delivery plan also supports delivery of local interventions determined following Bradford's designation as one of five 'Integrated Communities Pilot Areas'. Funding will be provided by MHCLG as part of a 'test and learn' programme to deliver some of the interventions in the Stronger Communities delivery plan.
- 2.3 The Government published its Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper on 14th March 2018 as a response to the Dame Louise Casey Review. Responsibility for the strategy sits with the Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). The strategy outlined a series of key challenges across the themes of: Strengthening leadership; Supporting recent migrants and resident communities; education and young people; Boosting English language; Places and communities; Increasing economic opportunity; Rights and freedoms.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 Over the course of the Spring and Summer the Bradford Stronger Communities Partnership developed a local response to the Government's Green Paper. A Bradford 'Stronger Communities Strategy and Delivery Plan' was submitted to MHCLG by the 29th August deadline. A copy of the strategy and delivery plan is attached as appendix A.
- 3.2 Consultation was carried out with district residents through three 'whole day' events that took place at City Park (17th July), Keighley Town Centre (23rd July) and Shipley Town Centre (26th July). Individual meetings with specific interest groups also took place and young people were both consulted and involved in the engagement process through the Youth Service.
- 3.3 The objectives of the engagement process were:

To understand what good integration looks like for communities

To include a shortlist of those ideas/initiatives which have the most support and could potentially deliver the widest or biggest benefit in the Stronger Communities

Strategy for Bradford to submit to MHCLG.

To ensure that despite the short timeframe a cross section of the communities within the district were meaningfully engaged and involved.

- 3.4 The engagement focussed on seven shortlisted ideas, whilst also providing space for people to make their own recommendations. The seven themes were:-

Employment Opportunities
English Language
Hope for the Future
Building Respect and Friendships
Dealing with Hate Crime and Intolerance
Sharing Spaces and Places
Linking Up Schools

- 3.5 Over 630 people were engaged in the three events and accompanying workshops, many giving over an hour and a half of their time to share their thoughts. A copy of the Executive Summary of the engagement report is attached as appendix B.

- 3.6 New governance arrangements are being developed to formalise the 'Partnership Board' and the decision making processes. A copy of the draft terms of reference for the planned governance is attached as appendix C.

3.7 **The Integrated Communities Green Paper**

- 3.7.1 The Green Paper states that true integration is "communities where people, whatever their background, live, work, learn and socialise together, based on shared rights, responsibilities and opportunities. Communities where many religions, cultures and opinions are celebrated, underpinned by a shared set of British values that champion tolerance, freedom and equality of opportunity. A society in which everyone is a potential friend".

- 3.7.2 The Strategy is intended to increase opportunities for people from different backgrounds to: mix together, increase their mutual understanding and respect of each other and reduce misunderstandings and to remove barriers that prevent people from taking full advantage of the opportunities available to all people living in Britain.

- 3.7.3 The Green Paper and local strategy are intended to amplify the benefits that can be realised from existing programmes that support integration and other programmes that support social mobility such as the Education Opportunity Area Programme and Economic Strategy. The Government intention is that it will set the ground work to ensure that other national strategies such as the Industrial Strategy can be fully realised. Bradford's approach seeks to build on this at a local as well as a national level.

4. **FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL**

- 4.1 Development of the local Stronger Communities strategy and associated consultation has been funded through a combination of mainstream Council funding

and through £100,000 of 'seed funding' provided by the MHCLG. This funding has been used to employ an 'Integrated Communities Programme Lead' to commission reports relating to this area of work and to lead on engagement with people and with district residents on their priorities.

- 4.2 MHCLG has committed financial support to the five 'Integrated Communities Pilot Areas'. Bradford Partnership's submission, through the local 'delivery Plan' sought funding of £4.9 million towards delivering a range of projects. MHCLG has not yet determined the allocation that will be made to Bradford, but informal feedback has indicated that not all of the planned interventions will be supported and some may be supported at reduced levels of funding. This funding needs to be committed by 31st March 2020.
- 4.3 In addition to funding from MHCLG separate applications for grants and support are being made by partners to the local strategy and delivery plan. At the moment the extent and success of these is not determined, but the type of work is contained in the wider plan.
- 4.4 A portion of funding from MHCLG will be allocated against project support and evaluation. An internal Council team, supported by specialist support, commissioned by MHCLG will help ensure that local interventions are delivered and monitored so that lessons can be learnt from the work that has taken place.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

- 5.1 A formal governance structure is being applied to the development of the Stronger Communities Partnership to support delivery of the strategy. MHCLG has stated an expectation that the local partnership will have an independent Chair.
- 5.2 A programme manager has been appointed and a programme management methodology will be deployed in the management of the programme including conventional approaches to managing risks and issues etc.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

- 6.1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the public sector equality duty) provides that:

(1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

(2) A person who is not a public authority but who exercises public functions must, in the exercise of those functions, have due regard to the matters mentioned in subsection (1).

(3) Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to—

- (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;

(c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

(4) The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

(5) Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to—

- (a) tackle prejudice, and
- (b) promote understanding.

(6) Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act.

(7) The relevant protected characteristics are—

age;
disability;
gender reassignment;
pregnancy and maternity;
race;
religion or belief;
sex;
sexual orientation.

6.2 An equality impact assessment has been prepared on the proposals within the Strategy and Delivery Plan to assist elected members in having regard to this duty and is attached at Appendix D.

6.3 There are no additional legal issues arising from the contents of this report.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

7.1.1 The Stronger Communities Strategy and Delivery Plan support the following Corporate Equality Objectives.

7.1.2 **Community Relations** – Ensure that people of the district get on well together.

The Stronger Communities Strategy and delivery plan is a response to the Government's Integrated Communities Green Paper. This document sets out its vision where people – whatever their background live, work, learn and socialise together, based on shared rights, responsibilities and opportunities. As such the

overall ambition of the Stronger Communities Strategy and Delivery Plan underpins this corporate equality objective.

- 7.1.3 **Employment & Skills** – Promote inclusive growth through ensuring those most disadvantaged in the labour market are able to get the skills they need and access good jobs.

Both the Government’s Green Paper and the engagement work undertaken locally recognise the importance of work (and people getting on in the workplace) as supporting integration by increasing the size and diversity of social networks and bringing confidence and a sense of belonging. The local delivery plan places significant emphasis on bringing those furthest from the labour market into work. Proposals include indirect measures, such as better coordination and greater opportunity for learning English and more directly by engaging employers in changes to recruitment practice alongside work with the Department of Work and Pensions and Job Centre Plus.

- 7.1.4 **Organisational Equalities Culture** – The Council is well run, fit for business and is fair and inclusive in its approach.

As an Integrated Communities Pilot area Bradford, and Bradford Council, will raise the profile of equality issues, amongst many of the protected characteristic groups during the course of the partnership with MHCLG. In particular, opportunity will be taken to review certain policies and procedures to determine whether they support integration and resource will be available to instigate change, where this is believed necessary or helpful. Raising the profile of the district’s work on integration will raise awareness amongst staff and elected members through the events and activities that are contained in the delivery plan.

- 7.1.5 **Equality Data** – Our data better provides us with the right insight, evidence and intelligence to make well informed decisions that impact on our communities.

MHCLG is working with five pilot authorities to try out new approaches to integration and wants to use these experiences as a means of determining what works well. Bradford’s approach has been based both on the analysis of data and engagement with partners and citizens. A robust evaluation framework is being developed to measure the impact of interventions. The Council will work alongside the MHCLG to ensure that the initiatives have outputs and outcomes that can be effectively measured. Learning about what works, and equally important what does not work, will help to ensure that the district can take better informed investment decisions and target resources at those interventions that are likely to deliver the greatest benefits.

- 7.1.6 An equality impact assessment has been carried out that evidences that the proposals within the strategy and delivery plan will make a positive contribution and impact on many protected characteristic groups. There is no perceived detriment from undertaking any of the initiatives within the delivery plan. A copy of the Equality Impact Assessment is attached at appendix D.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no sustainability implications apparent.

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

There are no greenhouse gas emission impacts apparent.

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

7.4.1 Feelings of safety can act as a barrier to people's willingness to engage in those activities that bring people together at a neighbourhood level, which was a factor raised during the consultation work carried out in support of the local Stronger Communities strategy.

7.4.2 The new Stronger Communities Partnership will need to align some of its work with the Community Safety Partnership and vice versa. The Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods & Community Safety will be a member of the Stronger Communities Partnership and also chairs the Community Safety Partnership. Officers also attend and support both partnerships and the relationship between these two, and other key district partnerships will be key to the success of the overall strategy.

7.4.2 Many of the initiatives that sit within the Stronger Communities Delivery Plan should also have a positive impact on peoples feeling of safety, particularly where they bring different groups of people together, building tolerance and understanding.

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

7.5.1 The Human Rights Act covers various rights including: Freedom from torture and inhumane or degrading treatment; right to liberty and security; respect for your private and family life and correspondence; freedom of thought, belief and religion and protection from discrimination in respect of the rights and freedoms.

7.5.2 Building understanding, tolerance and respect will help people to live their lives within the freedoms to which they are entitled.

7.6 TRADE UNION

Aspects of the strategy may focus on change in policy and approach, for example in relation to selection and recruitment practice. If any proposals have Council workforce implications consultation will take place with trade unions as appropriate.

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

To be successful, work to build stronger and more integrated communities will need to take place in all wards and communities across the district. Whilst the strategy will focus on particular areas within the district, the work funded by MHCLG is about learning what works and what does not work and what is 'scalable'. The 'Stronger Communities strategy' identifies work that is planned over the next five years, but needs to be seen within the context of a wider and more long term strategy.

7.9 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

There are no corporate parenting implications apparent.

7.10 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Council will adopt the role of the Controller. In some aspects of the programme the Council will also be responsible for processing data. The Council including any delivery partners commissioned will receive information management training. Projects will be assessed on the sensitivity of their data and potential data linkage to other services within the programme. This will be supported by appropriate data sharing agreements.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

There are no 'Not for Publication Documents'

9. OPTIONS

9.1 The Stronger Communities Strategy and associated delivery plan is a partnership document that has been put together in response to the Government's Integrated Communities Green Paper and at the invitation of Government to become one of five Integrated Communities Pilot Areas.

9.2 It is proposed that the Council will adopt the role of 'accountable body' in relation to any funding granted by MHCLG to respond to the initiatives contained in the delivery plan.

9.3 Executive may determine to support and endorse the proposals contained in the draft strategy and delivery plan or adopt an alternative position, making recommendations for changes to the Bradford Stronger Communities Partnership.

9.4 Any significant change to the funding provided by MHCLG may lead to changes in the delivery plan.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Executive having considered the Council's public sector equality duty as set out above:

10.1 Note the work carried out in the development of the Bradford Stronger Communities Strategy and Delivery Plan by the Stronger Communities Partnership.

10.2 Support the proposals contained in the Bradford Stronger Communities Strategy and Delivery Plan.

10.3 Agree to the Council adopting the role of 'accountable body' in relation to funding granted by MHCLG to respond to the initiatives contained in the delivery plan.

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix A
Bradford Stronger Communities Strategy & Delivery Plan.
Copy of the document prepared by the Local Integrated Communities Partnership and submitted to MHCLG on 29th August 2018
- 11.2 Appendix B
Executive Summary, Bradford Integration Engagement Report Findings
Report outlines the key findings from three community engagement events that took place in Bradford, Shipley and Keighley.
- 11.3 Appendix C
Stronger Communities Partnership Governance Arrangements
Draft terms of reference and structure diagram for the local 'Stronger Communities Partnership'.
- 11.4 Appendix D
Equality Impact Assessment.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 12.1 Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper, published 14 March 2018
- 12.2 “It’s Your Place – Tell Us What You Think” Report of the Social Kinetic, produced 14th August 2018.