

SUNDERLAND HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD

18 May 2012

REPORT OF HEAD OF STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE

EMERGING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PLAN

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report provides an overview of the Council's emerging Community Resilience Plan which sets out the proposed approach to building community resilience in Sunderland. We would like partners' views on how they may wish to be engaged in this agenda to ensure that their wider contributions to building community resilience may be reflected in the Plan. We are also keen to get partners' views on the aims, objectives and priority areas for action.

2.0 DEFINING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

2.1 Community resilience is about securing good outcomes for individuals and the wider community under difficult circumstances. It is about people coping and recovering in the face of adversity ('bouncing back'), but ideally adapting and continuing to fulfil their potential. Resilient communities are able to harness all local resources to mitigate the negative impact of an external shock (e.g. economic downturn or recession, major policy change) on individual residents, families and the wider community as a whole.

3.0 CONTEXT

3.1 The current uncertainty over the country's economic prospects and the disproportionate impact of public spending cuts on the North East present key challenges for Sunderland, the impact of which will be felt differently across the city. All residents will be affected in some way, but the cumulative effect of changes to the welfare system, cuts to public spending and the economic climate is likely to have a much more significant impact on some neighbourhoods relative to others. There is growing concern about the potential increase in neighbourhood concentrations of poverty and disadvantage and their effects on individuals, families and the broader community.

3.2 The need for a strategic response was identified in order to galvanise the energies and resources of the Council in the first instance, whilst looking more fundamentally in the longer term to work together with partners to respond as a city to the emerging issues. It was also recognised that the changing environment offered an opportunity to review and improve the way the Council works with residents and communities in Sunderland. Faced with diminishing public resources, many current delivery methods are recognised as no longer appropriate. Consideration is now being given to how services can be

delivered in the future to make best use of the resources available to achieve better outcomes. As a city, we need to enable and support communities in Sunderland make the transition to greater strength and independence, with less reliance on the public sector in the longer term. This involves being responsive not only to local needs but also to community strengths. By mobilising and building on the resources and energy of our communities, we can deliver better outcomes whilst encouraging people to take greater ownership over the changes that affect them.

4.0 CURRENT POSITION

4.1 A draft Community Resilience Plan has been developed to provide an integrated and focused approach to targeting resources on areas of need. The Plan sets out a potential framework for supporting all communities during this challenging time, with a particular emphasis on vulnerable individuals and communities who are most likely to experience poor outcomes.

4.2 The Plan has initially been developed as a Council document to focus the energies and resources across the Council on those areas that we have an ability to influence that will make the most difference for communities in the short to medium term. However, we recognise that community resilience is something that must be built in partnership – with other organisations in the public, private and voluntary and community sectors, and with residents themselves.

4.3 Statement of intent

The following statement of intent has been proposed:

To build stronger communities where people come together to tackle local challenges, take ownership of change, and help shape the places in which they live.

4.4 Principles

The following principles underpin our proposed approach to building community resilience in Sunderland:

- **Early intervention and prevention** – identifying and addressing issues before they escalate into more problematic and complex needs.
- **Building capacity and reducing dependence** – encouraging and developing community solutions by helping people to help themselves and each other
- **Creating connections** – providing places and opportunities for people to come together to build relationships and access support, strengthening their sense of belonging and sense of community.

- **Community leadership** – Elected Members, residents, officers and partners working together to build stronger communities, leading and supporting local areas through change.
- **Responsive local services** – delivering integrated services to respond to local conditions and priorities
- **Delivering publicly valued outcomes** – focusing on what matters to residents rather than what matters to the organisation
- **An asset based approach** – identifying and building on the specific strengths of each community, so that the abilities and insights of local residents become resources for the challenges ahead of us. An asset based approach does not ignore needs – instead, it distinguishes between those needs that can best be met by families and friends, those best met by communities working in partnership with public services, and those that can only be met by public sector providers.

4.5 Aims

The emerging Community Resilience Plan identifies a set of core aims where we believe the Council and partners can make the greatest contribution to resilience in communities. Each of these broad aims is supported by a range of specific objectives defined over the short to medium term (see Appendix 1).

- Aim 1 Maximise and stabilise the **disposable income** of households
- Aim 2 Ensure people have **a place to live** that meets the needs and entitlements of their household
- Aim 3 Increase the ability of residents to **influence and own change** that affects them and the communities they live in
- Aim 4 Create a strong and inclusive **sense of community** and local pride
- Aim 5 Support people to manage their **health and wellbeing**, and the health and wellbeing of others, including during times of stress
- Aim 6 Maintain a community environment where people are, and feel, **safe and secure**
- Aim 7 Ensure people have **access to appropriate services** and facilities that enable them to meet their changing needs
- Aim 8 Maintain a physical environment that is **clean and attractive**

5.0 NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 The draft Community Resilience Plan has initially been developed as a Council document in that it sets out how we will better align our service delivery offer to address the clear need for resilience in communities. Moving forward, we would like to engage partners and incorporate their views on the aims, objectives and priority areas for action in order to develop the draft plan into a multi-agency document. A workshop session has been arranged through the Sunderland Partnership (Sunderland Innovation and Improvement Group – SIIG) on 13 June 2012. We will be cross-referencing membership of the Health and Wellbeing Board with the SIIG to ensure all partners are invited to the workshop.

Emerging Aims and Objectives

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| <p>AIM 1:</p> <p>Maximise and stabilise the disposable income of households</p> | <p>1.1 Increase the number of people gaining or regaining employment</p> <p>1.2 Develop employment skills to increase or stabilise income</p> <p>1.3 Increase take up of benefits and tax reductions</p> <p>1.4 Support households to manage their finances effectively</p> <p>1.5 Minimise the number of households who become over-indebted; and assist people who have fallen into debt</p> |
| <p>AIM 2:</p> <p>Ensure people have a place to live that meets the needs and entitlements of their household</p> | <p>2.1 Support people to remain in their own homes where appropriate</p> <p>2.2 Enable access to decent and affordable alternative accommodation for people whose current home has become unaffordable</p> <p>2.3 Meet accommodation needs of all vulnerable and 'socially excluded' people</p> |
| <p>AIM 3:</p> <p>Increase the ability of residents to influence and own change that affects them and the community they live in</p> | <p>3.1 Ensure an integrated approach to engaging communities in identifying, shaping and delivering local priorities</p> <p>3.2 Enable all individuals and communities to influence and feel they own the design/redesign of services that directly affect them</p> <p>3.3 Create opportunities for community-led solutions, promoting self help and building social capital</p> <p>3.4 Ensure communities benefit as far as possible from external funding opportunities</p> |
| <p>AIM 4:</p> <p>Create a strong and inclusive sense of community and local pride</p> | <p>4.1 Increase the number of people volunteering in their community</p> <p>4.2 Increase participation in the local culture, heritage and leisure offer</p> <p>4.3 Provide spaces and places for people to come together</p> <p>4.4 Support the fostering of good relations within and between communities</p> |
| <p>AIM 5:</p> <p>Support people to manage their health and wellbeing, and the health of others, including during times of stress</p> | <p>5.1 Make healthy choices easy by providing accessible physical activity opportunities, lifestyle advice and health education within communities</p> <p>5.2 Enable individuals to move towards independence, confidence and wellbeing</p> |

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| | 5.3 Ensure that people who are dealing with a mental health issue feel safe, supported and understood |
| <u>AIM 6:</u> Create a community environment where people are, and feel, safe and secure | 6.1 Put systems in place which enable us to anticipate and respond in 'real time' to emerging issues (such as tensions in or between communities) |
| | 6.2 Reduce or prevent an increase in crime; anti-social behaviour; drug and alcohol misuse; domestic violence and other violent crime; and re-offending |
| | 6.3 Challenge discrimination, harassment and victimisation |
| <u>AIM 7:</u> Ensure people have access to appropriate services and facilities that enable them to meet their changing needs | 7.1 Provide a level of local support to people and families who find themselves in severe financial hardship, whose needs are most immediate and acute |
| | 7.2 Increase awareness of the services and support available to people in their community |
| | 7.3 Build the capacity of voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations to help people help themselves and assist them in delivering services within their communities |
| | 7.4 Adopt a more responsive and locality based approach to service delivery |
| | 7.5 Integrate our approach to strengthening families |
| | 7.6 Improve public transport access to locations of social and economic importance |
| <u>AIM 8:</u> Maintain a physical environment that is clean and attractive | 8.1 Engage residents, VCS organisations and businesses in the upkeep and improvement of their local area |
| | 8.2 Protect and enhance public transport corridors, cycle routes, footpaths, and green infrastructure |
| | 8.3 Improve the condition and use of neglected land and properties that are vacant and/or in a poor state of repair |