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**LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL STRATEGY**

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**Responsible Cabinet Member(s) - Councillor Stephen Harker,  
Consumer & Environmental Services Portfolio  
Responsible Director(s) – Cliff Brown, Director of Community Services**

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**Purpose of Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to present to Cabinet a draft of the Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and Action Plan Attached at **Appendix 1** for approval.

**Background**

2. The purpose of this strategy is to provide an approach to tackling deprivation in the eleven most disadvantaged wards in Darlington, identified as having high levels of deprivation. The development of this strategy has been co-ordinated by the Community Services Department, although Darlington Partnership are responsible for the strategy and as such it is an extension of the Community Strategy, not a separate document. The Action Plan attached to the Strategy contains actions that are, therefore, in addition to actions contained within the Community Strategy.

**Identifying Priority Wards**

3. Deprivation is a multi-faceted problem which is measured not by a single indicator, but by examining a range of factors, or social issues. In determining the priority wards for inclusion within this strategy the Government's Index of Multiple Deprivation 2000 was originally used, which ranked 11 wards within the Borough as being within the worst 25% in England. These wards were used as the basis for the development of both the Community Partnerships and the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy.
4. The Index of Multiple Deprivation has recently been revised to provide a more up to date picture of deprivation, focussing on sub-ward areas (Super Output Areas). Analysis of the new IMD shows that ten of the wards previously identified are still within the worst 25% nationally, when the whole ward is looked at and Cockerton East is replaced as the 11th most deprived area by Pierremont. Further analysis at sub ward level, however, shows that significant deprivation problems still exist in Cockerton East and as such it still merits inclusion in the strategy. Out of the ten wards within the worst 25% in England in terms of deprivation, 7 are within the worst 10% in England. The priority wards are as follows:

Central	Northgate
Cockerton West	Haughton East
Bank Top	North Road
Eastbourne	Lingfield
Lascelles	Cockerton East.
Park East	

## **Defining the Problems**

5. Strategic Priorities for this strategy and the resulting Action Plan have been driven by the need to improve performance against key deprivation targets, such as Government Floor Targets, Community Strategy Targets and PSA targets, issues identified in Darlington's Social Issues Map and community aspirations identified through Community Appraisals.
6. Following an analysis of the above the main drivers for the Strategy are to:

### ***Enhancing the Environment***

- Develop ways of tackling problems in the private rented sector including enforcement and making landlords accountable.
- Tackle litter, fly tipping, dog dirt and graffiti.

### ***Stimulating Leisure Activities***

- Develop youth and community centres.
- Increase provision for young people.
- Increase the number of youth workers.

### ***Improving the Local Economy***

- Increase employment opportunities and raise income levels
- Develop local training to tackle high levels of unemployment.
- Increase training for local environmental works.
- Develop of new businesses and job creation.

### ***Developing an Effective Transport System***

- Reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in road accidents and the number of children killed or seriously injured involved in road accidents .
- Introduce more speed restriction/traffic calming.
- Improve bus service and routes.

### ***Promoting Community Safety***

- Reduce incidents of domestic burglary and theft of/from motor vehicles
- Improve street lighting.
- Increase Police, Police Community Support Officers and Community Wardens presence.
- Introduce/Expand CCTV.
- Deal with issues of young people hanging around outside shops and off-licence.

### ***Improve Health and Well-being***

- Continue to reduce the number of teenage pregnancies
- Improve dental hygiene for young children
- Improve the general well being of residents
- Improve diet and levels of nutrition.
- Tackle young people drinking.
- Reduce smoking.

### ***Raising Educational Achievement***

- Increase attainment in both Key Stage 2 and GCSE
- Increase the number of young people living within the priority wards progressing to university
- Increase wider participation in learning
- Improve parenting skills
- Improve school attendance

### ***Promoting Inclusive Communities***

- Empower the community by improving the confidence and capacity of local residents
- Involve more young people and schools in the community.

### ***Stimulating Leisure Activities***

- Develop youth/community centres.
- Increase provision for young people.
- Increase the number of youth workers.

7. The overall vision of the strategy is therefore to:

***‘reduce deprivation in the eleven most disadvantaged wards within the Borough and improve the life chances of those residents living within these areas’.***

8. The Strategic Priorities of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and Action Plan are designed to have a positive impact on reversing the spiral of decline in the designated priority areas and to build the capacity and confidence in those communities. The priorities and Action Plan have been structured into sections based on the four visionary goals and eight connecting themes of the Community Strategy. The strategic priorities identified below summarise the key actions contained within the Action Plan:

### ***Improving the local Economy***

- Reduce worklessness and improve training opportunities and business development within the priority areas

### ***Promoting Inclusive Communities***

- Build cohesive and confident communities raising self esteem and confidence.

### ***Enhancing the local environment***

- Create a more attractive environment by tackling sustainability issues to protect the natural environment and liveability issues such as litter, graffiti, dog fouling that have been identified by the community
- Develop an effective transport system

### ***Raising Education Achievement***

- Raise educational standards and develop an ethos of lifelong learning by providing opportunities for access, achievement and engagement.
- Provide local training opportunities that develop the skills and confidence of local people

### ***Stimulating Leisure Activity***

- Engage communities and in particular young people in leisure activities

### ***Promoting Community Safety***

- Reduce crime and antisocial behaviour and increase the number of local people feeling safer within their community

### ***Improving Health and well-being***

- Encourage healthier lifestyles and reduce health inequalities

### ***Providing Decent Homes***

- Engage with private sector landlords to improve standards and increase the proportion of decent homes within the private sector occupied by vulnerable groups.

## **Delivery Arrangements**

9. The body responsible for ensuring that the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy is turned into reality is Darlington Partnership.
10. The themed groups of Darlington Partnership comprising; Community Safety, Learning Partnership, Health Improvement & Social Inclusion and Economy & Environment will be responsible for the delivery of the Action Plan and will focus upon the monitoring and review of the actions linked to their group. The Darlington Community Partnership Steering Group, the umbrella organisation for the Community Partnerships will also monitor progress against the strategic priorities of the document.
11. Seven key indicators have been selected to measure the performance of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy. They have been selected as they are both national floor targets and key Community Strategy targets measuring deprivation. These indicators are as follows:

#### **Health**

Number of conceptions per 1,000 females aged 15-17 average for 3-year period  
Increase the average mortality ratio across the priority wards.

#### **Education**

Percentage of pupils achieving 5 GCSEs grade A\*-C.

#### **Crime**

Total recorded crimes per 1,000 of population.

#### **Economy**

Proportion of working age in employment.

#### **Transport**

Road safety casualties per 100,000 population; total, pedestrians, pedal cyclists, motor cyclists, car users, other vehicles killed/serious injury / slightly injured.

#### **Housing**

Number of social housing in a decent condition.

## **Outcome of Consultation**

12. The draft strategy and action plan has been considered by all five Scrutiny Committees, each of the Community Partnerships and Darlington Partnership. The strategy and action plan have been well received. However individuals involved in the Community Partnerships have asked that continued professional support for the Community Partnerships be provided to deliver actions contained within the Strategy and to implement Local Action Plans.

## **Legal Implications**

13. This report has been considered by the Borough Solicitor for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. There are no issues which the Borough Solicitor considers need to be brought to the specific attention of Members, other than those highlighted in the report.

## **Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

14. The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. It is not considered that the contents of this report have any such effect.

## **Council Policy Framework**

15. The issues contained within this report require approval by Council.

## **Decision Deadline**

16. For the purpose of the 'call-in' procedure this does not represent an urgent matter.

## **Conclusion**

17. This report has presented the draft Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and highlighted issues to be addressed within the Action Plan.

## **Recommendation**

18. It is recommend that Cabinet endorse the Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and refer to Council for approval.

## **Reasons**

19. The aim of the Strategy and action plan is to address the spiral of decline in the eleven wards identified in the strategy and having high levels of significant deprivation.

**Cliff Brown**  
**Director of Community Services**

## Background Papers

- (i) No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

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