

WEST DEVON BOROUGH COUNCIL

NAME OF COMMITTEE	Community Services Committee
DATE	25th June 2013
REPORT TITLE	Connect Strategy and Priority Action Plan Update 2013-14
Report of	Community Manager
WARDS AFFECTED	All

Summary of report:

Following the review of the Connect Partnership and delivery arrangements the priority action plans for Community Life, Environment and Homes have been reviewed and updated to cover the period 2013-14 and incorporated in one Connect Strategy update document. Members are asked to consider this updated Strategy and recommend its approval to Council.

Financial implications:

The resource implications of the actions proposed are set out in the action plans and are already incorporated into the Council's Budget.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Members recommend to Council that the Connect Strategy annual update for 2013-14, incorporating updated action plans for Community Life, Environment and Homes, be approved and adopted.

Officer contact:

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In order to ensure that it manages and targets resources where they are most needed, the Council regularly reviews its corporate priorities to ensure that they are relevant to the local area. At the Council meeting in December 2010, Members approved four high level priorities for the authority and authorised the development of detailed delivery plans for each priority.

- 1.2 The high level priorities approved were:
- Community Life
 - Economy
 - Environment
 - Homes
- 1.3 The full delivery plans for each of these priorities were approved by the relevant Committees in July 2011. Annual updates for 2012-13 were produced for Community Life, Environment and Homes and approved by Members in July 2012. The Economy plan was updated following a review of the Service and an update document covering the period 2012-14 was approved in October 2012.
- 1.4 Following a review changes to the Connect Partnership and delivery arrangements were approved in April 2013. Rather than a Connect Strategy and four separate delivery plans there is now one strategy which includes focused annual action plans for the four priorities.
- 1.5 Longer terms strategic goals and aspirations are referenced in the main document and actions to support their delivery will be included in the annual action plans at the appropriate time.
- 1.6 Monitoring of the action plans will take place annually rather than six-monthly.
- 1.7 The Economy action plan is not due to be reviewed until March 2014 and will be integrated into the new arrangements at that time.

2. CONNECT STRATEGY UPDATE 2013-14

- 2.1 The Connect Strategy update for 2013-14 is included at Appendix A and incorporates updated action plans for Community Life, Environment and Homes.
- 2.2 The action plans were developed in consultation with stakeholders and partners. We also received 157 responses to an on-line questionnaire on the priorities; these responses indicate that in general actions are being focused on the areas the public consider to be important.
- 2.3 During the review process it was identified that there is still further work to do to shorten the priority action plans to ensure that they are focused with actions that add value and are realistic and measureable. Work has been undertaken this year with the delivery groups to address this.
- 2.4 The priority action plans also now identify estimated officer time, financial commitment and any known external funding.
- 2.5 It should be noted that whilst this is a shared strategy across South Hams and West Devon some actions may be specific to only one authority area, this may be due to resources or Member/community aspirations or to address issues specific to one area.

2.6 The draft action plans were presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 4th June 2013 for Members of that Committee to consider the proposed action plans and make recommendations as to their further development. The plans have been updated to reflect agreed changes.

2.7 A range of qualitative and quantitative measures will be used to measure whether milestones set out in the action plans have been met. Measures will be compared against previous information where available to determine whether there has been a positive change and will be reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the annual monitoring. Measures may also be used to set a base-line to monitor future progress.

3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Council is responsible for approving the Connect Strategy which now includes the priority action plans. Overview and Scrutiny is responsible for monitoring and influencing the priority action plans.

3.2 There is a legal requirement under the Homelessness Act 2002 to produce a homelessness strategy at least once every 5 years, based on a review of homelessness in the district and setting out plans for homeless prevention and securing sufficient suitable accommodation and support services for homeless households. This is included within the Connect Strategy and Homes action plan.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The resource implications of the actions proposed are set out in the action plans and are already incorporated into the Council's Budget.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

5.1 The Risk Management implications are shown at the end of this report in the Strategic Risks Template.

Corporate priorities engaged:	Community Life; Environment; Homes
Statutory powers:	Statutory requirement to produce a Homelessness Strategy.
Considerations of equality and human rights:	A 360 degree assessment was carried out on the original Connect Strategy and Delivery Plans – no further assessment is required unless the priorities change significantly.
Biodiversity considerations:	A 360 degree assessment was carried out on the original Connect Strategy and Delivery Plans – no further assessment is required unless the priorities change significantly.
Sustainability considerations:	A 360 degree assessment was carried out on the original Connect Strategy and Delivery Plans – no further assessment is required unless the priorities change significantly.

Crime and disorder implications:	A 360 degree assessment was carried out on the original Connect Strategy and Delivery Plans – no further assessment is required unless the priorities change significantly.
Background papers:	Connect Strategy 2011- 2015/ Connect Strategy Annual Update 2012/13 Community Life delivery plan 2011-2015/ Community Life Annual Update 2012/13 Homes delivery plan 2011-2015/ Homes Annual Update 2012/13 Economy delivery plan 2011-2015/Economy Annual Update 2012/14
Appendices attached:	Appendix A – Connect Strategy and Priority Action Plan Update 2013/14

STRATEGIC RISKS TEMPLATE

No	Risk Title	Risk/Opportunity Description	Inherent risk status			Mitigating & Management actions	Ownership	
			Impact of negative outcome	Chance of negative outcome	Risk score and direction of travel			
1	Strategic Direction	Provide strategic direction for community life and homes setting out how we will improve the quality of life in West Devon and South Hams working with our partners and the community.	Action plans that don't meet local needs.	Low	6	↔	<p>Community Life, Environment and Homes Identified as priorities for the area.</p> <p>Connect Strategy offers clear strategic direction to meet local needs in West Devon and South Hams.</p> <p>Actions define outcomes for local communities.</p>	Priority Lead Officers
2	Community Engagement	Effectively engage communities in developing plans for their locality to meet local needs.	Local People unable to influence and shape plans.	Medium	9	↔	<p>Regular stakeholder consultation and annual priorities survey.</p> <p>Up to date evidence used to develop plans, including local consultation.</p> <p>Voice initiatives used to inform development of plans.</p> <p>Delivery Groups comprising key partners and community representatives developing plans.</p>	Priority Lead Officers
3	Economic Conditions and Funding	Difficult economic conditions and reducing funding could impact on delivery.	Unable to deliver outcomes to meet local needs.	High	12	↓	<p>Resources identified in action plans and Financial Strategies.</p> <p>Regular monitoring and updating to identify and address emerging issues.</p>	Priority Lead Officers
4	New Government Policy	Actions need to be in conformity with Government legislation.	Actions don't deliver outcomes in line with Government policy	Low	6	↔	<p>Maintaining understanding of Government legislation.</p> <p>Working closely with partners and communities to develop action plans that reflect Government policy and meet local need.</p>	Priority Lead Officers

Direction of travel symbols ↓ ↑ ↔