

Executive

Brighter Futures in Banbury Programme

23 May 2011

Report of Strategic Director Environment and Community

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider a review of the first year of the Brighter Futures Programme in Banbury and the proposed emphasis in the second and subsequent years.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To note the very good progress made in the first year of the Brighter Futures Programme
- (2) To support the areas of emphasis and proposed activity in 2011/12
- (3) To receive further reports as appropriate on progress

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 The Brighter Futures in Banbury programme has been running for just over a year in an attempt to support in better ways those individuals and families in most need. During this time, it has made significant progress with effective multi-agency focus and joint actions.
- 1.2 The first year's activities and outcomes can be found in the attached Annual Report at Appendix 1.

Proposals

- 1.3 The proposals in this report are about making a difference to those families and individuals in greatest need. They include continued effectiveness of multi-agency working, helping those in greatest need, having a common purpose and understanding, taking a long-term approach, making best use of current and anticipated reducing resources and engaging with local people

and communities in Banbury.

1.4 Proposals for the coming year include maintaining the focus on the five main themes of :

- Financial and Employment Support
- Young People's Aspirations and Attainment
- Housing and Environment
- Health and Well-being
- Safe and Stronger Communities

1.5 Specific initiatives in 2011/12 include;

1. consolidate where we have started to make a real difference, for example:
 - getting local people into local jobs, such as through the Job Clubs
 - preventing young people becoming, and remaining, NEET
 - improving skill levels to increase local residents' employability
 - developing more self-build schemes in the area
 - enrolling even more local people into volunteering, particularly young people
 - ensuring we maintain the reduction in crime and disorder achieved to date
 - maintaining effective networks of professionals already established in the area.
2. co-ordinate youth provision in response to changes in local service provision during 2011
3. support residents affected by the proposed reductions in Benefits and Tax Credits from April and the Incapacity Benefit reassessment process proposed for later in 2011
4. introduce new services where possible, such as a Food Bank for Banbury, working with the faith and voluntary communities
5. improve access to services supporting residents, such as the Citizens Advice Bureau and "Next Step" – the free careers advice service for adults to support them back into learning and work
6. target early-intervention, one-to-one tuition, under-achieving pupils and a family focus to learning.

Conclusion

1.6 The Brighter Futures in Banbury programme will only be effective if it is targeted, long-term, multi-agency in nature and clear on its purpose and outcomes. A common understanding amongst all relevant agencies of what can and should be done underpins the proposals for 2011.

Background Information

- 2.1 The attached Annual Report 2010 sets out the extensive range of activities undertaken in the three target wards arranged by the five themes. It represents an excellent multi-agency response to local need and has established a new way of working which is based on a common purpose, good communication and better understanding of the roles and activities of many organisations.
- 2.2 The Programme commenced with the benefit of a Programme Manager funded by the Local Area Agreement Reward Grant. However, when this was cut by 50%, this role has been terminated as a means of directing the resource to more service initiatives.
- 2.3 The Council has been active in its support of this work in many ways, key has been taking a strong leadership role:
- Oxfordshire Partnership with Chief Executive and Council Leader input;
 - Chief Executive input at the '6 Oxfordshire Chiefs' meetings;
 - Strategic Director input to the Oxfordshire Programme Management Group
 - Strategic Director lead as Chairman of the Brighter Futures in Banbury Steering Group;
 - Head of Housing Services and Improvement Manager lead roles for Housing & Environment and Employment & Financial Support Banbury themes;
 - Improvement Manager coordination role for Banbury activity;
 - Aligning mainstream Council services such as benefits, employment support, housing, recreation, cleansing, and health improvement to the wards and people most in need;
 - The appointment of Councillor Colin Clarke as Portfolio Holder for Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation, who chairs the three tier Banbury Councillors meetings and workshops.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

- 3.1 In pursuing this programme, there are a number of key principles which should be considered. They are as follows:
- The focus on health inequality issues will by its nature need long term wider economic, social and environmental actions to be fully effective;
 - The outcomes sought must be relevant to the communities targeted and the specific needs of people in those communities;
 - This is an ongoing programme, not a project and as such there will be a need to embed actions in mainstream service provision for all participating agencies.
- 3.2 Effectiveness can only be achieved if there is commitment of participating agencies. It is encouraging to note that the level of commitment to work together to make a difference is evident throughout all partners.

- 3.3 The important issue of finance is a cause for concern. The Oxfordshire programme was originally allocated £1 million, but given the Coalition Government announcements about funding cuts, 50% of this will not be forthcoming. In addition, of the £500,000 received to date most has been committed to the work so far. What is also clear at this point is that in addition to the reduced additional funding, core budgets of partner organisations will be smaller in the future.
- 3.4 The most important aspect about funding is therefore not about how much new funding will or will not be available, but to ensure the most effective and efficient use is made of what ever resources are available irrespective of cutbacks. The new and enhanced multi-agency initiatives proposed for 2011 are being implemented with this intention. It is expected that more such initiatives will follow.
- 3.5 Long term outcomes expected will include:
- There will be a sustained improvement in IMD scores for the target areas, including the specific domains of health, employment, crime, education and skills;
 - The gap in death rates between the best and worst quintiles in the District will be reduced;
 - There will be better outcomes for children and young people - reduced teenage pregnancies, improved educational attainment, improved skills, fewer accidental and deliberate injuries and reduced poverty;
 - Reduce number of young people not in employment, education or training;
 - Improved skills levels and more will be employed or develop enterprises;
 - Public involvement in planning and implementing the programme will result in increased satisfaction with living in the area;
 - Financial savings and efficiencies with public money for health, social care, policing, children's services, community safety and advice services;
 - Improvements in the number of people who are obese, who smoke, who have low levels of physical activity, mothers who breastfeed, people with undiagnosed or unmanaged diabetes, teenage pregnancies and who take up flu vaccines.
- 3.6 This Banbury work is being pursued as part of the Oxfordshire wide programme as it is in certain Banbury wards which the data indicates most need is located. Over the medium term and as progress is made in Banbury, other parts of the District should be considered for similar focussed work according to the needs in those areas. Before this occurs, it will be important from the Banbury work to develop good practice and proven interventions which can then be applied elsewhere

The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward, reflected in Option One.

Option One Adopt the recommendations as set out

Option Two Amend/add to the areas of focus for 2011

