

Report of	Meeting	Date
Chief Executive (Introduced by the Executive Member for Policy and Performance)	Executive Cabinet	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2011

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2011/12

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. This report and appendix contain the Community Engagement Strategy 2011/12 for approval by Executive Cabinet.

### RECOMMENDATION

2. That Executive Cabinet approve the Community Engagement Strategy.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

3. This report provides details on the background and content of the new Community Engagement Strategy 2011/12.
4. The purpose of the Community Engagement Strategy is to bring together our current community engagement activities and to provide an overarching strategy which will clearly define our approach to community engagement, and put in place actions to help improve our existing methods for engaging with customers.

### REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

5. The Corporate Strategy 2010/11 – 2013/14 has a number of long term outcomes which rely on successful community engagement in order to be achieved. This includes being ‘an excellent community leader’ (9.2), ‘community that residents actively take care of and improve’ (4.3), and ‘empowered local people managing community assets’ (6.2). Having good community engagement also ensures that we are able to develop our services around customer need. By adopting this Community Engagement Strategy, we will ensure that we are able to achieve these outcomes, and will have a consolidated approach to the way in which we engage with our communities.

### ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

6. The alternative option would be to not adopt a Community Engagement Strategy for Chorley Council. This has been rejected on the basis that we need this strategy to ensure that we meet our Corporate Strategy outcomes.

## CORPORATE PRIORITIES

7. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Strong Family Support		Education and Jobs	
Being Healthy		Pride in Quality Homes and Clean Neighbourhoods	√
Safe Respectful Communities	√	Quality Community Services and Spaces	√
Vibrant Local Economy		Thriving Town Centre, Local Attractions and Villages	√
A Council that is a consistently Top Performing Organisation and Delivers Excellent Value for Money			√

## BACKGROUND

8. The purpose of the Community Engagement Strategy is to bring together our current community engagement activities and to provide an overarching strategy which will clearly define our approach to community engagement, and put in place actions to help improve our existing methods for engaging with customers.
9. We already have effective processes for engaging with communities in place, much of which includes the role of Elected Members in their ward and community leadership roles. This focus of this strategy is to consolidate the Council's approach to community engagement in the delivery of services.
10. The timescale for the Strategy has been set for one year (2011/12). However, it is envisaged that the approach, principles and methods will stay consistent, but that an annual refresh will enable to us to develop new actions to continually improve community engagement.

## THE CONTENT OF THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

11. The Strategy indicates our approach and principles of engagement, which are based on our existing Consultation and Participation Strategy. These principles apply to the four levels through which we engage with our customers, from informing and consulting, to involving and devolving.
12. Much of our engagement with customers is embedded within our business as usual and forms part of the Council's values and competency framework. There are examples of the current provision indicated within the Strategy, alongside details of the main delivery plans.
13. However, to ensure that we are able to improve our engagement, the Strategy includes four key actions for 2011/12. These actions are contained with the Corporate Strategy 2010/11- 2013/14 or within service Business Improvement Plans.
14. The Strategy also contains measures of success, so that we can monitor if we have been successful in improving community engagement. These measures will be performance managed as part of the Council's performance management processes.

## NEXT STEPS

15. Following approval of this Strategy, an underpinning action is to update and expand the Consultation and Participation Toolkit. This will provide clear guidance and advice for staff to enable them to successfully engage with customers based on this strategic approach.

## IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

16. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance		Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	√
Legal		No significant implications in this area	

## COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNICATIONS

17. Equality and diversity considerations are important in ensuring that community engagement activity is accessible and provides opportunities for all Chorley to become involved in their community. Links have been made between the principles in this strategy and the Equality Scheme to ensure that appropriate consideration is made of equality and diversity when the strategy is implemented.

DONNA HALL  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Sarah James	5348	3 <sup>rd</sup> March 2011	Community Engagement Strategy