

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Cabinet **DATE:** 17 October 2011

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**WARD(S):** All

**PORTFOLIO:** Finance and Strategy – Leader of the Council, Councillor Rob Anderson

### **PART I** **KEY DECISION**

#### **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY – REFRESH**

##### **1 Purpose of Report**

To agree the refreshed Slough Sustainable Community Strategy.

##### **2 Recommendation/Proposed Action**

2.1 That the Cabinet agree the refreshed Slough Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS).

##### **3 Community Strategy Priorities**

The current SCS sets out the strategic objectives and priorities for the borough for the period 2008 – 2028. These are reflected in the Strategic Plan 2009 – 2011 (which will be revised during early 2012) and other key strategies, policies and plans produced by the Council. It therefore supports and contributes to the delivery of the following priorities:

- **Celebrating Diversity, Enabling inclusion**
- **Adding years to Life and Life to years**
- **Being Safe, Feeling Safe**
- **A Cleaner, Greener place to live, Work and Play**
- **Prosperity for All**

##### **4 Other Implications**

(a) Financial -The SCS will inform both short term and long term priority and budget setting for the Authority.

(b) Risk Management – If the SCS is not refreshed there is a risk that the overall strategic direction and long term vision for the Borough will not be sufficiently articulated and coordinated, and the needs of the Borough's communities not met in a coordinated way.

Risk assessments have been or will be carried out by the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and the partnership delivery groups (PDGs) as part of the Council's Partnership Governance Framework. Any risks to the Council will be managed through our existing risk management policies and reported on a regular basis.

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications - Many aspects of the Strategy support Human Rights in setting out to tackle issues such as poverty, homelessness, sub standard homes and inequities in health. There are no other immediate legal or human rights implications.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment - Organisations representing different communities of interest were consulted and invited to engage in the development of the Strategy. Impact assessments will be undertaken for specific activity within the strategy before this is implemented.

(e) Workforce – As a result of withdrawal of government funding the LSP no longer has dedicated support, but in view of its importance the council has ensured that some support is provided via Policy and Communications. Following the agreement of the refreshed SCS the LSP governance will be reviewed and the remaining PDGs will review their support requirements.

## 5 **Supporting Information**

5.1 The previous Government introduced Sustainable Community Strategies to set out the overall strategic direction and long-term vision for the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of a local area – typically over 10-20 years. They are partnership documents which tell the 'story of the place', the distinctive vision and ambition of the area, backed by clear evidence and analysis. The current SCS (2008 – 2028) has the following priority areas:

- Community Cohesion
- Health and Wellbeing
- Economy and skills
- Safer Communities
- Environment

5.2 Although the Government has decided to repeal the Duty to Prepare a Sustainable Community Strategy (and maintain a Local Area Agreement), local authorities are still expected to work with partners and local communities to develop shared strategies for what they need to improve in their areas.

5.3 A decision has been taken in light of these and further significant changes within Slough to review and refresh the SCS. This has taken account of:

- economic changes and the financial context of our partners
- identified improvements and declines (e.g. housing stock and condition, young people's skills and childhood obesity) associated with the priority areas of the current SCS or emerging from the revision of the Slough Story
- the emerging emphasis on community engagement and responsibility

- the removal of the duty to maintain an LAA which largely dictated the focus and prioritisation of the current SCS. This allows the LSP to introduce and monitor locally agreed measures and targets

5.4 The Slough Story is the document which sits behind the SCS setting out the collective evidence base from which priorities and specific action may be agreed. It was comprehensively updated during 2011 and the evidence base includes:

- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- 2009 Private Sector Stock and HMO Condition Survey
- 2010 Attitude Survey
- Safer Slough Strategic Assessment 2011/12
- Neighbourhood Survey
- Local Economic Assessment

5.5 A range of consultation was carried out to refresh the SCS including:

- Workshop with council staff, stakeholders and partners represented on the Slough Forward Board (and its Priority Delivery Groups)
- Local Economic Assessment workshop with business partners
- Slough Forward Forum (including over 50 representatives of local community groups)

5.6 The draft SCS is being reported to the Slough Forward Board on 10 October and to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11 October. Comments made by the Board and the Committee will be reported verbally at the Cabinet meeting.

5.7 The Cabinet received a report at the meeting on 18 July setting out the priorities developed from the evidence and consultation:

- Economy and Skills
- Health and Wellbeing
- Housing
- Regeneration and Environment
- Safer Slough

Underpinning the above priorities there are two cross-cutting themes:

- Community engagement and civic responsibility; and
- Improving the image of the town

5.8 The SCS has been developed over the summer and the draft is attached as Appendix A for agreement. The Strategy will be supported by an Action Plan which will be developed over the coming months to include performance measures to ensure that the aims of the Strategy are implemented. An example of the type of indicators may be seen under the Safer Slough priority where the work on agreeing indicators is more advanced. The Strategy will also include case studies summarising successful projects developed as part of the previous strategy.

5.9 When the SCS has been agreed the governance structure of the LSP, Slough Forward, will be reviewed to ensure that the Board and its Partnership Delivery Groups are able to deliver the new priorities in the most effective way.

6 **Appendices**

Appendix 1 - Draft SCS.

7 **Background Papers**

SCS 2008 – 2028.