



Report to Cabinet

Subject: Sustainable Community Strategy
Vision 2026 and the '5 Priorities'

Date: 4 December 2008

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1. Purpose of the Report

- To invite Cabinet to recommend that Council agree Vision 2026 and the 5 Priorities as the basis of the new Gedling Borough Sustainable Community Strategy.

There will be a presentation to accompany this report at the meeting.

2. Background

2.1 – Legislative Context - The Local Government Act 2000 includes a statutory duty on local authorities to adopt a Community Strategy. The Strategy should set out what the local authority proposes to do to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area. It is expected to work with partners to develop and deliver this.

The recent Sustainable Communities Act updates this duty. It requires local authorities to lead the production and delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy that sets out a vision and priorities for the area, in effect demonstrating how the authority will work with partners to promote economic, social and environmental well-being.

A Sustainable Community Strategy need not necessarily cover a single district area – with agreement, district areas can join together to produce a Sustainable Community Strategy covering two or more districts. In two-tier areas, Government increasingly expects there to be a Sustainable Community Strategy at county as well as district level, reflecting the link between Sustainable

Community Strategies and their delivery through Local Area Agreements (LAAs). In Gedling, the preference of both the Borough Council and Gedling Partnership (the Local Strategic Partnership for the Borough) is that there should be a Sustainable Community Strategy at the district level. The Gedling Sustainable Community Strategy will then feed into and influence the Nottinghamshire Sustainable Community Strategy.

2.2 - The Gedling Sustainable Community Strategy - The Gedling Sustainable Community Strategy is at the heart of the Council's organisational vision, adopted in 2006. The Strategy is developed through the Gedling Partnership, in line with good practice, and the Partnership plays a key role in its delivery.

The current Gedling Community Strategy covers the period to the end of 2008. An approach to its review was agreed by Gedling Partnership and by Cabinet in July 2007, reflecting changing requirements of a Sustainable Community Strategy set out in legislation and draft guidance at the time. The review has been progressed in line with the agreed approach since then.

In September 2008, the Partnership Board and Cabinet agreed a draft Gedling Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2026 for Consultation. This was an outline document highlighting what the future Vision and Priorities for the Borough might look like. This document was informed by: -

- In-depth analysis of the State of Gedling Borough (reflecting the need for a more evidence-based approach), the findings of which were reported to the Partnership and the Borough Council in March/April 2008
- Consultation with stakeholders and with the wider community on the State of the Borough findings during April/May 2008
- Analysis of the findings of that consultation during summer 2008
- Identification of potential Vision and Priorities, taking into account degree of impact and short/long term issues, arising from the evidence base and consultation responses
- Assessment of fit with current national, regional, county and current district priorities.

The consultation period on the draft Gedling Sustainable Community Strategy finished in November. The feedback has now been considered and the result is the Vision 2026 and the '5 Priorities' document, which is intended to form the basis of the next Gedling Sustainable Community Strategy.

This document was discussed at the Gedling Partnership Board on 24 November 2008. With a few minor amendments, the document was agreed for recommendation to the Borough Council for adoption. A final version, incorporating changes made by the Partnership Board, is attached at **Appendix A**.

3. Vision 2026 and '5 Priorities'

A Vision and Priorities document

This final document sets out a vision of the Borough in 2026 and five priority themes on which it is proposed that action should be focussed in order to achieve this vision. It is designed to provide the basis for future action planning rather than being an action plan in itself.

'Key Issues'

As with the consultation draft agreed in September, the Vision and Priorities draw upon the evidence gathering, consultation and analysis outlined in section 2 above. The analysis of the full evidence base has arrived at fourteen 'Key Issues for Gedling Borough' from which the Vision and Priorities have been derived. More information regarding the 'Key Issues' can be found on pages 7 and 27 on the document.

Consultation on the Draft Vision and Priorities

This document also reflects upon feedback received during the 'Draft Strategy' consultation period undertaken during October. Details of the changes made, following this consultation can be found in **Appendix B**.

Gedling Borough Housing Strategy 2009-2014

The Council is required to produce a Housing Strategy. As previously agreed, the new Gedling Borough Housing Strategy is to be incorporated into the Sustainable Community Strategy. Government Office East Midlands (GOEM) have indicated support for this approach, which is in line with good practice recommendations. As a result, housing related issues are integrated into the main body of "Vision 2026 and the '5 Priorities'" document.

Consultation on the more detailed draft Housing Strategy section, which will cover a five year period, has recently been completed. However, in view of the current economic situation and the downturn in the housing market resulting from the "credit crunch", agreement has been reached with GOEM to delay its publication until Summer 2009. This will allow time to reflect a forthcoming review of affordable housing policies in the Borough, scheduled for the New Year, and possible changes to Local Area Agreement targets, due for consideration in February/March. Both issues impact significantly on the Housing Strategy and its delivery.

This final Housing Strategy document will be incorporated in the Sustainable Community Strategy in due course. The work to gather a strong evidence base and incorporate housing issues into the vision and priorities document still provides a good base for this work for the future. Work towards existing tasks and targets, including those included in the recently agreed Homelessness Strategy, will continue in the meantime.

Naming the Gedling Sustainable Community Strategy

Most Strategies as this kind have a particular name or slogan to make them distinctive to the local area they cover. Views were sought from the Partnership Board on this issue, and any feedback on this will be reported verbally at the Cabinet meeting.

4. Next Steps

Assuming that the Vision and Five Priorities are supported, the next stage in the development of the Sustainable Community Strategy will be action planning to ensure its delivery and turn the vision to reality.

Action planning needs to cover a shorter time period than the full strategy period. This will allow the Council and partners to reflect and act upon shorter-term influences while retaining focus on the longer-term vision. It is therefore proposed that, in the first instance, a two year action plan is developed. This also has the advantage of alignment with the current Local Area Agreement, which runs through to 2011.

Action planning will be progressed between January and April 2009 – partner commitment has been secured to support this. It is also intended to focus the Council's service planning more directly on the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy, reflecting its position at the heart of the Council's organisational vision.

In many instances, work will already be in hand to address the priorities, which will be reflected in action plans, but is also likely to involve the development of new areas of work. These actions will be based on the '5 Priorities'. Shorter-term outcome targets will be adopted to allow for progress to be assessed – where appropriate, Local Area Agreement targets, as broken down to district level, will be used. The outcome of this process will be a published action plan for the Strategy to focus the work of Gedling Partnership and which aligns to the Nottinghamshire Local Area Agreement.

Work on design and print of the final document will also be progressed in early 2009, with a view to a community launch in early Spring. The opportunity to summarise the strategy in "Contacts" magazine is being explored.

5. Resource Implications

Adequate financial resource is available for the publication and launch of the Sustainable Community Strategy in the New Year.

Partners' time will be required between January and April 2009 to contribute to the development of an action plan for the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Longer-term resource implications are likely to be significant, as all partners might reasonably be expected to align resource allocations towards delivery of the strategy where this is not already the case.

6. Recommendation

Cabinet is **recommended**: -

- To recommend that Council agree Vision 2026 and the 5 Priorities as the basis of the new Gedling Borough Sustainable Community Strategy

Appendix B: Changes Following the Draft Consultation

| Change | Reason |
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| Introduction | |
| The introduction split into two sections – ‘What is Distinctive About Gedling Borough?’ and ‘Gedling Partnership and the Gedling Borough Strategy’ Pages 3-5 | To have a brief clear description of what Gedling Borough is like today. To fully explain the purpose of this document. |
| Explaining to this document is only part of the full Sustainable Community Strategy. Page 4 | Feedback from the consultation highlighted the draft document was “not a Strategy” as there was “no plan of action”. To reflect this, we have clarified the purpose of this document as the Vision and Priorities for the new Sustainable Community Strategy and that from it we will draw up an action plan. As a result, we are not referring to this document as the full Sustainable Community Strategy. |
| Explanation as to why we choose the date 2026. Page 5 | To clarify the reason behind the timescale of the Vision. |
| Reference to the Housing Strategy and the Local Development Framework. Page 5 | To highlight the role and links with these two area of work. |
| Vision | |
| A more detailed expression of the Vision, expanding on the original bullet points Page 6 | During the consultation it was clear that not all consultees could picture the Borough that was being outlined by the bullet pointed Vision in the Draft document. |
| Changing the word “happy” so the Vision reads where people <u>want</u> to live, work and do business.” | Consultation feedback suggested the word “want” showed more ambition than the word “happy”. |

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| Page 6 | |
| Moving the reference to partners working across Nottinghamshire from one of the six Vision bullet points to the top of the Vision. | Feedback from the consultation highlighted that this sixth bullet point in our draft Vision did not flow with the rest of it. Bearing in mind the importance of this reference added at the last Board meeting, it was agreed to refer to the Countywide working as a description of how we are going to achieve our Vision. |
| Page 6 | |
| Adding the reference, that Gedling Borough is part of Nottinghamshire. | During the consultation, concerns were raised that there was not a strong enough reference to the Borough continuing to be part of Nottinghamshire. |
| Page 6 | |
| Including reference to the Key issues and how we decided on our Vision and Priorities. | This was added to give greater clarity as how the State of the Borough research and consultation has informed the Vision. |
| Pages 6-9 | |
| Priorities | |
| Clarification that the Priorities are not a plan of action, but that they will drive the future action of partners. | Part of clarifying the purpose of this document, in response to the consultation feedback that highlighted that there was no plan of action. |
| Page 9 | |
| Addition of an introductory paragraph for each priority. | This is linked to need to further express what we mean by our Vision and Priorities. Whereas, the Vision is a statement of what we want the Borough to be like in 2026, this part gives the reader a more detailed picture of why we believe in each priority. |
| Pages 10, 12, 13, 15, 17 | This part also helps to explain as why we have highlighted particular findings. In the draft there was some confusion as to why we referred to the increasing BME population in the "Fairer" priority, as consultees thought we were suggesting that this was a |

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| | negative trend. The new paragraph on page 12, explains the importance of understanding the make up of our population so we have the knowledge to provide services that reflect the needs of all our community. |
| Addition of sub-heading, 'What has been achieved so far?' Pages 10, 12, 13, 15, 17 | This is in response to the concern that the draft document made no reference to the Partnerships and partners' achievements to date, under each of the priorities. |
| Referring to our State of Gedling Borough evidence under each priority as 'Local Findings'. | This reference was changes and it was clear from the consultation that the use of the term "issue" caused some confusion for consultees. The "issues" were often viewed as just negative, which is not case within this document. |
| Addition local findings added under each priority. Pages 10-17 | Following consultation and further research some additional findings have been added under each priority. For example, under the "environment" priority we have the new finding to reflect consultation feedback - "A well designed local environment and good quality housing can enhance people's life, by preventing crime and disorder, providing the opportunity for a healthy lifestyle, reducing energy use and ensuring there are more accessible services for health and public transport." |
| Addition of section 'Delivering the Priorities' | To explain that we need to develop an action plan based on our '5 Priorities'. |
| Re-wording of the Values. | Consultation feedback highlighted the use of jargon, such as "community cohesion" and "rural proofing" and the lack of understanding from consultees as to what these terms mean. We have removed the jargon for a more 'plain English' approach. |
| Partnerships and Partner Organisations | |
| Added reference to the Nottinghamshire Sustainable Community Strategy | To emphasise the importance and the links with the Nottinghamshire Strategy. |
| Added references to the South Notts Community | To highlight these key partnerships that will be involved in the |

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| Safety Partnership, Housing Related Partners and Partnerships and the Greater Nottingham Joint Advisory Board | delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy. |
| Appendices | |
| Definition of the Key Issues in Appendix A. | To give an explanation and clarity as to what has informed the Key Issues. |
| Highlighting the links with the Nottinghamshire Local Area Agreement priorities. | To show which indicators within the Nottinghamshire Local Area Agreement our priorities will contribute to. |
| Summary of Housing Strategy moved to Appendix D. | This has been moved from the main text of the document. The full Housing Strategy will be a separate supporting document that is part of the full Sustainable Community Strategy. |