

CHESHIRE'S SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY 2006

VISION

“We want Cheshire to be a place where people want to live and work, now and in the future – where everyone can achieve their potential and make an effective contribution, at work and play, at home and in the community, in a safe and healthy environment, take an active part in decisions, and continue to learn and develop throughout their lives”

When we achieve our vision for a sustainable Cheshire, it will be a place that is:

- *ACTIVE, INCLUSIVE AND SAFE – fair, tolerant and cohesive with a strong local culture and other shared community activities;*
- *WELL RUN – with effective and inclusive participation, representation and leadership;*
- *ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE – providing places for people to live that are considerate of the environment;*
- *WELL DESIGNED AND BUILT – featuring a quality built and natural environment;*
- *WELL CONNECTED – with good transport services and communication linking people to jobs, schools, health and other services;*
- *THRIVING – with a flourishing and diverse local economy ;*
- *WELL SERVED – with public, private, community and voluntary services that are appropriate to people’s needs and accessible to all ; and*
- *FAIR FOR EVERYONE – including those in other communities, now and in the future.*

HEADLINE OUTCOMES

The Cheshire Sustainable Community Strategy is based around the following themes:

- Safer & Stronger Communities
- Children & Young People
- Older People & Healthier Communities
- Economic Development & Enterprise
- The Environment
- Innovation & New Ways of Working

SAFER & STRONGER COMMUNITIES

Key Outcomes:

1. To reduce inequality in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods and particular sections of the community
2. To reduce crime, the harm caused by illegal drugs and alcohol, and to reassure the public, reducing the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour
3. To empower local people to have a greater voice and influence over local decision making and the delivery of services, promote community involvement, responsible citizenship and volunteering
4. To ensure that cultural services, including libraries, heritage and sport, better meet the needs of their communities
5. To reduce the incidence of domestic violence
6. To improve road safety

Where are we now?

- Eleven Cheshire neighbourhoods fall in the top 10% most multiply deprived neighbourhoods in England
- Thirty-nine Cheshire neighbourhoods fall in the top 20% most multiply deprived neighbourhoods in England
- There were 56,457 recorded crimes in Cheshire in 2004/05 compared with 61,135 in 2003/04 (down 7.7%)
- Cheshire had one of the lowest crime rates for 2004/05 at 83 per 1,000 population compared with a rate of 105 per 1,000 in England & Wales
- There were 6,184 incidences of domestic violence in 2004, an increase of 13% between 2002 and 2004
- There were 2901 reported injury collisions on Cheshire's road network during 2004 resulting in a total of 4075 casualties, down 5% on the 2003 total of 4292
- Approximately 20% of those killed or seriously injured on Cheshire roads during 2004 were two-wheeled motor vehicle users, 15% were pedestrians, while cyclists accounted for just over 6% of the total

Quality of Life 2005 Survey Results

- 92% of Cheshire residents like living in their home area
- Reducing Crime & Disorder was the top priority among respondents (ranked first by 41% of respondents), down from 61% of respondents who ranked this priority first in the 1995 Survey
- One half of QoL respondents (50%) said no-one in their household had been a victim of crime in last 5 years
- 14% of QoL respondents were 'very worried' about being victims of crime compared with 39% who were not at all worried
- A 'more visible police presence' was top priority to reduce crime and disorder
- 'Involving local people in decisions that affect them' was considered both important and a high priority action for improving quality of life
- 47% of Cheshire residents belong to a community group
- 46% agreed that there were issues about drugs in there area
- 50% of younger respondents felt that it was easy to get drugs in this area (up from 40% in 2000 Survey)
- 'Stricter punishment for illegal drug dealers' was the top action to reduce illegal drug taking generally
- Over half (54%) said roads were less safe than 5 years ago

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

Key Outcomes

1. Be Healthy
 - a. To reduce childhood obesity
 - b. To reduce teenage pregnancy
2. Stay Safe
 - a. To stay safe from crime and anti-social behaviour
 - b. To stay safe from bullying or discrimination
3. Enjoy and Achieve
 - a. To reduce the number of people who are not in education / employment or training
 - b. To achieve 5 GCSEs at age 16 (A* - C)
 - c. To increase the number of level 2 and 3 achievement at age 19
 - d. To provide activities for young people
4. Make a Positive Contribution
 - a. To encourage participation in the local community and the environment
 - b. To support the development of self confidence and positive and enterprising behaviour
5. Achieve Economic Well-being
 - a. To increase participation in and completion of apprenticeships

Where are we now?

- Over 60% of Cheshire pupils achieved 5 or more GCSEs at grade A to C in 2005
- 44% of secondary school pupils reported that they had experienced bullying during the school year in 2004, evenly divided between boys (42%) and girls (45%)
- The teenage conception rate in Cheshire in 2003 was 31 per 1,000 females (aged 15-17 yrs) compared with a rate of over 34 per 1,000 population in 2002

Quality of Life 2005 Survey Results

- Young people have a far more negative impression of how adults feel about them than is actually the case
- Young people put less importance on providing youth centres; they prioritise making leisure facilities more affordable and listening to young people more
- Providing activities for young people is becoming an increasingly important priority for Cheshire
- Young people place more importance than other age groups on providing activities for young people
- 85% of young people said their health was good or very good for their age
- 74% of young people said they took part in physical activity (3% never took part)

HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES & OLDER PEOPLE

Key Outcomes

1. To improve the health of the local population, increase life expectancy and reduce health inequalities
 - a. To promote healthy and active life across all ages
 - b. To improve mental health and well being
 - c. To encourage sensible drinking
 - d. To reduce prevalence rates of smoking

2. To support greater independence of all older people
 - a. To achieve higher employment rates overall and greater flexibility for over 50s in continuing careers
 - b. To reduce pensioner poverty
 - c. To improve information and advice to change attitudes towards older people and reduce discrimination
 - d. To increase the number of older people who are productively engaged in the development and design of services that meet their needs and aspirations

Where are we now?

- 18% of the total unemployed were aged 50 and over in 2005, down from 19% in 2004
- 1 in 6 (17%) respondents do not consume alcohol
- 80% of Cheshire residents do not smoke

Quality of Life 2005 Survey Results

- Almost half said 'people should take responsibility for their own health' and this was considered the best action to improve the health of local people
- Four out of five (80%) of respondents said they considered their general health as good or very good
- Almost half chose 'smoke free buildings', second highest priority action, to improve health
- Access to physical activity was considered very important in having a good effect on health
- 'Pain or discomfort' and 'mobility problems' were the most frequently mentioned general health issues mentioned by older people
- Older people were as likely as any others to have seen or spoken to friends or relatives in the previous fortnight
- Older people were more concerned than other age groups about 'accessing public buildings' or 'driving or being driven after dark'

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & ENTERPRISE

Key Outcomes

1. To increase skill levels of the local population with clear reference to local business need
2. To retain and enhance a sustainable and diverse economy, supporting growth and productivity in specific local business sectors of importance, e.g. retail, business and financial services, manufacturing, tourism, leisure and creative industries
3. To increase economic growth, productivity, investment, competition and total entrepreneurial activity amongst the local population
4. To promote and support growth and sustainability of enterprise and small business
5. To restructure the rural economy and revitalise and improve Cheshire's market towns
6. To develop an appropriate, effective and efficient infrastructure (e.g. transport, telecommunications, etc.) to underpin economic growth and prosperity

Where are we now?

- Total Employment Growth 1996-2003 was 17% compared with a national rate of 11%
- Employment growth forecasts 2000 – 2015 are 0.6% p.a.
- Residence based claimant count unemployment rates (Apr 05) was 1.3% compared with a national rate of 2.4%
- 7% of unemployed in long-term unemployment (Apr 05) compared with national rate of 10%
- Increase in VAT registered enterprises 1999-2004 was 6% compared with a national rate of 5%
- 40% of Cheshire's population lives in mainly rural areas (2003)
- All 22 Cheshire neighbourhoods (SOAs) which fall within the top 10% of the Barriers to Housing & Services domain of the 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation are within rural wards

THE ENVIRONMENT

Key Outcomes

1. To provide and sustain the provision of affordable housing in both rural and urban areas
2. To enhance and improve the local environment and the community's enjoyment of it
3. To increase domestic and commercial recycling rates
4. To improve accessibility and tackle congestion on Cheshire's roads
5. To promote sustainable development and land use
6. To reduce greenhouse gas emissions and manage the impacts of climate change
7. To preserve local heritage and cultural distinctiveness
8. To protect and enhance natural resources, including biodiversity and landscape, in both rural and urban areas
9. To promote cleaner, more efficient production / products and services and shifts in consumer / citizen consumption patterns through choosing lower impact goods and services
10. To provide more energy efficient new housing

Where are we now?

- Average mortgage repayment cost was estimated at 36% of average earnings in Cheshire in 2002. In Macclesfield District this is 53% of average earnings
- During 2004-2005 Cheshire produced over 448,000 tonnes of Household Waste, a similar amount to that produced in the previous year
- 11.5% of Cheshire's household waste was recycled in 2004/05, and a further 13.4% composted
- 90% of households own at least one car
- 49% of households own two or more cars
- Traffic on Cheshire's roads has increased by 9% between 1995 and 2004
- 72% of house completions were on previously developed land

Quality of Life 2005 Survey Results

- Top priority action on housing was 'build more affordable houses to buy'
- Younger people would want to move home to gain independence
- Almost three quarters are happy to stay where they live
- A half said, that compared to five years ago, their area had stayed the same
- Residents concerned about dog fouling, household waste and dumping of litter
- 'More recycling facilities and kerbside collections' was the top priority action for improving the local environment
- A half said 'improve public transport to reduce traffic and transport problems'.

INNOVATION AND NEW WAYS OF WORKING

Key Outcomes

1. To encourage innovation, quality and excellence
2. To develop a more cohesive and integrated approach to public service delivery in Cheshire
3. To develop effective monitoring, evaluation and communication mechanisms
4. To add value to and make connections between work on cross-cutting issues
5. To lead to a step change in the way organisations work together to deliver services

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