

# APPENDIX E

## WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 16 JUNE 2008

#### EXECUTIVE – 8 JULY 2008

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**Title:****DRAFT SOCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGY**

**[Portfolio Holder for Equality and Diversity: Cllr Ms D Le Gal]  
[Wards Affected: All]**

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**Summary and purpose:**

This report presents Members with a refreshed version of Waverley's Social Inclusion Strategy. The Strategy has been updated following work undertaken by a number of officers and a range of partners and other outside organisations whose work impacts on or is affected by Waverley's approach to social inclusion in the community.

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**Environmental implications:**

This report has no direct environmental implications.

**Social / community implications:**

This Strategy aims to help focus and coordinate a joined-up approach to improving the lives of some of Waverley's citizens who are most in need of support. The Strategy identifies a range of issues where targeted action is required to make a difference.

**E-Government implications:**

This report has no direct e-government implications.

**Resource and legal implications:**

There are no direct resource or legal implications arising from this report.

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**Introduction**

1. Waverley first adopted '*Opportunities for All – A Social Inclusion Strategy for Waverley*' in 1997. Since then a lot has happened through the Council's own work, working in partnership and through enabling others. The draft 2008 Strategy, included at Annexe 1, is a 'refresh' and many of the issues identified in the Strategy ten years ago are still relevant today. This new Strategy highlights the progress made dealing with these issues, but recognises that there is still much more work to be done.

2. This Strategy brings together information and ideas from many of the Council's services. A number of external groups and organisations that play a role in Waverley in ensuring social inclusion were involved in the production of this Strategy.
3. At an event held on 3 June 2008, representatives of partners and community organisations (attendees listed in Annexe 2) were asked to help the Council develop its understanding of the social exclusion factors in Waverley, and to determine whether the objectives identified in the draft Strategy are the right ones to benefit our residents. Partners were also asked about their own work to combat social exclusion, and to consider potential threats and opportunities for this work in the future. This was a very successful event and has helped to finalise the attached draft of the Strategy and will help to inform the action plan going forward.

#### **How will this Strategy make a difference?**

4. This Strategy aims to ensure that Waverley is focuses on the right issues, in the right places at the right time. It aims to do this in a joined-up way with partners who have expertise or access that will enable an improved outcome for the community. Through this Strategy, the Council aims to:
  - Understand factors in Waverley that could lead to Social Exclusion
  - Increase awareness throughout the Borough
  - Support the achievement of Waverley's Corporate Plan 2008-11 priorities, particularly *'Improving Lives'*
  - Set objectives to work towards Social Inclusion through the Council's own work, partnership working and by enabling others
  - Highlight current areas of work delivering these objectives, and identify further actions that are necessary
  - Monitor and review progress in delivering Social Inclusion.
5. To ensure that the Strategy delivers against the objectives, it is proposed that officers produce a 'SMART' action plan to sit under the Strategy based on the factors and objectives raised in the draft Strategy, and the issues raised at the event on 3 June 2008.

#### **Links to Corporate Priorities and other Policy Areas**

6. This Strategy underpins the achievement of a number of Waverley's corporate priorities and will help meet the Council's targets and the wider Local Area Agreement required outcomes. The Strategy supports a number of other key policy areas that the Council is focussing on such as:
  - Debt management
  - Homelessness and Housing
  - Leisure

## **Observations from Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 16 June 2008**

7. The Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered this report at its meeting on 16 June and commended officers for the clarity of the Strategy and made the following observations:
- There was particular concern regarding the impact of the prevailing ‘credit crunch’ on the residents of Waverley, especially on tenants’ and the Council’s own finances. It was suggested that Waverley might issue a press release signposting sources of advice on financial matters, and the steps to take if personal financial circumstances became unsustainable.
  - Whilst the Social Inclusion Strategy highlighted the areas in Waverley that were well-known areas of multiple deprivation, it was felt that there was a danger of missing pockets of deprivation if too much emphasis was put on a small number of indices. Councillors were pleased to hear of the Waverley ‘heat map’ initiative being developed by Surrey County Council but hoped that their local knowledge of their wards might also contribute to identifying localities in need of focused help.
  - Councillors were concerned about the low level of take-up of benefits, and suggested that more could be done to encourage those who might be entitled to receive them to apply.
8. The Committee requested that officers produce a ‘SMART’ action plan to sit under the Strategy, to be reported to a future meeting of the Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Executive approves the draft Social Inclusion Strategy.

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### **Background Papers (CEX)**

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

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