

STRATEGIC EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Bolton: Our Vision 2012-15

Date: 13 February 2012

Prepared by: Assistant Director, Policy, Partnerships and Communication

1. **Describe in summary the aims, objectives and purpose of the proposal, including desired outcomes**

Bolton has a long history of collaborative partnership working to deliver improved outcomes for the people of Bolton. This is set out in Bolton's Community Strategy. The current strategy, *Bolton: Our Vision 2007-17* was articulated during a time of strong economic forecasts for the borough and optimism for what could be achieved for the Bolton Family.

Many of the ambitions in the strategy have been achieved in the past four years. However, during this time, the context in which the council and its partners are working has changed significantly – particularly in relation to the economy and public services. Challenging economic forecasts, reduced public sector funding, and extensive public sector reform have all had an impact on the partnership's work.

The partnership has set out its response to this challenging context in the refreshed Community Strategy, *Bolton: Our Vision 2012-15*. This has a clear vision for how we will invest in partnership working in Bolton, to continue to reduce inequalities and improve the quality of life for people in the borough. Within this, there is a continued ambition to deliver Bolton's main aims of **securing economic prosperity** and **narrowing the gap** in outcomes across the borough.

The strategy has been developed following extensive engagement across the partnership and is based on a solid understanding of need across the borough:

- Throughout 2011, the partnership invested significant energy in analysing the impact of the economic and policy context on its work, and shaping the appropriate 'Bolton first' response to this
- This work was – and continues to be – led at the highest level by the Vision Steering Group and the Public Sector Leadership Group, who meet regularly to discuss and shape the delivery of Bolton's priorities
- During the autumn of 2011, extensive engagement took place across the partnership, to identify the detailed priorities and ambition across each themed partnership. This informed a draft version of the refreshed strategy
- In December 2011, the annual Bolton Vision Conference was attended by around 200 delegates from across the public, private, voluntary, community and faith sectors. The draft strategy was shared with delegates, who were

invited to comment on the draft. Delegates also participated in workshops on how to address the major issues identified within the strategy

- Feedback from partners and the conference delegates has been used to shape the final Community Strategy, *Bolton: Our Vision 2012-15*, which is set out in this report
- It is important to stress that this work is underpinned by extensive data about what our services are delivering and how they influence outcomes for local people. It has also been shaped by what people tell us about the services they receive, and the issues that matter to them. This analysis is set out in further detail in the strategy document

In addition to maintaining a commitment to delivering Bolton's main aims of economic prosperity and narrowing the gap, the strategy is also very clear about the need to continue to support Bolton's most vulnerable people. This is in line with the philosophy which the council's Executive articulated in November 2010, in response to the council's challenging financial position.

The strategy therefore seeks to have a positive impact by investing in work to deliver economic prosperity and narrow the gap across six priority themes. It also sets out work to tackle five particularly challenging cross-cutting partnership issues, which will be especially important in supporting some of Bolton's most disadvantaged people:

Priority themes

- Prosperous
- Health and well being
- Children and young people
- Clean and green
- Safe
- Stronger

Cross-cutting issues

- Aspiration
- Alcohol
- Skills
- Complex families
- Community cohesion

2. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the proposal?

In setting out its ambitions for Bolton, the Community Strategy touches upon a wide range of stakeholders. These include:

Members of the public

The Community Strategy sets out the outcomes which the Bolton Vision Partnership seeks to achieve for Bolton from 2012 to 2015. This continues to invest in partnership activity to achieve economic prosperity and narrow the gap in outcomes between the least and most well off in the borough. We anticipate that people who live in, work in, study in and visit Bolton will see benefits as a result of the strategy.

However, the strategy recognises that we need to reprioritise and do some things differently with our partners. With less capacity within the council and in our partner organisations, it will be more difficult to deliver improvements in some areas than it has been in the past.

Partners and Elected Members

The strategy has been shaped by extensive engagement with the Bolton Vision Partnership and Bolton's Elected Members. As such, the work which it seeks to deliver reflects the priorities of Bolton's community leaders and key service providers, based on their extensive knowledge of Bolton's communities and neighbourhoods.

Staff

The council's staff – and staff within partner organisations – play an essential role in delivering Bolton's priorities. The strategy retains a consistent message about achieving economic prosperity and narrowing the gap, and is clear about the need to support the borough's most vulnerable people. It will be essential to ensure that the council's staff continue to receive the appropriate support and training to contribute to the delivery of these priorities, in line with its business planning and people management processes.

3. In summary, what are the anticipated (positive or negative) impacts of the proposal?

Bolton: Our Vision 2012-15 seeks to have a positive impact for people across Bolton, by reaffirming the investment in partnership working to achieve economic prosperity and narrow the gap in outcomes across the borough.

However, the strategy recognises that the changed economic and policy context means that making improvements in some areas is likely to be more difficult than in the past. Where resources are reducing, the strategy seeks to target them in the most effective way to improve outcomes for our diverse communities.

The strategy seeks to deliver the following outcomes across six priority themes:

Prosperous

Deliver Bolton's Economic Strategy to:

- Sustain existing and further develop key employment sites.
- Retain and develop the business base of the Borough.
- Maintain skills levels amongst the residents of working age.
- Sustain levels of employment as set out in the Local Economic Assessment.
- Increase the provision of affordable housing.
- Increase the number of people who live in suitable and decent accommodation and ensure they are able to remain in and sustain their accommodation.

Health and wellbeing

- Encourage people to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.
- Intervene early to prevent or defer people from needing care and support.
- Make sure it is quick and easy for people to get the care, support and treatment they need.

- Make sure that the care, support and treatment is of high quality/reasonable cost.
- Make sure that we safeguard the vulnerable, and that people in Bolton live and die with dignity.

Children and young people

- Raise attainment.
- Improve children's health.
- Improve outcomes for looked after children.
- Reduce the number of children living in poverty.
- Keep children safe.

Clean and green

- Maintain the current levels of cleanliness across the Borough.
- Maintain Bolton's parks and green spaces and continue to encourage visitors.
- Minimise the levels of waste and increase recycling initiatives.
- Reduce the environmental impact on the Borough.

Safe

- Reduce crime – serious acquisitive, burglary, vehicle and anti-social behaviour, criminal damage, theft, robbery.
- Narrow the crime gap between high crime and low crime areas.
- Reduce reoffending.
- Improving confidence, focus on protecting vulnerable people and 'troubled' families.
- Focus on understanding and tackling organised crime.
- Participation and volunteering in policing.
- Reduce deliberate fires.

Stronger

- Shape our strategy for neighbourhood renewal and narrowing the gap.
- Deliver neighbourhood management and invest in our deprived communities.
- Develop the voluntary, community and faith sector and promote volunteering.
- Community cohesion and community relationships.
- Financial inclusion.

In addition, the strategy recognises the need for partnership investment to tackle five particularly challenging cross-cutting issues: aspiration, alcohol, skills, complex families, community cohesion. These issues can affect the quality of life for people from across Bolton's diverse communities. However, the evidence shows us that

these issues can particularly affect our most vulnerable people, for example those who experience severe and multiple deprivation. Making improvements across these issues will therefore be an important part of our strategy to reduce inequalities and support those who are most in need.

4. **Is there any potential for (positive or negative) differential impact or adverse impact with regard to the identified stakeholders and the diversity groups (race, religion, disability, gender, gender reassignment, age, sexuality, caring status, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, socio-economic)? Can this be justified/what mitigating actions will be taken?**

Bolton: Our Vision 2012-15 reaffirms Bolton's commitment to collaborative partnership working and investment to deliver Bolton's main aims of economic prosperity and narrowing the gap, within the changed economic and policy context. The strategy continues to be the linchpin in Bolton's work to reduce inequalities and improve outcomes across Bolton's diverse communities, and for our most vulnerable people in particular. The strategy is therefore intended to have a positive impact across our communities and neighbourhoods.

Section 3 sets out the outcomes which the strategy seeks to focus on. These have been shaped by extensive engagement across the Bolton Vision Partnership, and represent Bolton's priorities in the context of economic challenges and major public sector reform. This work will be relevant to people from across the range of diversity groups, although each theme will have particular relevance to some groups:

Prosperous

This theme seeks to improve the economic prosperity of Bolton as a place, and of the people who live and work in Bolton. This is relevant to people from across the range of diversity groups, but we recognise that people from some backgrounds may need additional support to participate economically. This may include, for example, young people, who have been particularly affected by the recession; people who have a disability which may affect their ability to work; people with caring responsibilities; and people with lower level skills.

Health and wellbeing

This theme sets out the ways in which we will support the physical, emotional and mental health and wellbeing of Bolton's adult population. This may have particular relevance to those who experience additional or complex needs as a result of older age or a disability; and those who may provide care for their friends or relatives. In addition, this theme recognises the need for ongoing work to reduce health inequalities across the borough, particularly where they are linked to socio-economic disadvantage.

Children and young people

This theme has a holistic focus on outcomes for Bolton's children, young people and their families. Within this, we recognise that some young people may need particular support – for example, because they have special educational needs or a disability; they are in care or have a complex family background; they live in areas of socio-economic deprivation; or because they are new arrivals to Bolton.

Clean and green

The clean and green theme is universal in its work to maintain the environmental quality of the borough. However, it also seeks to work with communities in our more deprived areas, to ensure that environmental conditions are in line with those in our more affluent areas.

Safe

This theme seeks to improve outcomes around crime and anti-social behaviour across the borough. However, it recognises the need for sustained energy to ensure that outcomes in our most socio-economically deprived areas improve alongside those in our more affluent areas. In addition, this theme recognises the importance of supporting victims of crime, who may be vulnerable due to their age, disability or the area in which they live. This theme also seeks to support offenders, who may themselves be vulnerable, to turn away from crime.

Stronger

This theme has a clear focus on building strong, successful and sustainable communities where diversity is celebrated and people from all of our diverse communities have a voice. Continued work to invest in our deprived communities is of particular benefit to those who are experiencing socio-economic disadvantage.

5. Are there any gaps in your evidence or conclusions which make it difficult to quantify the potential adverse impact? If so, please explain how you will explore the proposal in greater depth.

No, as described in section 1, the strategy has been developed on the basis of extensive engagement with key partners during 2011, and a firm understanding of the needs of Bolton's diverse communities and neighbourhoods.

The following stakeholders have been involved in shaping the strategy:

- Bolton Vision Steering Group
- Public Sector Leadership Group
- All Members of Bolton Council
- Bolton Council's Executive Management Team
- Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board
- Children's Trust
- Bolton Strategic Economic Partnership and Skills Board
- BeSafe Partnership
- Cleaner Greener Partnership
- Stronger Communities Partnership
- Voluntary and Community Forum
- Around 200 delegates at the Bolton Vision Conference on 6 December 2011

Please confirm the outcome of this EIA:

No major impact identified, therefore no major changes required – proceed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adjustments to remove barriers / promote equality (mitigate impact) have been identified – proceed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Continue despite having identified potential for adverse impact/missed opportunities for promoting equality – this requires a strong justification	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stop and rethink - the EIA identifies actual or potential unlawful discrimination	<input type="checkbox"/>