

<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	
<b>Date:</b>	18 August 2014	
<b>Report of:</b>	The Chief Executive	<b>Report No:</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Lynne Ridsdale, Assistant Director, People, Policy & Communications	<b>Tele No:</b> 331201
<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>Community Strategy outcomes update 2013/14</b>	
<b>Confidential / Non Confidential:</b> <i>(delete as approp)</i>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <b>(Non-Confidential)</b> This report does <b>not</b> contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public </div>	
<b>Purpose:</b>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> This report provides the Cabinet with an update on performance at the outturn of 2013/14 </div>	
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> The Cabinet is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Comment upon and challenge the performance update set out in this report;</li> <li>b. Endorse the conclusions and priorities set out for 2014/15.</li> </ul> </div>	
<b>Decision:</b>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div>	
<b>Background Doc(s):</b>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div>	
<b>Signed:</b>	<div style="border-top: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"></div> Leader / Cabinet Member	<div style="border-top: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"></div> Monitoring Officer
<b>Date:</b>	<div style="border-top: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"></div>	

## **1. Introduction**

Elected Members will recall that Bolton Council works with its partners in the Bolton Vision Partnership to develop and progress strategic objectives for the town through the Community Strategy. The strategic priorities of the current Community Strategy, 2012-2015, are to promote economic prosperity and to narrow the gap between the most and least well off.

This report provides an overview of outcomes against the current strategy to date, including a particular review of 2013/14, across each of the key themes and cross-cutting priorities as follows:

- Economic prosperity and the related cross cutting themes of skills; Working Well and Children and Young People's attainment
- Narrowing the gap and the related cross cutting themes of Health, Safe; Clean and Green; Alcohol and the Anti-poverty strategy.

The key messages were considered in some detail by the Vision Steering Group at its meeting on the 24 June 2014.

Overall, the partnership continues to make progress towards delivering community strategy priorities. The commitment to partnership working was once again demonstrated at the annual Vision conference in December 2013 when around 200 delegates from across sectors came together to further shape the priorities for Bolton. Continuity around the strong independent leadership for the partnership was also secured as Dave Singleton took on the chairmanship role following seven committed years from Chris Hopkinson.

This report does, however, highlight the challenge of maintaining outcomes in some areas in the ongoing climate of diminishing municipal resources, whilst reaffirming the importance of collaboration to maximising focus and capacity.

## **2. Progress in delivering the Strategic Objective of Economic Prosperity**

### *Context and economic development*

The national economic situation continues to present a very challenging operating context for Bolton. Whilst the macro economy is starting to recover from a long and deep recession, projections are that the micro-economic position will take longer to improve and, further, recovery will be faster in cities than in towns like Bolton. On this basis, direct interventions to stimulate the local economy have been a major priority for the Council and its partners over recent years.

Whilst strategic economic development work will still take years to come to full fruition, development plans to bring large scale employment and business to the town are beginning to firm up, in particular:

- Planning permission for Logistics North (Cutacre) has been agreed to develop 400,000 square foot of distribution and manufacturing space, shops, business units and a 225-hectare country park
- Regeneration of Rivington Chase (Horwich Loco Works) will deliver up to 1,700 houses with a planning application imminent

- the strategy to regenerate the Town Centre is now being implemented, including an investment of £8.9m. A number of priorities were developed for delivery focusing on: a stronger office market; leisure and cultural offer; improvements to the public realm; town centre living and developing the town centre campaign:
  - A new office development for Asons Solicitors is to be completed by 2015 with 300 employment opportunities. The development is subject to public realm improvements to the value of £75,000. Marketing information is being prepared to re-let council owned office space e.g The Wellsprings and Le Mans Crescent
  - The Market Place Shopping Centre owners, Moorgarth, have obtained planning permissions for a nine-screen cinema and to transform Victorian Vaults on the bottom floor into a new restaurant, bar and shop venue.
  - The first phase of the Great Moor Street scheme was completed in time for the re-launch of Bolton Market and the repair, clean and protection of Victoria Square project has now been completed.
  - The former college site, Westbrook Gateway will become a residential development with 100 homes and non-food retail space close to the town centre. Work to bring forward an Academic Village in partnership with the University is also underway.
  - A business support scheme has been approved and is now being promoted. The first two grant applications were approved for two shops in April 2014. Both retail units are now open for business and 32 applications are currently in the pipeline.
  - Bolton's Town Centre Parking Initiative was introduced in May 2013, as part of the council's approach to stabilise business conditions in the town centre and encourage existing and additional visitors to the centre. It applies to Topp Way, Deane Road and the Octagon Multi-Storey car parks. There has been a 95.4% increase in the volume of cars using the three multi-storey car parks from May 2013 to the end of March 2014. The initiative been extended until May 2015.

Positive results have also been recorded for the year on year increase in visits and events within the town (up 29% from 2013). A range of nationally recognised events were held to promote Bolton as a place open for business and to increase group visits, including:

- the Food and Drink festival which has grown to 130,000 visitors from 94,000 a couple of years ago
- Bolton cemented its position as a firm fixture in the Ironman and Skyride series'
- In the past year Bolton also played host to a Royal visit, the BBC's One Show and a CBeebies Live show.

#### *Housing and homelessness*

The Housing market is a further measure of economic performance. Since 2007 the market has been subdued, however recent performance indicates that there is some signs of recovery from the significant down turn, as house prices and sales are beginning to rise.

Latest figures for December 2013 show a 28% increase in house sales compared to December 2012

The availability of affordable housing continues to be an issue, however, where demand continues to exceed supply. Out of the 377 new affordable housing units which it was forecast are required within Bolton by 2015, progress is on track to deliver 275. In response, a piece of analysis is underway to identify all potential sites for new housing, to inform targeted work with potential developers.

The numbers and complexity of homelessness cases continue to be monitored and additional resources have been invested in preventative services, eg money skills advice. On this basis, in overall terms, homelessness levels are being contained. There is, however, a trend of increasing complexity in the cases reported, with a particular increase in the number of cases that are attributed to domestic violence.

### *Jobs and Skills*

A key related strategic objective is to improve the skills and “employability” of local people, to ensure they are in a position to take up the new jobs that should be created by economic development activity.

The percentage of working age population who are economically active has remained fairly static at 66% since 2010 and, further, there was a 6 year low in levels of worklessness last year, at 14.2%. Relatively low skills levels remains a perennial issue, however. Whilst 78% of our school age children achieve NVQ level 2, which is above the national average, the skills levels of our working age residents have plateaued since 2012 at a level below the national average (67.6% of working age Bolton residents are qualified to NVQ level 2, compared with the national average of 72.5%).

Raising skills levels across the Borough is being addressed by the all-age Skills Strategy, which operates across a number of strands to ensure that local people have the information and guidance to improve their skills, as well as generating employment and education opportunities to improve in and out of work skills. Through the Skills Strategy particular progress has been made in:

- supporting new apprenticeships –Bolton had the third highest increase in Greater Manchester for 16-18 year old apprenticeship starts at the start of 14/15.
- integrating the further and higher educational service provision through the Education Zone, in particular over the last year the College’s Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Centre progressed with opening due September 2014. Approval has also been given for a University Technical College which will open in September 2015 to teach 14-16 year olds health sciences and engineering
- Active engagement of around 150 local employers within the skills strategy, through which over 500 additional supported employment and development opportunities for local people have been generated.

There is, however, more to do to maintain employer engagement in the strategy. The number of local employers actively engaged in the skills strategy remains a fairly small proportion of businesses within Bolton. Employer engagement is, however, resource

intensive. A key issue for the partnership is therefore to maximise the opportunities amongst public sector partners, to champion and drive the agenda as well as maximise opportunities amongst some of the largest employers in the town.

### *Working Well*

Bolton is a key partner in the Greater Manchester Working Well initiative, which is a place-based approach to assist those who are furthest from work back into sustainable employment through the “key worker” model which is at the heart of much of the Public Service Reform work.

In Bolton, it is estimated that 450 people will be referred on to this programme. Common barriers to work presented by these clients are likely to include mental and physical health problems, drug and alcohol abuse, housing issues, debt and low skills.

A third party provider, Ingeus, has been appointed to provide the key worker service, to draw on and co-ordinate local services, under the leadership of the Local Authority, to offer a tailored, sequenced and holistic package of support to reduce the barriers to work. The programme went live in March and referral progress is being monitored locally and regionally. Key to the success of this initiative will be the ongoing engagement and active participation of public service partners.

## **3. Strategic Objective – Narrowing the Gap**

The objective to “narrow the gap” has two dimensions: narrowing the gap nationally, between Bolton’s outcomes and the average of England as a whole and narrowing the gap locally between the most and least deprived parts of the Borough.

### *Narrowing the national gap*

Strong progress continues to be made in narrowing the gap against the England average for a number of our priority areas. In particular, the life expectancy gap has reduced for the third year running and Bolton compares well with the national average for GCSE attainment and in continuing to deliver a reduction in the percentage of the population on out of work benefits.

Bolton compares least well to the England average in relation to infant mortality and low birth weight babies, however. The long term trend in infant mortality rates in Bolton is downwards. However, Bolton’s rate rose between 2009-11 and 2010-12 to a level above the England average and was the highest rate of our statistical neighbour group of authorities. Low birth weight is of course one indicator of deprivation and as such the Children’s Trust is examining this issue in further detail.

### *Narrowing the local gap*

We continue to narrow the gap within the Borough around life expectancy gap between the most and least deprived areas; narrow the gap between high and low crime areas and for anti-social behaviour; and the attainment gap for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers.

In relation to the litter measures we use to assess cleanliness, the gap has slightly widened, and this is seen as directly related to the significant reduction of resources in these areas.

A more detailed update across each key theme is provided below.

### 3.1 Health

- Life expectancy is a key measure of health inequality and the picture in Bolton is looking good after a sustained period of increasing inequality (although life expectancy was increasing in Bolton, it was not increasing as fast as the rest of England and the gap between Bolton and the national average increased every year from 2001 through to 2012). Since then there has been a steady reduction in the gap which is now down to 1.7 years after the widest gap of 2.2 years in 2005. Whilst this is still considerable, in Bolton over the last three years we have improved life expectancy faster than seen across England as a whole.
- Proving more difficult to address is the internal life expectancy gap within the borough. This gap has increased every year since 2001 and was the widest inequality gap of all our peers. The latest figures suggest that this gap has fallen to 12.1 years for men and 9.2 years for women, although it is too early to predict that this will be an improving trend. This significant in-borough health inequality is almost exclusively due to long term conditions, chief of which is cardio vascular disease (CVD). It is worth noting that our CVD and stroke ranking nationally is worsening – we rank 135th out of 150 areas and 14th out of our 15 peer areas for CVD premature mortality. This mortality is reducing, just not as fast as other areas.

Population health checks are our key response to addressing this issue - latest performance shows that 67% of our eligible population have been offered this service and 65% have gone on to receive a health check which is a very good uptake rate and ahead of most other areas in England for health check coverage. This very positive uptake is allowing far greater focus now on the hardest to reach groups which in turn will begin to directly address internal inequalities due to CVD.

The Health and Social Care integration agenda and provisions of the Better Care Fund proposals will also help fund Bolton's plans to work differently and more efficiently with people at the end of life, those living with long term conditions requiring active intervention, frail elderly, people with complex lifestyles, and those with long term conditions that are able to self-care. Early implementation has commenced with new Integrated Neighbourhood Teams now in place in parts of the borough.

### 3.2 Children and Young People

There are a series of strong performance measures in relation to children and young people, including:

- The under 18 conception rate has been reducing, and the latest figures show that it is at its lowest rate for 15 years. To give this some perspective, the current rate of 30 per 1,000 women aged 15-17 conceiving is significantly less than the 46 per 1,000 women baseline when we adopted the current community strategy, which was particularly high compared to our peers and against the England average. Of concern still is, however, that intelligence indicates a strong connection between high teenage pregnancy rates and areas of highest deprivation.
- The positive long term trend in reducing childhood poverty (according to HMRC measures) continues this year. This is also evident in the reductions in the attainment gap for children and young people from more disadvantaged backgrounds.

- Bolton is a very strong performer when it comes to childhood adoptions – our current rate of 28% demonstrates very significant growth on our 18% baseline position which is way ahead of the national average and amongst the highest rates in the country. Additionally, Bolton performs exceptionally with the speed at which the adoption process is concluded.

The Children's Trust has identified childhood obesity and low birth weight babies as two key outcomes that are less strong and has established the Developing Well sub group to examine them in more detail:

- Childhood obesity is an area of really mixed performance where, promisingly, reception age obesity has continued to fall over the life of the strategy. This positive picture changes by year 6, however, where Bolton performs poorly.
- Low birth weight babies are an issue strongly linked to deprivation and in the last outturn we reported a spike in the data from 2011. In response to this, the Children's Trust Developing Well sub group gathered intelligence and are monitoring the impact of a range of population strategies (tobacco/alcohol control, nutrition, housing, financial inclusion/anti-poverty) alongside specific ante-natal strategies (early access to ante-natal care/better growth charts, maternal nutrition, smoking cessation and better GP advice in early pregnancy).

### 3.3 Clean and Green

- Clean – high environmental standards have been achieved in Bolton for a number of years and much of the success has been attributable to the way in which the Cleaner and Greener Partnership has enhanced joint working at strategic and operational levels. However, the reduction in resources is challenging this and we have seen our cleanliness pass rates slip from 94% in 2010/11 down to about 90% for the past four years - a direct result of there being fewer people, vehicles and sweepers in operation.

Key to maintaining cleanliness, particularly in an environment of diminished resources, is behaviour change programmes and partnership activities. For example, over 1,000 volunteers have participated in local clean ups encouraged by Faith Leaders, schools and Area Forums. Building on this, the Cleaner and Greener Partnership has commissioned a draft Ask and Offer document for Bolton which will help to frame how the Council and voluntary and community sector organisations can work together and collaborate in the future given the certainty of reduced resources. There will be an initial workshop with voluntary and community sector partners to test the viability of this approach.

In 2013/14 there has been significant success in reducing domestic waste and improving recycling. A reduction of 16.57% of domestic (grey bin waste) tonnages (including flytipping) has been delivered: the kilogrammes of household waste collected per household reduced from 562.93 kgs in 2012/13 to 479.73 kgs in 2013/14, which surpassed the projection of 517.53 kgs. The recycling rate also shows a significant increase from 30.48% in 2012/13 to 37.26% in 2013/14, which is an increase of 6.78%.

### 3.4 Safe

Overall, Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour have reduced significantly over recent years in Bolton. For example, between 2010/11 and 2013/14 total victim based crime has reduced

by 15%, some 2,717 less crimes and Anti-Social Behaviour by 15%, meaning 2,448 less reported incidents. Further analysis of these victim based crimes indicates that burglary, robbery, theft and vehicle offences have all dropped by at least 10% in the same period. Challenges in Bolton in the main relate to violence and in particular domestic violence which is a significant problem in terms of impact, risk and cost. Police recorded Domestic Abuse offences increased by 37% (393). The Be Safe partnership response over the past year has been to develop and roll out a strongly supported multi-agency Domestic Abuse and Violence strategy for Bolton (supported by the Police and Crime Commissioner) which focuses on:

- prevention and early intervention – schemes and campaigns to encourage recognition, reporting and early intervention where domestic abuse and violence is occurring.
- provision - ensuring that effective and accessible support services are available for victims and their families and that we work with perpetrators to challenge and change their attitudes and behaviours.
- protection – ensuring effective investigation prosecution; victim support and protection; and perpetrator interventions.
- participation – supporting a Victims Forum to ensure that the services we provide are meeting their needs and are fit for purpose and supporting a Youth Panel to enhance knowledge and understanding of issues around domestic violence and abuse as they effect young people.

### 3.5 Alcohol

Bolton's strategy has three work-streams: economy, enforcement and health and is being delivered by the Alcohol and Drugs theme group within the Be Safe Partnership. Progress includes a developing strategy for the Night Time Economy (in consultation with local businesses), the development of a Tactical Licensing Plan and working with Greater Manchester as a Local Alcohol Action Area.

As regards health, liver disease in adults is one of the very few disease areas where mortality and hospital admissions are increasing. A key response is the early screening programme around alcohol use/liver disease which has been rolled out to 30% of adults to date with scaling up planned. However, Bolton's under 18 hospital alcohol admission rate has reduced significantly in the past couple of years; from a baseline of 94 per 100,000, rate is now at 55 per 100,000. This has been an important improvement locally as well as comparatively to the national picture.

### 3.5 Family First

As noted in the last report to Cabinet, Bolton has established the Families First initiative, as part of the national Troubled Families programme, which committed to turning around the lives of 830 families who have a range of complex issues, at a high cost to the public purse.

The outturn position for 2013/14 is that we are continuing to make good progress and have successfully turned around 380 families to date, achieving the following positive outcomes:

- 88% reduction in juvenile offences
- 57% reduction in adult crime



- 42% improved school attendance
- 29 people in sustained employment

All our remaining families are now on the programme, and have a dedicated key worker helping resolve complex issues. Early evidence suggests that the programme is reducing the vulnerability of local areas and cost benefit analysis suggests that there will be fiscal benefits. The Government is currently considering a phase 2 rollout for Troubled Families.

### 3.7 Anti-poverty strategy – is now delivering the following:

Implementation of the Borough anti-poverty strategy is now underway, with key progress as follows:

- Three active Food Banks experiencing significantly increased demand have received financial support until March 2016.
- The Council, working alongside the local Citizens Advice Bureau has used some funding to provide more advice/support to deal with the impact of changes made to disability benefits.
- Three additional Money Skills/Debt Advisors have been appointed to increase capacity to provide the full spectrum of advice from giving people basic budgetary skills through to dealing significant multiple debt problems.
- The strategy has supported the promotion of the services offered by the local Credit Union.
- Finally, a high street offer to assist with buying a range of household goods is in development.

## 6. Conclusions

Overall, the partnership continues to make progress towards delivering community strategy priorities:

- robust plans are in place to deliver the economic prosperity agenda by building capacity to attract employment and businesses to the town. There is, however, much work to do in the coming years to deliver these plans in practice.  
The skills strategy is a related, key initiative, to ensure that local people have the skills and experience to apply for the jobs that will be created through economic development activity. The ongoing engagement of local businesses in the strategy, particularly the leadership of public sector partners, is a key priority for delivery
- broadly Bolton holds its position against national comparators in key measures relating to health, children and young people, employment and educational attainment. Plans are in place to tackle the areas where performance is less strong, specifically childhood obesity and low birth weight
- progress continues to narrow the gap between the areas of greatest and least deprivation, including in-borough health inequality (which, whilst improving, remains a key issue) and educational attainment

- significant progress has been made in reducing domestic waste and improving recycling, through a comprehensive service and behaviour change programme. Cleanliness pass rates have slipped, however, from 94% in 2010/11 down to about 90% for the past four years - a direct result of there being fewer people, vehicles and sweepers in operation

Key issues for 2014-15, which are within existing delivery plans, including:

- examining how cleanliness standards are maintained within a climate of diminished municipal resources
- monitoring domestic violence, as the one crime indicator which has increased
- delivering Public Service reform initiatives, including Families First and Working well, as the key response to reductions in public service capacity
- delivering the Borough anti-poverty strategy.

## **7. Recommendations**

### **6.1 The Cabinet is asked to**

- Comment upon and challenge the performance update set out in this report;
- Endorse the conclusions and priorities set out for 2014/15.