

# **BRECKLAND LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP**

**LSP BOARD, 12 April 2007**

## **SOCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGY PROGRESS REPORT**

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### **Purpose of report**

This paper highlights the work that is going on to develop a Social Inclusion Strategy for the Breckland Local Strategic Partnership.

### **Setting up the project and monitoring progress**

In conjunction with members of the LSP steering group, a project plan and consultation strategy for this work has been developed and agreed. This covers the key areas of work required to develop an effective and well-founded strategy.

In addition, regular (fortnightly) progress meetings have been held between the consultant leading on the project and key people from the Local Strategic Partnership (representing the client). This has worked well and will continue during the critical phases in the development of the strategy.

### **Building the picture of social exclusion in Breckland?**

This is being progressed through two parallel initiatives:

1. Research into the nature of exclusion in Breckland through a review of national, regional, county-wide and local studies of deprivation and plans to tackle social exclusion and isolation. This is being supplemented by data on deprivation (from the recently published study commissioned by Norfolk Rural Community Council/Norfolk Investing in Communities) together with labour market and population statistics.
2. Contacting local organisations and staff dealing with aspects of social exclusion in order to get a “qualitative” feel of the nature of exclusion in Breckland. This is explained further in the next section.

### **Engaging with the community**

Much of the effort in developing the social inclusion strategy is being put into listening to local views of the nature of exclusion, what is being done in response, what barriers they face and what, in particular, the partners that make up the Breckland LSP can contribute to overcoming these barriers.

This process of engagement is progressing along several fronts:

- A survey of around 30 voluntary groups (covering Norfolk wide and more local organisations).
- Interviews with representatives from the major voluntary organisations and with staff working in the public sector (county, district council and health authorities)

In addition, we are planning a series of workshop/focus groups to which a range of representatives from both voluntary and public sectors will be invited. These workshops will explore further the issues uncovered in the survey and interviews as well as providing an opportunity for people to develop plans and actions together. It is planned to hold these workshops after Easter.

### **Developing the strategy and action plan**

The approach we are adopting is, firstly, to explore, the nature of exclusion in Breckland with those who work most closely with the deprived and isolated, and, secondly, to develop a response which is agreed and owned by as many of the parties involved as possible. In particular, we are endeavouring to clarify what, specifically, the Breckland LSP can contribute:

- To ensure that existing activities continue to meet proven needs,
- Gaps in provision are identified
- Plans and activities are coordinated to ensure the most effective response to tackling social exclusion in the area.

### **Next steps**

The programme for this work envisages a report on findings and a draft strategy being submitted to the round of meetings of the Council and LSP in about two months time (from mid May). From the many interviews I have already conducted and the initial responses to the survey, I have little doubt that a clear sense of direction and an action programme will emerge which can command the support of those actively engaged in tackling social exclusion in Breckland.