

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

19 MARCH 2020

**REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

CABINET DECISION

Leader of the Council – Councillor Bob Cook

The Communities Strategy 2020-23

SUMMARY

We recognise the great value and impact of our strong and vibrant communities and as a council we want to continue our support to community activity and engagement. This report shows how we plan to do this through a new Communities Strategy. The strategy will replace the Brighter Borough For All Strategy. It is proposed that the new Strategy will be underpinned by a framework of seven new Community Forums which will replace the existing Locality Forums. This work will continue to be facilitated, coordinated and supported by the Community Engagement Team. The new approach will retain a focus on activity to tackle poverty but will also support and encourage the community activity that we see in the strong, cohesive communities we are fortunate to have across the borough. We also recognise that the Community Forums will provide a valuable vehicle to support the work to tackle loneliness across the Borough.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION/DECISION

To seek Cabinet approval of the 2020-2023 Communities Strategy.

RECOMMENDATION

1. Cabinet endorse the 2020-2023 Communities Strategy and the formation of the seven Community Forums.

DETAIL

1. The Communities Strategy (2020-23) sets out our vision to demonstrate how we will support our new Community Forums to strengthen their power and impact to continue to build and sustain strong and vibrant communities across the borough.
2. The strategy will be underpinned by a network of seven new Community Forums which will encourage involvement from people across the seven Communities. This approach recognises the valuable contribution that communities make and provides a framework to encourage, support and develop their work.
3. The Strategy sets out that Communities Forums will:
 1. Retain a focus on tackling poverty. Of course there are many organisations working to tackle poverty in the borough and we recognise this cannot be achieved by any one organisation in isolation. This strategy attempts to harness the power of the community involvement in this task.

2. Create a strong, proactive and creative community network which will play a pivotal role in helping build strong, cohesive communities
3. Support the delivery of the work to tackle loneliness across the Borough under the strategic lead of the Health and Wellbeing Board
4. The Seven identified community areas are shown in the map in **Appendix 1**.
 - Billingham Communities
 - Norton Communities
 - Ingleby Barwick Communities
 - Yarm & Parishes Communities
 - Stockton West Communities
 - Stockton Central Communities
 - Thornaby Communities
5. The draft Communities Strategy is attached at **Appendix 2**. In preparing this strategy we have consulted with a variety of stakeholders, including: Locality Forums, Members Policy Briefings, Catalyst Voice Forums, Welfare Support, SDAIS and The Infinity Partnership.
6. It is proposed that the activity in the seven communities will be driven by seven Community Forums. The proposed initial membership of the new Community Forums is attached at **Appendix 3**. The forums will meet on a bi-monthly basis to co-ordinate activity in their communities. It is also anticipated that they will meet on a “task and finish” basis to work on initiatives as they arise.
7. The Community Forums will also meet collectively 4 times a year to share best practice and explore areas for co-operation. It is planned that in the first year the joint meetings will be:
 - A meeting to share ideas for building cohesive communities
 - A meeting with the Leader of Stockton on Tees Borough Council
 - A meeting to share ideas on tackling poverty
 - The Big Community Get Together at the end of the first year to celebrate success and share plans for the following year
8. The proposed terms of reference for the Community Forums is attached at **Appendix 4**.
9. Each forum will have a social media presence which will be established and supported by the Council to engage with people in the community and to promote activities, events and ways to get involved.
10. The new Communities Strategy will be launched at ‘The Big Community Get Together’ on the 1st April 2020. This will include a short promotional video which hopes to inspire and enthuse communities to get involved. It will also include a presentation and performance from Mike McGrother who will work with the Community Forums in his role as Community Engineer to give people a voice, thereby enabling creative, collaborative and cohesive thinking.
11. In April 2020 each new forum will meet, appoint a chair and start to plan their work for the next 12 months. This will be facilitated, coordinated and supported by the Community Engagement Team.
12. Each Community Forum will host a ‘Big Lunch’ event during the weekend of 6 & 7 June 2020 as part of the national Big Lunch campaign. This will be an opportunity to engage and involve the wider community supported by the Community Engagement Team and the Community Engineer.

COMMUNITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

13. This report covers the Communities Strategy. The Communities Strategy summarises the Council's strategic position over the next 3 years and describes the Council's Policy Principles, Vision and Key Objectives in relation to tackling poverty and building strong, cohesive communities and support the work to tackle loneliness across the Borough. The Communities Strategy does not include any policy changes and therefore a community impact assessment is not required.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

14. The cost of the work associated with the Strategy is covered by the resources included in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

15. This report covers the Communities Strategy and summarises the Council's strategic position over the next 3 years and describes the Council's Policy Principles, Vision and Key Objectives in relation to tackling poverty and building strong, cohesive communities and support the work to tackle loneliness across the Borough. There are no legal implications as a direct result of this report.

RISK ASSESSMENT

16. The development of the Communities Strategy is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce the risk.

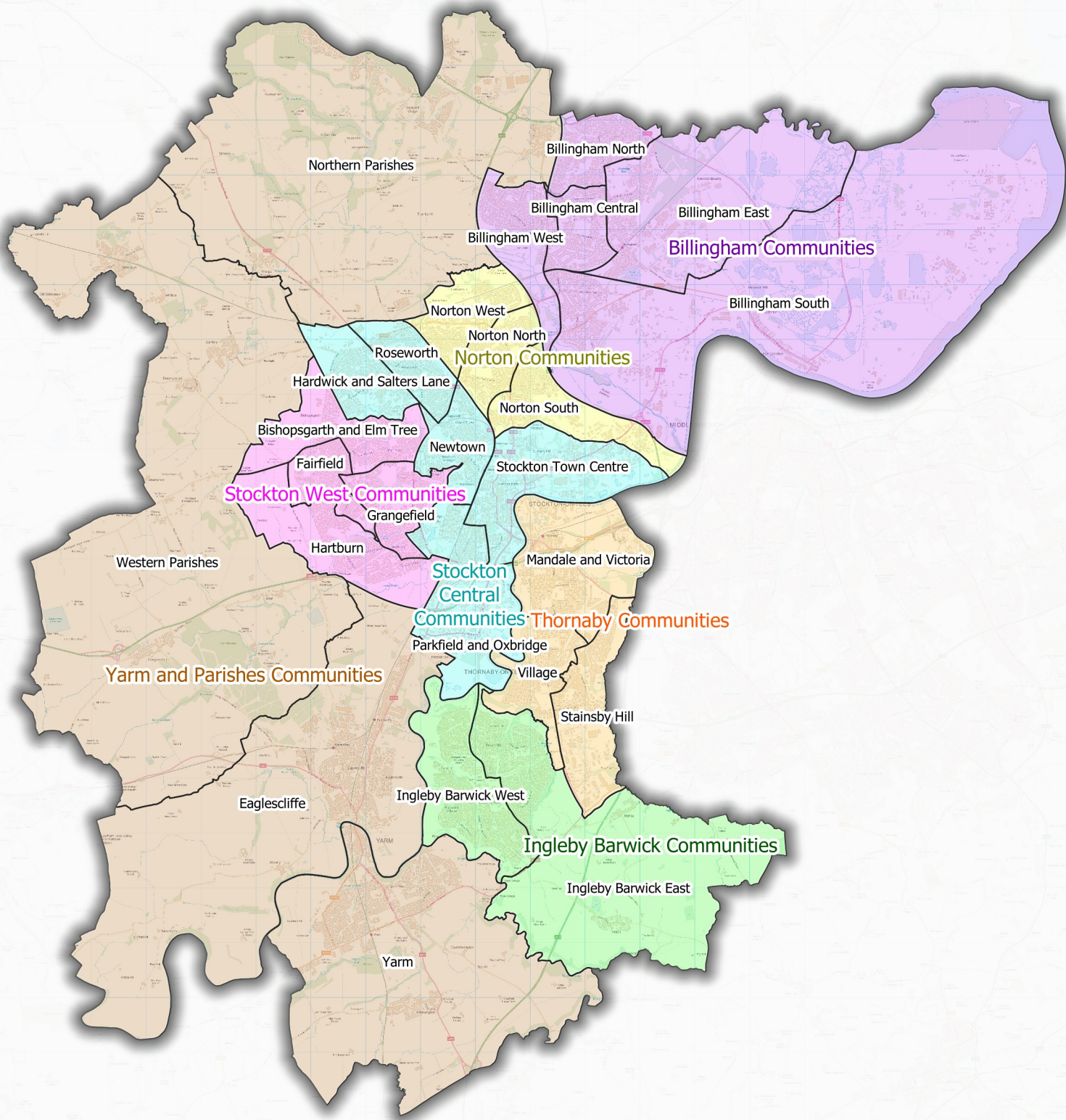
CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS

17. There are no corporate parenting implications as a direct result of this report.

WARDS AFFECTED AND CONSULTATION WITH WARD/COUNCILLORS

18. This proposal will affect every ward and in preparing for this strategy we have consulted with a variety of stakeholders, including: Locality Forums, Members Policy Briefing, Catalyst Voice Forums, SDAIS and The Infinity and Housing and Affordable Warmth Partnerships.

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□ Wards



Stockton-on-Tees
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Planning and Performance - GIS
Information and Improvement
Finance and Business Services
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
4th Floor, Bayheath House, Prince Regent Street
Stockton-on-Tees TS18 1DF

Title
Borough Communities and Wards

Communities Strategy 2020-23

DRAFT

Our People

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The Power of Communities!

We are pleased to introduce our 2020 – 2023 Communities Strategy. This is the first Communities Strategy for the Borough and it builds on the incredible success and work of the Locality Forums that have been delivering the "Brighter Borough For All – Tackling Poverty" Framework since 2012. The Strategy sets out our vision and hopes for our communities and specifically that they will:

- Be cohesive, strong and welcoming

And that they will join us in the task of:

- tackling poverty across the borough and
- ensuring that people in the borough are not lonely

We are confident that there is a commitment and desire amongst our communities to be part of delivering what is set out in this strategy and we are confident that it is right for our borough.

We are proud that **community cohesion** is strong in the borough and that people report a strong sense of belonging here and we want it to stay that way. We believe that by building the strong, proactive and creative community network set out in this strategy we will continue to see strong, cohesive communities across the borough.

We also know that there are many organisations working to **tackle poverty** in the borough and we recognise this challenge cannot be met by any one organisation on its own. This strategy recognises that there are many people and groups across the borough who are giving their time and energy to tackle poverty and we want to provide a framework to harness this community power. We want to make sure that everyone who wants to do something can and to make sure that no effort goes to waste.

And finally we want to support the work that is being done to **tackle loneliness** across the Borough which is being driven and led by the Health and Wellbeing Board. We know that community involvement and support can play a big role in tackling loneliness and we want to support this.

We would like to thank everyone who has worked with us since the introduction of the Brighter Borough for All strategy in 2012. We continue to celebrate and benefit from all of the fantastic work you have done. We hope you'll agree that in this Communities Strategy and the underpinning framework of seven new Community Forums we are building on your good work. We believe that this approach gives our communities the power, with our support, to develop community activity and engagement even further.

We are excited to see what happens next and look forward to working with you over the next three years.

Cllr Bob Cook

Leader

Stockton on Tees Borough Council

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Why do we need a Communities Strategy?

We are an ambitious Council and we have big plans for Stockton on Tees. We want the Borough to be:

- A place where people are healthy, safe and protected from harm
- A place that is clean, vibrant and attractive

And,

- A place with a thriving economy where everyone has opportunities to succeed

We recognise that we can't achieve this vision on our own. So, whilst we have a Council Plan which focuses on what we plan to do as a Council, we also have a number of Partnership Strategies that set out the exciting work we're doing with others, to bring the vision to life:



This Communities Strategy is a vital part of the overall plan for the borough as it is where we set out a shared vision and hope for our communities and specifically that they will:

- Be cohesive, strong and welcoming
- Join us in the task of tackling poverty across the borough
- Join us in the task of ensuring that people in the borough are not lonely

Here at the Council, we have an instinct to collaborate and we work hard to be an effective partner, so you can be sure that we are co-ordinating and driving all the benefits from these

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closely related plans and strategies to make sure that together they deliver the greatest possible benefit to the Borough.

The Communities Strategy sets out a framework for enabling and empowering community involvement. As a Council we believe that great things can be achieved if we:

- Hand over the power to our communities to further develop, community integration, inclusion and support.
- Support new projects to promote and increase intergenerational cohesion & cross cultural cohesion.
- Keep a focus on tackling poverty; if we work together to look at new ways of supporting those in need.
- Encourage innovative approaches to bringing all aspects of the community together to tackle loneliness and isolation.
- Provide the opportunity for positive and proactive community members to come together and collaborate with likeminded people.
- Continue to develop the successful work being undertaken across the borough by providing practical support, resources, connections, information and encouragement to help communities to make things happen.
- Make sure that, as far as possible, work is co-ordinated across the borough so there is no duplication, wasted effort or missed opportunity.

How do we maintain cohesive, strong and welcoming communities?

We are proud that community cohesion is strong in the borough and that people report a strong sense of belonging here and we want it to stay that way.

In our most recent residents survey, carried out by Ipsos MORI in 2019, the response to questions about 'belonging to the borough' and 'community cohesion' remain positive with levels of satisfaction increasing. This is a great platform for us to build on. The sense of belonging to the local area and to the Borough, community cohesion, and the sense that people pull together to improve the local area have all increased since the last survey in 2015.

- 80% of residents feel they belong to their local area, up from 77% in 2015. This sentiment is highest amongst the oldest age group of 75+ where it is 88%, but the strong reports of belonging are consistent across all groups of residents.
- The sense of belonging in the Borough as a whole has also increased. There has been a 5 percentage point increase in belonging to the Borough since 2015 from 65% to 70%. Longer term residents are more likely to have a strong sense of belonging (75% feel they belong, among those who have lived in the Borough for 20 years or more). Understandably, residents who are more positive about their local area have a stronger sense of belonging. In particular 87% of residents who think

people from different backgrounds get on well together also feel they belong to their local area.

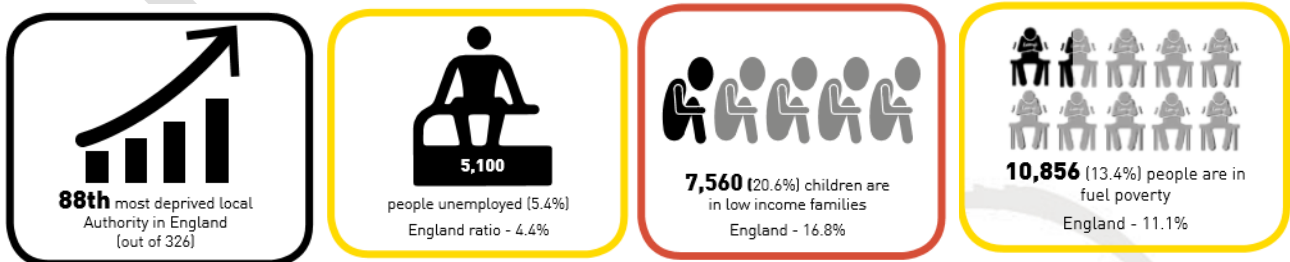
- 68% of residents agree that people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area, this is up from 56% in 2015. Those aged 65 and over are more likely to agree with this statement with 76% of this age category agreeing.
- 50% of residents think that people pull together to improve the local area, which marks an improvement from 44% in 2015.

These results are extremely encouraging and provide a great basis for growing community involvement and we believe that by building the strong, proactive and creative community network set out in this strategy we will continue to see strong, cohesive communities across the borough.

How can Communities help to tackle poverty?

This strategy recognises that there are many people and groups across the borough who are giving their time and energy to tackle poverty and we want to provide a framework to harness this community power. We want to make sure that everyone who wants to do something can and we want to make sure that no effort goes to waste.

Inequality remains a challenge in Stockton-on-Tees and we are ranked the 73rd most deprived Local Authority area in England. With a borough wide population of 197,200 residents we have affluent areas alongside areas of deprivation. Nine of our wards are in the 10% most deprived wards in the country and we're not happy with that fact. Linked to this we also see inequality in life expectancy, with a gap of 21 years in average life expectancy amongst men between the most and least deprived wards. Poverty remains a real challenge for many people in the borough:



[diagrams to be updated]

We're committed to fighting this discrepancy and we are working to tackle poverty in the borough at the Council and with our partners.

For example our Economic Growth Strategy sets out how we are working with businesses to create sustainable and good employment opportunities to reduce unemployment 6.2% (3.9%

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GB average), workless households 21.5% (14.3% GB average) and increase not only households in employment but also raise the average weekly earnings of £570 which are currently below the national average of £586.50.

The Adults Strategy describes how we are working with health and care partners to help those who need particular support.

The Children's and Young Peoples Strategy sets out how we are working with schools, colleges and other partners to make sure our children have the best start in life and a good education that sets them up for life. With 577 children in local authority care and above national average numbers of children living in poverty at 34% we are striving to bridge the gap in inequality.

In this Communities Strategy we recognise that there are many people in our communities who are giving their time and energy to tackle the direct effects of poverty and we think this is incredibly important. We commit through this strategy to support this work and to help maximise the benefit of this community power. Over the years we have seen the valuable work of our communities in supporting foodbanks, affordable warmth schemes, and clothing collections, Christmas appeals, benefits take up schemes and information sessions and support for vulnerable people in our communities. This work is invaluable and we will support it.

How can Communities help to tackle loneliness?

We recognise that our communities are carrying out vital work to support the drive to tackle loneliness across the Borough. The Health and Wellbeing Board has set out in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy the impact of loneliness and is providing a strategic lead in tackling this across the borough. We know that Community involvement and support can play a big role in tackling loneliness and we want to support this.

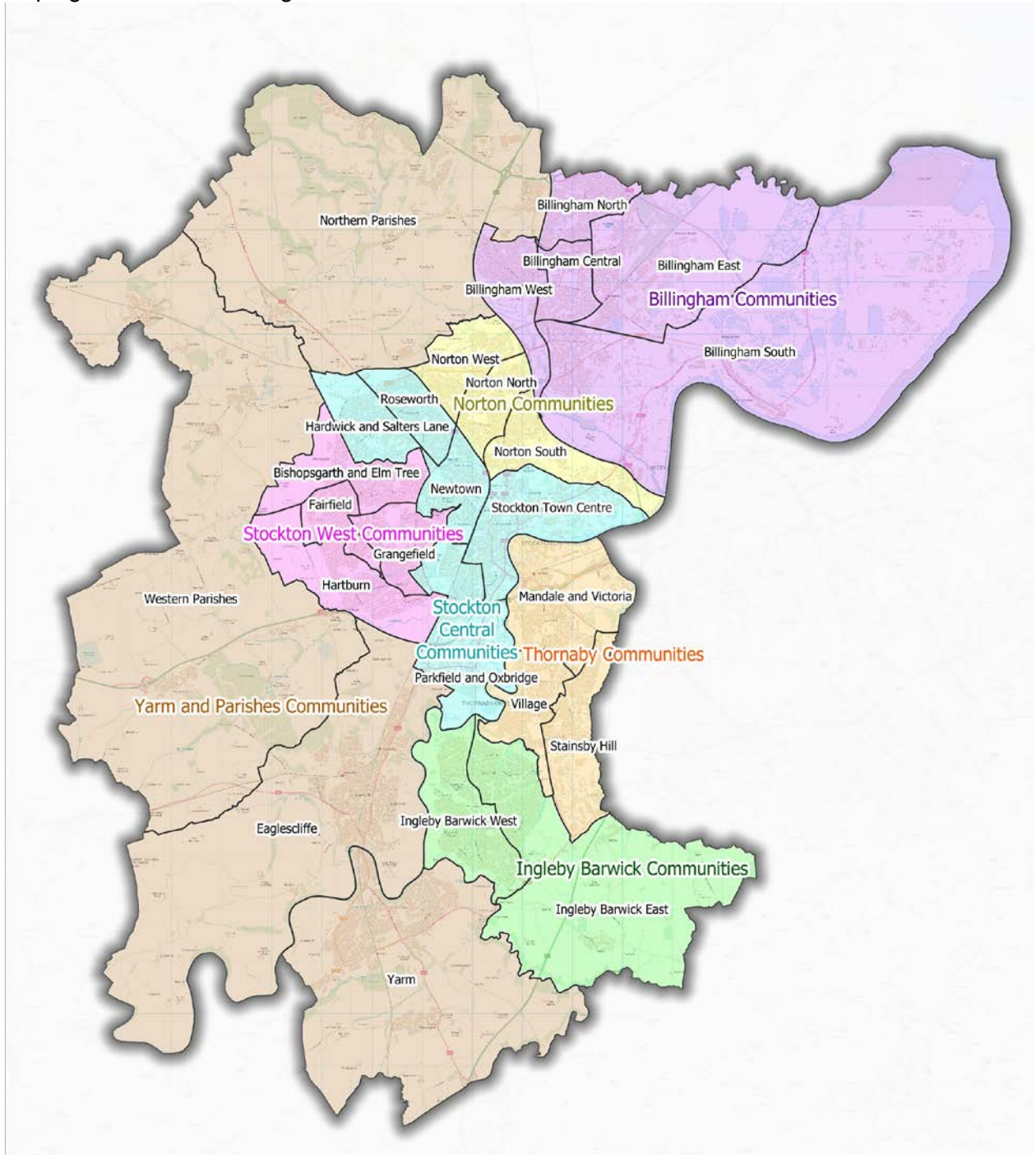
Loneliness is not currently routinely measured in the general population. However, the national Community Life Survey carried out in 2016-17 identified that 5% of adults in England reported feeling lonely "often" or "always". If this is applied to the local population this would equate to over 7,500 adults in Stockton-on-Tees who may be experiencing loneliness.

We believe that the Community Forums can play an active role in helping to address this issue. Building on the success of projects such as the Big Get Together events arranged by the Locality Forums, we see a clear opportunity for the Community Forums to fulfil an important role.



How will we deliver the Communities Strategy?

The strategy will be underpinned and delivered by a network of seven new Community Forums which will encourage community involvement. We have identified seven natural community groupings across the borough:



The seven communities will be supported by seven Community Forums. The Forums will be made up of members of the community, Councillors, voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations, young people from the Borough-wide “Bright Minds Big Futures” initiative and faith group representatives. They will work to facilitate community involvement and to develop, drive and co-ordinate a community plan for their area.

Community Forum	Population	Wards
Billingham Communities	35,526	Billingham Central, Billingham East, Billingham North, Billingham South, Billingham West
Ingleby Barwick Communities	23,051	Ingleby Barwick East, Ingleby Barwick West
Norton Communities	20,466	Norton North, Norton South, Norton West
Stockton West Communities	25,057	Grangefield, Bishopsgarth & Elmtree, Fairfield, Hartburn,
Stockton Central Communities	38,767	Hardwick & Salters Lane, Newtown, Parkfield & Oxbridge, Roseworth, Stockton Town Centre
Thornaby Communities	25,876	Mandale & Victoria, Stainsby Hill, Village
Yarm & Parishes Communities	27,744	Eaglescliffe, Yarm Western Parishes, Northern Parishes

The Forums will meet on a regular basis to co-ordinate activity in their communities. It is also anticipated that they will meet on a “task and finish” basis to work on initiatives as they arise. The Community Forum will also meet collectively four times a year to share best practice and explore areas for co-operation across the borough. For example it is proposed that in the first year the joint meetings will be:

- to share ideas for building cohesive communities
- to meet with the Leader of Stockton on Tees Borough Council to ensure that the Seven Community Plans are fully co-ordinated with all the other closely related plans and strategies and to make sure that together they are delivering the greatest possible benefit to the Borough.
- to share ideas on tackling poverty
- to celebrate success and share plans for the following year at The Big Community Get Together at the end of the first year

The Forums will be supported and facilitated by the Council’s Community Engagement Team and each one will have a social media presence which will be established and supported by the Council to engage with people in the community and to promote activities, events and ways to get involved.

If you’d like to get involved or learn more then please contact us on **01642 528830** or by email at engagement@stockton.gov.uk. We look forward to hearing from you.

Community Partnership Proposed Initial Membership

Billingham Communities
Billingham Environmental Link Project
Billingham Town Council
Billingham Family Hub
1 Councillor from each of the 5 Wards
BMBF
BCT Aspire
Involve Tees Valley
New Life Church
GP Primary Care Network
Infinity Partnership member
Housing and Affordable Warmth Partnership member

Ingleby Barwick Communities
Ingleby Barwick Town Council
Hilton Parish Council
1 Councillor from each of the 2 wards
BMBF
St Francis Church
Ingleby Barwick Community Partnership
GP Primary Care Network
Infinity Partnership member
Housing and Affordable Warmth Partnership member

Norton Communities
Norton Business Forum
Groundwork
1 Councillor from each of the 3 Wards
BMBF
Norton Business Forum
Daisy Chain
St Michaels and St Marys Church
GP Primary Care Network
Infinity Partnership member
Housing and Affordable Warmth Partnership member

Stockton Central Communities
Targeted Area Action
Redhill Family Hub
Stockton Family Hub
1 Councillor from each of the 5 Wards
BMBF
Roseworth Community Partnership
Hardwick in Partnership
EPIC
Stockton Baptist Church

St Andrews Methodist Church
Eastern Ravens
Portrack Baptist Church
Salvation Army
Marlborough House
Corner House
Thrive
Friends of Ropner Park
GP Primary Care Network
Infinity Partnership member
Housing and Affordable Warmth Partnership member

Thornaby Communities
Targeted Area Action
Thornaby Family Hub
Maltby Parish Council
Thornaby Town Council
1 Councillor from each of the 3 Wards
BMBF
Five Lamps
Shri Guru Nanak Gurdwara & Sikh Community Centre
GP Primary Care Network
Infinity Partnership member
Housing and Affordable Warmth Partnership member

Stockton West Communities
Stockton Town Football Club
BMBF
Faith Group rep
GP Primary Care Network
Infinity Partnership member
Housing and Affordable Warmth Partnership member
1 Councillor from east of the 4 wards
Friends of Six Fields
Shaw Trust
Elmwood Centre

Yarm and Parishes Communities
Tees Valley Rural Action
Carlton Parish Council
Grindon and Thorpe Thewles Parish Council
Long Newton Parish Council
Redmarhall Parish Council
Stillington and Whitton Parish Council
Wolviston Parish Council
Wynyard Parish Council
Egglescliffe and Eaglescliffe Parish Council

Kirklevington and Castle Leavington Parish Council
Preston-on-Tees Parish Council
Yarm Town Council
1 Councillor from each of the 4 wards
BMBF
Yarm Business Forum
All Saints Church
GP Primary Care Network
Infinity Partnership member
Housing and Affordable Warmth Partnership member

BILLINGHAM COMMUNITY FORUM

TERMS OF REFERENCE

PURPOSE

- To bring together partners to work at a local community level to work to support the Communities Strategy and strengthen the power and impact of our communities.
- To develop an agreed action plan for the Billingham Communities.
- To respond to requests from the community to facilitate community activity.
- To network, share information and good practice

MEMBERSHIP

- Ward Members from Billingham Communities
- Billingham Town Council representatives
- SBC Community Engagement Team
- Faith Groups
- VCSE organisations
- Partner Agencies that work within the Community

FREQUENCY OF MEETING

- Every 2 months
- Date and time to be agreed in each Community
- Borough-wide quarterly

INFORMATION AND RESOURCE SHARING

Everyone is responsible for sharing information appropriately. The Forum will also be a place to explore opportunities and the potential for sharing resources.

A Facebook group, Billingham Community Forum, will be used to share information with the people in the Billingham Communities.

As far as possible all information such as note of meetings will be shared openly - the principle is open communication with the community.



Stockton-on-Tees
BOROUGH COUNCIL

ACCOUNTABILITY

- Ensure the action plan is delivered and outcomes driven forward
- Information is shared with appropriate bodies
- Feedback is given

GOVERNANCE

- The work of the Billingham Community Forum will be reviewed annually at the 'Big Community Get Together'
- A review of these Terms of Reference will take place annually at the first meeting of the year
- A Chair and vice Chair will be elected at the first meeting of the financial year. This will be a community member of the forum rather than a Council member
- Delivery of Action Plan will be the responsibility of all members and supported by the Council's Community Engagement Team
- Time limited task and finish groups will be set up as and when required
- The Council's Community Engagement Team will provide secretariat for the Forum and will support the Forum Social Media platforms
- Wherever possible papers will be sent out 10 days before the meeting.
- An end of year report will be produced to capture the work that has happened over the course of the year and highlighting achievements
- Open Agenda - anyone can propose agenda items in advance of the meetings