

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

21 APRIL 2022

**REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

CABINET DECISION

A FAIRER STOCKTON-ON-TEES (FSOT) – THE NEXT STAGES

SUMMARY

This report provides Cabinet with an update on work undertaken to date on the framework, an outline of proposals for the delivery of FSOT in 2022/23 and some options for longer term development over the 10-year period to 2031. It outlines options for resourcing a team and for the potential reconfiguration of services in support of this agenda in a phased approach.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is recommended:

1. Note the work to date.
2. Note the draft action plan for 2022/23.
3. Note the emerging proposals for long term delivery and implementation

THE SCALE AND NATURE OF THIS WORK

1. The Fairer Stockton-on-Tees (FSOT) framework sets out an ambitious programme of change if we are to achieve a fundamental shift in tackling inequalities.
2. This will require some additional resources to implement the framework, and in the longer term a more fundamental review of the way the Council works, and how it works with partners to embed a different way of working.
3. This is a 10-year framework, so points to a fundamentally different way of addressing inequality, NOT just an add on to existing strategy. Implementation should lead to big changes in how we operate, or we will continue to, at best, mitigate impacts, and do more of the same.
4. It is also important to re-emphasise that this is not just about geographical areas but a whole framework of change, designed to get as upstream as possible. It is based on the following principles:
 - Action everywhere – seeking to focus on those key areas where we think we can make a difference, and which seek to join up;
 - More action for some communities;
 - More action in some localities;
 - More action for some individuals;
 - ...and being aware of overlaps between them.

5. In strategic terms, FSOT is one of the key partnership strategies, and is embedded into the Council Plan as a key Council priority.

PROGRESS TO DATE

Activity

6. The focus for this period has been on a mixture of preparatory and developmental work, designed to create additional visibility for the programme as a whole as well as to seek to identify specific areas of focus to identify and test out practical actions. The work to date has focused on:
 - a. Engagement, governance and communication:
 - i. Establishment of the Multi agency steering group, chaired by the Leader;
 - ii. The SBC internal advisory group to provide ongoing steering of key activity and links to existing programmes;
 - iii. Webpages;
 - iv. Briefings; attendance and engagement with a wide variety of existing groups, organisations and partnerships. This has been the predominant focus of much activity in this period.
 - b. Embedding the work with other ongoing initiatives and programmes:
 - i. The development of the child and family poverty approach via the CYP Select Committee review;
 - ii. Exploring options for integration with the Inclusion Growth agenda and on the role of the Employment and Skills Hub;
 - iii. Engaging with the Infinity Partnership on their action on poverty, wealth, debt and credit.
 - c. Development of 'deprived area' priorities:
 - i. Development of area profiles covering health, employment, housing, social care issues and knowledge;
 - ii. Initial priorities for focus in each of the 3 identified areas, including detailed discussions with ward members and other partners;
 - iii. Working with relevant officers and agencies in support of the development of area working;
 - iv. Development of a proposal for social prescribing for young people, developing a concept developed in Newcastle and also being piloted in Middlesbrough;
 - v. Analysis and assessment of current services, interventions and associated expenditure.
 - d. Disadvantaged communities:
 - i. Outline work on profiling and analysis to understand what we know and don't for each of the groups identified as a priority for action on the framework.
 - e. Development of a community outreach programme to focus in the most marginalized, drawing on expertise and practice in Durham.
 - f. SBC role and remit:
 - i. Initial analysis of existing approach to social value working with Corporate Procurement and opportunities to work with voluntary sector and business community to enhance current levels.

7. There remains more work to do on:
 - a. The development of an effective outcomes framework to be able to measure progress. Some aspects of this may be done in partnership with a university – initial conversation with Durham University about a potential role for them or other organization as an ongoing critical friend;
 - b. The more detailed process to be worked through for working with disadvantaged communities, and the development of clear local priorities for action and coordination, as well as clear success measurement;
 - c. The development of the areas approach – the governance structures and the plans for action for each area;
 - d. Piloting and testing of specific initiatives;
 - e. Clarifying the links with existing activity in a number of areas – especially around the health inequalities work being taken forward through the Health and Wellbeing Board, and the alignment of work in other areas such as Inclusive Growth.
 - f. Reviewing current resources and expenditure deployed on the areas and communities identified.

Delivery and structure

8. The period to March 2022 has seen 2 temporary coordinator posts in place. This was felt to be sufficient to establish momentum, engage with a wider range of partners, discuss and assess existing programmes and activities and to develop action plans and quick wins.
9. The work has continued to be sponsored by the Director of Children's Services.

FUTURE PLANS FOR DELIVERY – 2022/23 AND BEYOND

Activity

10. A draft action plan for 2022/23 is attached at **Annex 1**. Some of the most significant priorities identified are:
 - a. Finalisation of a clear programme of action for the borough wide elements of the programme – actions, programmes and anticipated links;
 - b. Oversight of the proposed family poverty approach;
 - c. Profiles and actions for each disadvantaged communities in the form of a JSNA profile and priority actions to narrow gaps in outcomes;
 - d. Action plans and partnerships for each of the 3 defined deprived areas and demonstrable activity across a range of priorities;
 - e. A specific test programme for social prescribing for children – focused on breaking cycles of disadvantage and working with defined schools in one target area;
 - f. Testing of an approach to the most marginalised which is based on more effective outreach and peer support;
 - g. Clearly defined actions for the planned priorities on the Council's organisational role;
 - h. Employability support through implementing 'spokes' to the Employment and Training Hub;
 - i. Considering opportunities for housing intervention and improvement linking with activity underway
 - i. Selective licensing;
 - ii. Town Deal in Thornaby;
 - iii. Working with partners to improve conditions;
 - iv. energy efficiency opportunities.

Structure

11. The strategic leadership for this work will shift to the Finance, Development and Regeneration Directorate in April.
12. It is proposed that a phased approach is taken to delivery
 - a. Programme delivery – to March 2023;
 - b. Implement longer term operating model from April 2023.

To March 2023

13. This period will be focused on the establishment of a sustainable FSOT coordination function, based on the following:
 - a. A Fairer Stockton Lead
 - b. Two coordinators.
 - c. A specific focus on the engagement of the VCSE
14. £200K has been allocated in the MTFP which will be sufficient to fund these roles.
15. Not included in the available budget to date is any additional revenue or capital funding to support wider implementation. It is envisaged that additional resources will ultimately be needed to support the implementation of new initiatives and programmes, and where appropriate to support physical regeneration and redevelopment.
16. Alongside this, it is proposed that governance arrangements are reviewed to ensure effective coordination internally and externally.

From April – towards a longer-term approach

17. The plan is then to develop and consider options for a longer-term operating model from April 2023.
18. This would be developed over time, but initial thinking is that the key issues to consider, centre on the scope to establish different ways of working to enable the Council and partners to respond to need and address some of the outcome gaps the framework is seeking to tackle.
19. The following are initial proposals for HOW we might want to work in the future:
 - a. New approach to provide a single source of help for those who need it, ask for it, or where data suggests they are vulnerable;
 - b. Focus on self-service and information;
 - c. Brokerage of community-based solutions, peer support;
 - d. Targeted support based on groups/areas;
 - e. Intensive support – through a case manager;
 - f. Linked to and working from family hubs and other community access points. Building community and family resilience focus – i.e. doing WITH not doing TO or FOR;
 - g. Where an enhanced focus on dealing with root causes will help to resolve, and will help people to help themselves;
 - h. And where a focus on responding to needs will help to reduce the need for additional assessment processes.

20. In terms of an operating model and structure, this will be developed over the next 12 months.
21. As part of the proposed senior management changes, it is proposed that the following functions will work closely together in part to support the development of a long-term approach to FSOT:
 - a. FSOT Coordination and team
 - b. Housing/homelessness support;
 - c. Community engagement/support/signposting/capacity – working with Catalyst and the wider VCSE.
22. The intention will be to develop a working model which is able to draw on the expertise and experience of a range of other services to support the implementation of the framework, through a mixture of virtual teams a working and other specific project activity.
23. Other related functions to operate as a virtual team and be 'pulled in' to support specific actions and priorities:
24. This would also include close working with a range of VCSE led initiatives and other partnerships, including:
 - a. SDAIS
 - b. Community Partnerships
 - c. Infinity Partnership
 - d. Food Power Network etc.
25. This approach would also seek the alignment of a range of partners to support these functions and roles including Cleveland Police, Integrated Care Board/Partnership etc.

COMMUNITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

26. The framework has been designed to address fundamental inequalities in the Borough, and to ensure there is an effective way of measuring progress through an outcomes framework and a focus on ensuring there is a focus on an impact assessment of strategies, policies and approaches. This work will be taken forward in the 2022/23 action plan.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

27. The strategic framework identifies the need for additional resources to deliver the strategy, around coordination and delivery and around intervention. This has been built into the Medium Term Financial Plan.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

28. There are no specific legal implications arising from this report. The basis for taking action is to some extent found in the Equality Act 2010.

RISK ASSESSMENT

29. The implementation of the framework will be managed in line with established risk assessment systems.

COUNCIL PLAN POLICY PRINCIPLES AND PRIORITIES

30. The strategic framework delivers a key priority in the Council Plan:

Fighting inequality

Inequality is a challenge in the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees. We have affluent areas alongside areas of deprivation. Nine of our wards are in the 10% most deprived wards in the country and there is a gap of 21 years in average life expectancy amongst men between the most and least deprived wards. We're committed to fighting this discrepancy and making sure more people enjoy a healthy and happy life here.

We will:

Develop a new approach to tackling inequality in the Borough and to ensure that we deliver targeted support and help to those currently living in poverty to improve their outcomes, including around health inequalities and emotional health and wellbeing.

CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS

31. The strategy sets out a broad based approach to tackling inequalities. The specific needs of those who have been in the care system are identified as one of the key communities which provide a focus for this work.

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

32. Extensive engagement was undertaken between June and October on the development of the framework upon which this report is based.

33. The steering group was consulted informally at its meeting on 28 March 2022.

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Fairer Stockton-on-Tees – Draft Action Plan 2022/23

Work area / rationale	Specific tasks	Who	When	Comments
<p>Governance and communication</p> <p><i>The development of the partnership, steering group, visibility, communications and links with other activity</i></p>	<p>Service and embed Steering Group</p> <p>Further develop role of SBC Advisory as a steering group</p> <p>Establish area leadership teams</p> <p>Establish webpage and comms routes</p> <p>Programme in CMT / Cabinet updates</p>	<p>Lead AD</p> <p>Lead AD</p> <p>Lead AD</p> <p>Coordinator</p> <p>Coordinator</p>		<p>Subject to agreement on pursuing this approach</p>
<p>Performance framework</p> <p><i>Framework includes initial proposals for how we measure progress – borough wide, for disadvantaged communities and for deprived areas. Needs further evolution to become a manageable tool.</i></p>	<p>Establish and use Power to communicate a borough wide outcomes framework based on the draft in the framework</p> <p>Develop gap analysis as part of JSNA work on disadvantaged communities</p> <p>Develop area gap reduction plans</p>	<p>SSI / PH</p>	<p>June 22</p>	<p>Outcomes frameworks to be based on the key gaps we are seeking to narrow.</p> <p>Will require different approaches for disadvantaged communities and deprived areas</p>

Work area / rationale	Specific tasks	Who	When	Comments
<p>Borough wide</p> <p><i>Development of the 'action everywhere' element of the framework. Establishing scope / spec for further work on key priorities, linking with existing mechanisms where possible, creating new ones where necessary</i></p>	<p>Clarify specific actions on work</p> <p>Contribute to family poverty action plan</p> <p>Work with Infinity Partnership to define an approach to debt and credit</p> <p>Develop co-production charter for use with communities</p> <p>Review community assets, focused initially in 3 target areas</p>	Lead AD	June 22	<p>Specific work to develop coherent approaches to the key priorities identified:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Creating good work / getting people into good jobs/ inclusive growth 2. Poverty approaches - maximising benefit take up / Debt and credit 3. Early years 4. Local supply chains 5. Co-production 6. Community assets
<p>Disadvantaged communities</p> <p><i>Developing clear plans for reducing outcome gaps for the defined communities in the framework. Linking with existing mechanisms, creating new ones where necessary</i></p>	<p>Undertake JSNA process for each defined priority group and review overlaps and gaps</p> <p>Develop clear action plans</p>	Lead AD and Coord		Needs greater focus in 22/23.
<p>Deprived areas</p> <p><i>Defining priority areas, profiling them, developing plans to close gaps</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communicate actions on first 3 priorities 2. Clarify boundaries 3. Review existing mechanisms and structures in each area 4. Identify base data / gap analysis 	Lead AD and Coord	3 area partnerships and plans by June 22	<p>Profiles completed. Key next stages are to define local governance arrangements to take forward work.</p> <p>Plans, structures and approaches will vary.</p>

Work area / rationale	Specific tasks	Who	When	Comments
	5. Develop area specific action plan 6. Identify and prioritise next 3 Identify specific actions to test: social prescribing identified as first priority			Steering group role to endorse proposals.
Marginalized individuals <i>Define and test a new approach to working with the most complex individuals and families.</i> <i>Scope, option appraisal and agreement on approach</i>	Establish task and finish group on issues and options. Learning from previous efforts to define 'complex / high impact' individuals Develop outreach proposal	Lead AD	Launch April 22	Potential project developed in 2021/22. Business case required.
SBC role and functions <i>To develop SBC statement on a fairer Stockton</i>	<i>take forward 3 key priorities:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>How to impact assess for all decision making</i> 2. <i>Employer role</i> 3. <i>Procurement role</i> Develop impact tool for decision making. Embed in Cabinet reports	Lead AD	Oct 22	Opportunities to connect with existing good practice, review tools

Work area / rationale	Specific tasks	Who	When	Comments
Capacity and resources	Develop and propose approaches for next stages, including any additional transfer of resources Pursue funding applications Identify opportunities to align funding	Lead AD	Oct 22	Development of a 3-year business plan and 12-month action plans