

**CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL**

**COUNCIL**  
**13 DECEMBER 2006**

**REPORT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**STRONG AND PROSPEROUS COMMUNITIES – THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER**

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To inform Members of the proposals set out in the White Paper, and to alert Members to the proposed changes to local government across a wide range of areas, and their implications for Cannock Chase Council.

**2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 That Members note the proposals set out in the Local Government White Paper *Strong and Prosperous Communities*, as presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2006.

**3. Background**

- 3.1 On 26<sup>th</sup> October 2006, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Ruth Kelly MP) presented the Local Government White Paper *Strong and Prosperous Communities* to Parliament.
- 3.2 The White Paper covers a wide range of issues, containing proposals on local leadership, the role of councillors, cutting back national targets, streamlining inspection and enhancing the scope of Local Area Agreements (Local Area Agreements).
- 3.3 The White Paper is split into a number of chapters. These are titled: -
- a Strong and Prosperous Communities;
  - b Responsive Services and Empowered Communities;
  - c Effective, Accountable and Responsive Local Government;
  - d Strong Cities, Strategic Regions;
  - e Local Government as Strategic Leader and Place-Shaper;
  - f A New Performance Framework;
  - g Efficiency - Transforming Local Services;

- h Community Cohesion;
  - i Annexes - a range of issues relating to individual service areas, including Community Safety, Vulnerable People and Climate Change
- 3.4 The White Paper builds on a number of other Government initiatives, including the Lyons Review of local government's role, finance and functions; the proposals set out in the Queen's Speech and the Comprehensive Spending Review.
- 3.5 The key proposals in the White Paper include:
- a *A new performance framework* - this will seek to cut the number of national performance indicators to 200 (from around 1,200) and targets to around 50, and will replace the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) with new assessment arrangements with a reduced and risk-based role for inspection
  - b *An enhanced role for councils as strategic leaders and place-shapers* - through stronger Local Strategic Partnerships and next-generation Local Area Agreements with wider scope and importance, and a duty to cooperate between councils and local partners
  - c *Stronger cities, strategic regions* - reforming Passenger Transport Authorities and the development of Local Area Agreements into Multi-Area Agreements
  - d *Stronger political leadership* - requiring all councils to opt for a directly-elected mayor, directly-elected executive or indirectly-elected leader for a four-year term
  - e *An invitation* - to councils in shire areas to bid for unitary status or enhanced two-tier working
  - f *A strengthened role for front-line councillors* - including powers to respond to community calls for action on local issues and greater freedom to speak up on planning and licensing issues affecting their wards
  - g *A wider and stronger role for scrutiny* - including the power to require evidence from all local service providers and a duty on them to have regard to scrutiny recommendations
  - h *Devolution* - of powers, including removing the requirement for Secretary of State's consent to bye-laws and the creation of parish councils
  - i *Community cohesion* - councils encouraged to put integration and cohesion at the heart of community strategies and Local Area Agreements.
- 3.6 Following the White Paper's publication, a range of legislation, consultations and reviews will be set in motion. These are detailed in this report from section 6 onwards.

#### 4. Options Available

- 4.1 There are no options for Members to consider at this time. The report is for note, although it should also be said that there will be a range of implications for the Authority should the proposals for the White Paper come into being. Further reports will be presented to Members as and when more information becomes available.

## REPORT INDEX

Background	Section 1
Details of Matters to be Considered i.e. Options Considered, Outcome of Consultations etc.	Section 2
Contribution to CHASE	Section 3
Section 17 (Crime Prevention) Implications	Section 4
Human Rights Act Implications	Section 5
Data Protection Act Implications	Section 6
Risk Management Implications	Section 7
Legal Implications	Section 8
Financial Implications	Section 9
Human Resource Implications	Section 10
Conclusions	Section 11
List of Background Papers	Section 12
Annexes to the Report i.e. copies of correspondence, plans etc.	Annex 1, 2, 3 etc

### Section 1

#### Background

On 26<sup>th</sup> October 2006, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Ruth Kelly MP) presented the Local Government White Paper *Strong and Prosperous Communities* (Cm 6939-I) to Parliament.

The White Paper covers a wide range of issues, containing proposals on local leadership, the role of councillors, cutting back national targets, streamlining inspection and enhancing the scope of Local Area Agreements (Local Area Agreements).

The White Paper is split into a number of sections, titled Strong and Prosperous Communities; Responsive Services and Empowered Communities; Effective, Accountable and Responsive Local Government; Strong Cities, Strategic Regions; Local Government as Strategic Leader and Place-Shaper; A New Performance Framework; Efficiency - Transforming Local Services; Community Cohesion and a range of issues relating to individual service areas.

The White Paper builds on a number of other Government initiatives, including the Lyons Review of local government's role, finance and functions; the proposals set out in the Queen's Speech and the Comprehensive Spending Review. Indeed, the three priorities for local government reform identified by Sir Michael Lyons in his report in May 2006 *National Prosperity, Local Choice and Civic Engagement* - greater clarity about the respective roles of central and local government, greater recognition of local government's role as a 'place-shaper' and co-ordinator of local services, and a recognition within local government of the need to improve its capability to do this job - are all key themes of the White Paper.

The key proposals in the White Paper include:

- *A new performance framework* - this will seek to cut the number of national performance indicators to 200 (from around 1,200) and targets to around 50, and will replace the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) with new assessment arrangements with a reduced and risk-based role for inspection
- *An enhanced role for councils as strategic leaders and place-shapers* - through stronger Local Strategic Partnerships and next-generation Local Area Agreements with wider scope and importance, and a duty to cooperate between councils and local partners
- *Stronger cities, strategic regions* - reforming Passenger Transport Authorities and the development of Local Area Agreements into Multi-Area Agreements
- *Stronger political leadership* - requiring all councils to opt for a directly-elected mayor, directly-elected executive or indirectly-elected leader for a four-year term
- *An invitation* - to councils in shire areas to bid for unitary status or enhanced two-tier working
- *A strengthened role for front-line councillors* - including powers to respond to community calls for action on local issues and greater freedom to speak up on planning and licensing issues affecting their wards
- *A wider and stronger role for scrutiny* - including the power to require evidence from all local service providers and a duty on them to have regard to scrutiny recommendations
- *Devolution* - of powers, including removing the requirement for Secretary of State's consent to bye-laws and the creation of parish councils
- *Community cohesion* - councils encouraged to put integration and cohesion at the heart of community strategies and Local Area Agreements.

In the following sections, this report will set out the specific proposals in each of the sections of the White Paper.

## **Strong and Prosperous Communities**

In the opening section of the White Paper, the Government provides an assessment of the progress made by local councils in terms of creating strong and prosperous communities and also highlights the future direction that, according to the Government, needs to be taken.

It goes on to argue that substantial improvements have been made, and should be built upon, and that public expectations of local services continue to rise.

The argument put forward by Government is that there must be a new role for local government, involving strong strategic leadership, effective partnership working on issues, more information (and better communication) to and with local people, and focusing on their needs and wants through greater community consultation and engagement.

## **Responsive Services and Empowered Communities**

This chapter sets out proposals designed to devolve power to the communities and give local people a greater say over local public services through extending individual choice, giving local people more say in running local services, providing better and more timely information on the quality of local services, listening to and acting on local concerns, and empowering local people to manage and develop their own community facilities.

The key proposals within the White Paper include:

- A Community Call for Action - enabling citizens to address serious or persistent problems through their local councillor. Councils will be encouraged to delegate powers and budgets to tackle minor problems; councillors will have the right to raise issues across all local services with the Executive and refer them to Overview and Scrutiny.
- Reforming legislation - so that all Councils have the power to create parish councils or similar structures, extending the power of well-being to quality parish councils, enabling councils to decide on other forms of community governance beyond parish councils, and allow parish and town councils to be named village, community or neighbourhood councils
- Petitions - all councils to consider how they deal with petitions
- Role of the Ombudsman - the powers of the Local Ombudsman will be widened to include action taken by Councils where they work in partnership
- Neighbourhoods - empower local people to manage their neighbourhoods and own and manage community facilities. Barry Quirk, Chief Executive of Lewisham, will lead an enquiry to look at the pros and cons of these proposals and will report in Spring 2007.

The LGA and Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) are taking this agenda forward through their *Closer to the People* campaign, providing best practice advice to councils, and a programme of support to develop the role of frontline councillors.

## Effective, Accountable and Responsive Local Government

This chapter sets out proposals to create a framework for councils to act as strong leaders of their communities, removing any barriers to effective working and attracting more diverse and capable councillors.

The key proposals in the White Paper include: -

- Councillor recruitment - an independent review will be established, looking at the incentives and barriers to serving as a Councillor, including time issues, time required off work, and remuneration issues, as well as encouraging the LGA and political parties to work together to promote the recruitment of more diverse and capable councillors
- Building capacity - work with the LGA, IDeA, and Leadership Centre for Local Government to develop a clear definition of the councillor's role as community champion and developing capacity-building and support
- Bye-laws and fixed penalty notices - removes the requirement for councils to get government consent to bye-laws and give councils powers to enforce bye-laws through fixed penalty notices
- Political management - legislation will be introduced to require councils to adopt one of three political management arrangements (directly-elected mayor, directly-elected executive, or indirectly-elected leader for a four-year term). Also, Councils to opt for a directly-elected mayor or executive without a referendum. All executive powers will be invested in a mayor (or leader), including appointing the cabinet and deciding portfolios. Councils will be free to decide how a leader may be removed in their constitutions (reformed committee system councils will be unaffected)
- Overview and Scrutiny - the overview and scrutiny function will be widened and strengthened through legislation and will give power to consider specific matters regarding the action of local public service providers; require service providers to appear and provide information, and require these providers to have regard to scrutiny recommendations.
- Electoral arrangements - will legislate to remove requirement for councils to get the Secretary of State's approval to adopt whole-council elections, and to request the Electoral Commission to review creating single member wards
- Standards and conduct - will legislate to implement the Graham Committee recommendations to create a more locally-based conduct regime with a revised role for the Standards Board, and revise the code of conduct to allow members to speak and vote on planning and licensing matters unless their interest is "greater than most other people in the ward"
- Unitary status - all councils are invited to submit proposals to create unitary councils by 25 January 2007. Proposals must command support, enhance strategic leadership and neighbourhood empowerment, as well as providing value for money and equity. Finally, the proposals must meet the costs of change from council's existing resources

- Enhancing two-tier working - councils in shire areas are invited to submit proposals to become pathfinders for enhanced two-tier working by 25 January 2007. Proposals must be submitted jointly by all the district and the county council; must demonstrate enhanced leadership, efficiency and outcomes equivalent to a unitary council; and commit to explore how to remove barriers to innovative and more effective governance. Pathfinders will be subject to long term evaluation with reports after 2, 4 and 6 years to inform future government policy

The LGA has already begun work with the main political parties on councillor recruitment on proposals for a national campaign to raise awareness of the role of councillors and encourage more people to come forward as candidates.

On building capacity, the LGA/IDeA has begun work to develop support for frontline councillors and on overview and scrutiny, the LGA/IDeA will be working with the Centre for Public Scrutiny to support councils in exercising these new powers.

### **Strong Cities, Strategic Regions**

This chapter sets out proposals to further national and regional economic growth in our cities and regions, through improving the quality of governance and leadership.

The key proposals in the White Paper include: -

- Sub-national review - a Treasury-led review of sub-national economic development and regeneration (feeding into the Comprehensive Spending Review) will identify the most appropriate level to locate responsibility for interventions for the different policy areas which impact on economic development, regeneration and neighbourhood renewal.
- Passenger Transport Authorities - the Department for Transport will propose reforms to Passenger Transport Authorities (PTAs), including greater local government representation on PTAs.
- Bus services - new powers for those councils that require them to ensure that bus services deliver for their communities
- Multi area agreements - the government will work with councils to develop MAAs to support effective collaboration at the city region level, but these not only apply to large cities
- Leadership models - the government will encourage stronger leadership models, including directly-elected mayors where there is local support

The LGA has made a submission to the Treasury's sub-national review focusing on the role of sub-regional partnerships. Over the next six months the LGA will also publish a series of publications that develop the case for devolution of specific powers to local councils and partnerships.

On Passenger Transport Authorities, the LGA will lobby for all councils to have a range of options, and will work with the government on developing Multi Area Agreements.

## Local Government as Strategic Leader and Place-Shaper

This chapter sets out proposals to strengthen the strategic leadership role of councils as coordinators of all local agencies and groups involved in shaping the community through their work in different sectors.

The key proposals in the White Paper include: -

- New duty for upper tier councils to prepare Local Area Agreements in consultation with other partners, forming part of a new statutory framework
- New model of Local Area Agreements - to strengthen partnership working and council leadership of the LAA, and to streamline and simplify funding and consultation. The Local Area Agreements will encompass more area-based funding, and the four blocks of funding will be replaced by four themes to form a 'single pot'.
- Creating multi-area agreements (MAAs) - will allow localities to extend the geographic scope of the LAA and apply the principles to a sub regional area through what are being called MAAs
- Duty to cooperate and duty to have regard to LAA targets - duty to cooperate between councils and named partners to agree LAA targets; also, duty for partners to have regard to LAA targets, and duty for councils to prepare the LAA in consultation with others. Finally, the voluntary and community sector must be involved. The named partners include districts, upper tier authorities and unitaries, chief police officers, PCTs, HSE, PTAs, Environment Agency, National Parks Authorities, and Fire and Rescue Authorities
- Strengthening the political leadership of Local Strategic Partnerships - expectation that council leaders will play a leading role and agree the appointment of the chair of the Local Strategic Partnership, with council executive members chairing or leading thematic sub-groups
- Statutory partnerships for health and well-being under the Local Strategic Partnership - will follow a similar model to the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships. Department of Health will invite views on the details of this proposal, including the role of the elected member.
- Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) - reiterates the existing duty and proposes new statutory guidance to strengthen the relationship between the SCS and other local and regional plans. This will also develop a new comprehensive engagement strategy for SCS, Local Area Agreements and LDFs, repealing the existing Statement of Community Involvement for LDFs. Finally, a commitment to explore whether councils could be given the responsibility for hearing appeals in relation to planning decisions delegated to officers.

The LGA will continue to work with Ministers on the Local Area Agreements issue, and with a range of other agencies on the other issues contained in the White Paper.

## **A New Performance Framework**

This chapter sets out proposals to improve local public services by reforming the current system of targets and inspection. There will be a framework of national outcomes, with locally set and delivered targets that will ensure minimum standards, with a closer focus on the views of the public, encouraging local solutions to problems.

The key proposals in the White Paper include: -

- Customers and citizens driving improvement - to strengthen customers' and citizens' role in driving improvement, monitoring performance and inspection, including clarifying responsibilities to respond and report to citizens and incorporating user views into inspection activities
- National outcomes to reflect priorities - use the Comprehensive Spending Review process to develop a clear set of national outcomes reflecting Government priorities and progress on delivering national outcomes to be measured against a core set of 200 national indicators. In addition, a maximum of 35 targets will be set and delivered for each locality through the LAA. Government Offices will lead on negotiating targets.
- Annual Comprehensive Area Assessment - new process to replace CPA by March 2009. The Audit Commission will lead the process. A range of data will be published about a locality's performance, including performance against a set of 200 national indicators; scored direction of travel statement for the Council, and scored use of resources statement for the council.
- LGA/Government wide improvement strategy - continued support for improvement, with investment priorities shaped through a jointly agreed LGA/Government-wide improvement strategy
- Reforming Best Value - remove requirements for best value authorities to prepare annual performance plans and conduct review. Also, ensure that best value authorities secure participation of local citizens and encourage councils to strengthen their approach to competition

The LGA are keen to work with the Government and Audit Commission and other agencies to develop elements of the new framework.

## **Efficiency - Transforming Local Services**

This chapter of the White Paper sets out proposals to ensure that every council, working with partners, is able to improve local services and drive forward efficiency. This is to be done through transforming how services are delivered, encouraging collaboration across administrative boundaries and greater competition in contracts for the provision of the delivery of local public services.

The key proposals in the White Paper include: -

- Efficiency gains - to be achieved over the next few years as part of the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review

- Collaboration across the public sector - between councils and across all public bodies, where this improves effectiveness and efficiency, and ensuring administrative boundaries are not a barrier
- Local government service markets - greater contestability through the use of fair and open competition, using a code of local government service markets which include stimulating new markets and increasing capacity and competitiveness in existing markets
- Service transformation - agenda will look at opportunities for local and central government and other providers to work more closely together
- Three year budgets - local authorities will have the opportunity to publish three year council tax figures
- Third sector funding - greater stability for funding to the third sector through three year grant funding, except where this does not represent best value in individual cases
- Alignment with LAA framework - to align efficiency into the LAA framework

The LGA will work with the DCLG to produce the markets code and will work with a range of agencies on developing the role of the third sector.

### **Community Cohesion**

This chapter sets out the importance of local councils leading the response to the challenges created by an increasingly diverse society. This can be done by incorporating community cohesion across council structures and processes, tackling extremism where it exists and by implementing the conclusions of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion.

The key proposals in the White Paper include: -

- Performance and Local Area Agreements - puts community cohesion firmly into the new performance framework, and Local Area Agreements should reflect community cohesion where it is a particular issue that needs to be reflected
- Local Strategic Partnerships - importance of community cohesion in Local Strategic Partnerships and sharing best practice
- Extremism - makes tackling extremism core business
- Commission on Integration and Cohesion - to produce more detailed plans when it reports next year

The LGA and IDeA is working on spreading best practice with practical guidance to councillors and chief executives.

### **Steps Towards Implementation**

This chapter sets out the programme of legislation, guidance and consultation that the Government will undertake to implement the proposals in the White Paper.

These can be broken down into four main headings - legislation, reviews, consultation and other initiatives.

Under 'legislation', the proposal is for a range of new measures to be introduced. These include: -

- To revise the duty on best value authorities to require them to secure the participation of local people;
- Deregulate and simplify best value by removing the requirements on best value authorities to prepare a Best Value Performance Plan and conduct Best Value Reviews;
- Exempt parishes from best value;
- Delete provisions which enable the Secretary of State to specify, by order, Best Value Performance Indicators and best value performance standards, so that they no longer apply in England;
- Enable councillors acting as advocates for their communities to initiate a Community Call for Action to resolve local issues of concern;
- Devolve the power to create new parishes from the Secretary of State and Electoral Commission to district and unitary authorities and allow parishes to adopt alternative names;
- Amend the Right to Manage regulations;
- Improve the responsiveness of the Local Government Ombudsman and clarify its role;
- End the Secretary of State's role in confirming byelaws, and make it possible for councils to enforce byelaws through fixed penalty notices;
- Give local authorities the choice of one of three executive models - a directly elected mayor, directly elected executive or an indirectly elected leader with a four year term;
- Allow local authorities to adopt a mayoral model without the need for a referendum;
- Strengthen Overview and Scrutiny Committees;
- Allow all local authorities to opt for whole council elections and move to single member wards;
- Give councils in two-tier areas an opportunity to seek unitary status, and those continuing with two-tier arrangements expected to adopt new improved models;
- Establish a new locally-based conduct regime, with a streamlined Standards Board having a refocused role as a light touch regulator;

- Publish a revised statutory model Code of Conduct for councillors, to allow councillors to speak on planning and licensing issues, and a new code of conduct for local authority employees;
- Place a duty on upper-tier or unitary authorities to prepare Local Area Agreements in consultation with named local partners;
- Issue guidance saying that the Sustainable Community Strategy and other local and regional statutory plans must have regard to each other;
- Streamline procedures for consulting communities, by repealing the requirement for the Local Development Framework's Statement of Community Involvement to be examined;
- Legislate to amend Audit Commission powers, functions and governance arrangements to reflect the new inspection agenda;
- Require the Audit Commission to act as a 'gatekeeper' for proposed inspections relating to local authority services

Under 'reviews', the Government will review: -

- Community management and ownership of assets;
- Incentives and barriers to serving on councils

The Government will consult on a range of consolidated and light-touch guidance, including:-

- The revised Best Value duty;
- Community Call for Action, Overview and Scrutiny and governance reforms;
- Local Strategic Partnerships, Sustainable Community Strategies and Local Area Agreements;
- City development companies, to drive regional and national economic growth

Under 'other initiatives', there will be a range of actions, including: -

- Establishing an agreed set of national priority outcomes measured through a single set of national indicators;
- Develop proposals for a new small set of national citizen satisfaction and prospective indicators;
- Explore with local authorities and other stakeholders how to improve information management;
- Negotiate and implement burden reduction packages;
- Work with the LGA in developing improvement;

- Work with the Audit Commission and other inspectorates to develop Use of Resources and Direction of Travel judgements to deliver the new Comprehensive Area Assessments;
- Work with the Audit Commission to ensure that audit and inspection have a greater focus on citizen experience and perspectives and to make results more publicly accessible;
- Ensure Government Offices have the necessary skills and capacity;
- Agree with the LGA a national improvement strategy;
- Work to align and coordinate existing frameworks for improvement and intervention;
- Continue to work with towns, cities and other places on their business cases and MAAs to promote further economic development;
- Work with local government to support and spread best practice on business process improvement techniques;
- Introduce a fund to give local authorities capital support in refurbishing buildings to facilitate their transfer to community management and ownership;
- Work with local government and other partners to improve take-up of community empowerment

### **Annexes to the White Paper**

The White Paper also sets out a range of initiatives in individual service areas.

In the area of Community Safety, the White Paper will: -

- Aim to remove barriers to work in partnership to create safer local communities;
- Create a duty to work with named partners to agree relevant targets in Local Area Agreements;
- Extend the Community Call for Action to cover community safety issues;
- Requires portfolio holder for Community Safety to play an active role in the CDRP

Under Health and Well-Being, the White Paper: -

- Creates a statutory duty for councils to establish a new inspection body with Local Involvement Networks to provide flexible ways for communities to engage with health and social care organisations;
- Extends Community Call for Action to include social care issues;
- Grants new powers to overview and scrutiny committees, including evidence from Social Care providers and scrutinising PCTs;

- Encourages councils and PCTs to coordinate consultations;
- Ensures that council restructuring complements PCT boundaries and provides greater coterminosity;
- Directors of Public Health to be jointly appointed;
- New statutory partnership for health and wellbeing under the Local Strategic Partnership

Under Vulnerable People, the White Paper will: -

- Make local government a stronger champion of those who are disadvantaged and discriminated;
- Develop statutory guidance to target disadvantaged and marginalised groups;
- Encourage councillors to work proactively with outreach workers;
- Work with LGA and political parties to ensure democratic representatives reflect local communities;
- Develop cross boundary strategies linking physical regeneration, economic growth and neighbourhood renewal;
- Ensuring access to skills and training;
- Develop proposal to publish a national housing strategy and a new Supporting People Strategy;
- Develop a Social Exclusion Task Force

Under Economic Development, Housing and Planning, the White Paper will: -

- Develop shared objectives through Local Area Agreements and Sustainable Community Strategies;
- Promote more meaningful consultation with residents on Sustainable Community Strategy, Local Area Agreements and LDF;
- Review planning resources;
- Consult on new Housing and Planning Delivery Grant;
- Develop strong leader mandate;
- Develop a greater strategic housing role;
- Endorse strategic regional approach to economic development;
- Create new duties to cooperate on Local Area Agreements

Under Climate Change, the White Paper will: -

- Develop strong leadership on climate change;
- Encourage parish councils to use powers on energy saving measures;
- Use Local Area Agreements to tackle climate change with partners;
- Include climate change as an explicit part of the new performance framework;
- Allocate additional funding for SALIX to help councils tackle climate change;
- Encourage and support the LGA's Climate Change Commission;
- Develop Sustainable Energy Beacons

Under the Third Sector, the White Paper will: -

- Create a new duty for participation;
- Extend choice in services;
- Encourage local community groups to have a key role alongside frontline councillors;
- Develop three year funding grants

### **Next Steps**

The next steps following publication of the White Paper will be a period of consultation and engagement, that includes a 12-week period for those local authorities wishing to bid for unitary status to make their case to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), or for two-tier areas to offer themselves as pathfinders for the improvement of the two-tier system process.

During this period, the DCLG will issue further guidance where appropriate and will work with local government and partners to support and promote best practice, and will legislate where necessary.

During this period, updates will be presented to Members as and when they appear.

### **Section 3**

#### **Contribution to CHASE**

The contribution of Strong and Prosperous Communities White Paper makes to CHASE is captured by the view of Government that there must be a new role for local government, involving strong strategic leadership, effective partnership working on issues, more information (and better communication) to and with local people, and focusing on their needs and wants through greater community consultation and engagement.

**Section 4**

**Section 17 Implications**

The White Paper contains a range of specific proposals for Community Safety, included in the Annexes to the White Paper.

**Section 5**

**Human Rights Act Implications**

There are no identified implications in respect of the Human Rights Act 1998 arising from this report.

**Section 6**

**Data Protection Act Implications**

There are no identified implications in respect of the Data Protection Act.

**Section 7**

**Risk Management Implications**

**Section 8**

**Legal Implications**

A range of legislative changes is proposed as the White Paper is implemented and further reports will be presented to Members as the detail and impact of those legislative changes become clearer.

**Section 9**

**Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications at this stage for the Authority, but it is likely that the introduction of a number of the proposals contained within the White Paper will have a financial impact on the Authority.

**Section 10**

**Resource Implications**

There is a range of implications for employees in the White Paper, across a range of issues. Implications are likely to include a need for training and development of both employees and Members in relation to the new duties to develop new skills and competencies. The emphasis on involving local people through community consultation and engagement is consistent with work currently being carried

by this Authority out to address the existing statutory requirements arising from the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. The White Paper will make local government a stronger champion of those who are disadvantaged and discriminated against. Many aspects of the statutory requirement to produce a Race Equality Scheme and a Disability Equality Scheme focus on identifying methods and approaches to engage local people (disadvantaged by virtue of disability or race) to participate in helping to define and improve services and to tackle exclusion, all of which will contribute in the longer term to the proposed duties on community involvement and engagement. One notable proposal from the White Paper is the introduction of a code of conduct for local authority employees, which may have implications for core policies such as discipline and capability. Further reports will be presented to Members at future meetings.

**Section 11**

**Conclusions**

That the recommendation at point 2 be approved.

**Section 12**

**Background Papers**

Department for Communities and Local Government - *Strong and Prosperous Communities* - The Local Government White Paper October 2006

Local Government Association Briefing - 26<sup>th</sup> October 2006

**Annexes**

None