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2 June 2010

S U M M O N S

MEETING: Overview and Scrutiny Committee
DATE: 10 June 2010
TIME: 6.00 p.m.
PLACE: Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Gosport
Democratic Services contact: Chris Wrein

LINDA EDWARDS
BOROUGH SOLICITOR

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Councillor Forder(Chairman)
Councillor Kimber (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Bradley	Councillor Jacobs
Councillor Dickson	Councillor Jessop
Councillor Foster-Reed	Councillor Scard
Councillor Geddes	Councillor Mrs Searle
Councillor Hylands	Councillor Miss West

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NOTE:

Please note that mobile phones should be switched off for the duration of the meeting.

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies, if any, for inability to attend the meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members present are reminded to declare, at this point in the meeting or as soon as possible thereafter, any personal (including financial) or prejudicial interest in any item(s) being considered at this meeting.

3. MINUTES

To confirm the Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 25 March and 19 May 2010.

4. WELCOME TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

An introduction by the Chairman to the role and work undertaken by the Committee.

5. DEVELOPMENT OF A WORK PROGRAMME

A) REQUESTS FOR SCRUTINY

To consider any requests for scrutiny received by the Borough Solicitor. A copy of the Scrutiny Work Plan Prioritisation Aid is attached.

B) WORK PROGRAMME

To consider the work programme (attached) for the Committee and any suggestions from Members for issues to be scrutinise.

C) OTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR SCRUTINY

6. REPORTS TO BE RECEIVED

(i) DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME ANNUAL REPORT

To present the annual report on the third year of the Disability Equality Scheme (DES) and the revised Action Plan.

(ii) GOSPORT'S SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY – PROGRESS UPDATE

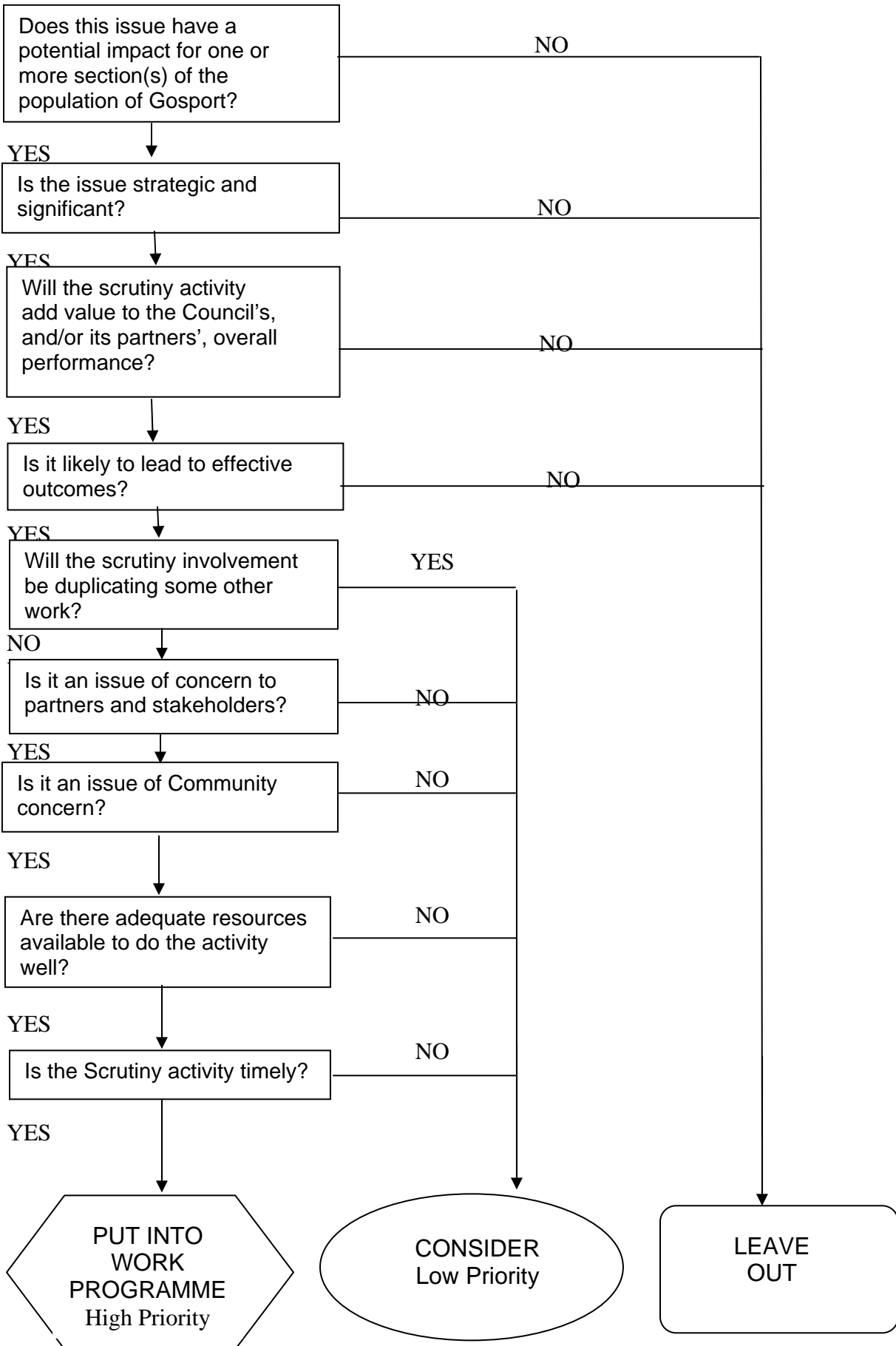
Overview and Scrutiny Committee
10 June 2010

To provide Members with a progress update on Gosport's Sustainable Community Strategy and its Local Strategic Partnership.

(iii) GOSPORT'S CULTURAL STRATEGY PLANNING

To advise the Committee of the arrangements for the updating of the strategy.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: WORK PROGRAMME

Work Area	Lead Member/Officer	Date to be reported to Committee
Performance Information: <i>Consideration of performance information relating to actions agreed by CMT</i>	Ian Lycett/ Des Welbourne	Annually. Next report: July 2010
Community Strategy Action Plan: <i>Policy Framework Document</i>	Julie Petty	At 6-monthly intervals: Next report June 2010
Disability Equality Scheme: <i>Receive progress report on an annual basis</i>	Julie Petty	Annually: Next report June 2010
Race Equality Scheme <i>Receive progress report on an annual basis</i>	Julie Petty	Annually: Next report 27 January 2011
Gender Equality Scheme <i>Receive progress report on an annual basis</i>	Julie Petty	Annually: Next report September 2010
Single Equality Bill	Julie Petty	Annually: June 2012
Cultural Strategy	Nigel Draycott	10 June 2010
Sustainable Communities Act 2007, Calls for Action and Local Petitions and recent and impending legislation affecting local authorities	Linda Edwards	2010/11 Municipal Year
Budget Issues Working Group	Peter Wilson	22 July 2010
Work areas: <i>Review at each meeting</i>		

GOSPORT BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10th June 2010

ITEM FOR DISCUSSION

TITLE: DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME ANNUAL REPORT

AUTHOR: HEAD OF CORPORATE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE

1.0 PURPOSE:

This is the third annual report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the Disability Equality Scheme. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the scheme's progress and to provide information on future consolidation of the Council's statutory equality schemes in line with new legislation.

2.0 BACKGROUND:

- 2.1 The Disability Equality Scheme 2007-2010 with Action Plan was launched in February 2007 to ensure the Council addressed its legal duties and responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.
- 2.2 The Disability Equality Scheme is one of three statutory equality schemes linked under the Corporate Equalities Policy, which was adopted in February 2008. The other two schemes are the Race Equality Scheme, adopted in February 2007, and the Gender Equality Scheme, adopted in July 2008.

3.0 REPORT:

- 3.1 This is the final annual report of the Council's first Disability Equality Scheme, which ran from February 2007. Over the past three years, the Council has worked with local disabled people to identify and address issues and improve the accessibility of its services and facilities.

- 3.2 Twenty six actions from the action plan have been completed over the past three years and four ongoing actions have been transferred onto the Interim Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan for 2010-11 (Appendix B attached).
- 3.3 Significant achievements under the past three years include:
- Completion of 86 Equality Impact Assessments, ensuring the Council's policies and practices are non-discriminatory;
 - Refurbishment of the Council's third floor reception area in consultation with the Gosport Access Group and Disability Forum, which resulted in it being awarded "Excellent" in the Access Awards;
 - Improved disabled access information on all publicity for leisure, recreational and cultural events and commonly used community venues;
 - Improved access and facilities for disabled people in the Council's sheltered housing accommodation;
 - Improved hate crime reporting procedures to ensure incidents to staff and customers on Council property are reported and victims supported;
 - Completion of equalities training by all Council staff which is refreshed every three years;
 - Closer working between disabled people and planners to ensure all new developments in Gosport are fully accessible and comply with building regulations.
- 3.4 As the term of the first Disability Equality Scheme was due to end in February 2010, the Equality and Diversity Steering Group (EDSG) began consultations with local disability groups on the development of an Interim Disability Scheme for 2010-11 in preparation for the extended provisions in the Equality Act which received Royal Assent in April (Appendix A attached).
- 3.5 The Gosport Access Group and Disability Forum supported the proposal to develop an Interim Disability Equality Scheme for 2010-2011 and to develop a single equality scheme and action plan from April 2011 which would include disability equality.
- 3.6 The Council consulted on the development of its Interim Disability Equality Scheme. A targeted consultation exercise was carried out in partnership with the Disability Information Centre, the Crofton Activity Group and the Gosport Access Group and Disability Forum between 1 and 17 February 2010.
- 3.7 Feedback from the exercise was circulated to EDSG members for discussion within their respective Service Units and their responses and suggestions were updated in the draft action plan.
- 3.8 The scheme and updated action plan was circulated to all of the groups consulted, for final comment. The Gosport Access Group and Disability Forum formally endorsed the draft Interim Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan in March.

- 3.9 The Council Management Team approved the final Interim Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan in March. It also approved the timeline for merging the existing separate schemes for Race, Gender and Disability into one single equality scheme and action plan from April 2011 when the duties and requirements for public authorities under the Equality Act come into force. The single equality scheme will still be reviewed annually and its actions will still be monitored quarterly.
- 3.10 The Interim Disability Equality Scheme will continue to be monitored quarterly by the Corporate Policy and Performance Section during 2010. An annual review will take place in Spring 2011 with final report being made to CMT and the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

4.0 CONCLUSION:

- 4.1 The Council Management Team approved this final annual report on the Disability Equality Scheme 2007-10 and the Interim Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan for 2010-2011 (Appendix B).
- 4.2 It also acknowledged that all equality schemes and action plans are 'live' documents which are monitored and updated regularly to identify and address areas of inequality and to reflect the development of new legislation, initiatives and best practices to eliminate discrimination.
- 4.3 It is recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny note this final annual report on the Disability Equality Scheme 2007-10 and note the Interim Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan for 2010-2011 as preparatory work to the development a single equality scheme and action plan from April 2011 compliant with the Equality Act.

Supporting Information

Financial implications:	None for the purposes of this report.
Legal implications:	None for the purposes of this report.
Risk Assessment:	Compliance of Public Bodies to all anti-discrimination legislation is monitored by the Equality and Human Rights Commission. Failure to maintain a Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan which satisfies the general and specific duties required under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 would invite an array of possible enforcement actions against the Council.

**Background papers
including previous
reports:**

The Disability Equality Scheme 2007-2010

Enclosures/Appendices:

Interim Disability Equality Scheme 2010-2011.
Interim Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan
2010-2011

Contact name & tel. no.

Julie Petty, 023 9254 5381



Disability Equality Scheme 2010 – 2011

Gosport Borough Council is committed to equal opportunities for all.

If you need this document in large print, on tape, in Braille or in other languages, please ask.

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Disability Equality Scheme 2010-2011

1.0 Introduction

Despite years of disability equality legislation, disabled people still face significant levels of inequality, discrimination and harassment and do not enjoy the same life opportunities as everyone else. According to the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), examples of inequality include:

- only half (50 per cent) of disabled people of working age are in work compared with 80 per cent of non-disabled people¹
- 23 per cent of disabled people have no qualifications compared with 9 per cent of non-disabled people²
- 30 per cent of disabled people live in relative poverty as opposed to 16 per cent of non-disabled people³
- disabled people are four times more likely to be victims of crime compared to non-disabled people,⁴ and;
- 71 per cent of people with mental health conditions experience hate crimes, harassment and abuse in their communities.⁵

Gosport Borough Council produced its first Disability Equality Scheme in February 2007 along with a three-year action plan which has been monitored quarterly and reviewed annually. Over the past three years, the Council has worked with local disabled people to identify and address issues of local concern and improve its services to disabled people.

A review of its first disability scheme revealed the following main achievements:

- Completion of 76% of actions in the Action Plan, with four ongoing actions featuring in the new action plan;
- Completion of 63 Equality Impact Assessments ensuring the Council's policies and practises promote equality of opportunity;
- Refurbishment of the Council's third floor reception area in consultation with the Gosport Access Group and Disability Forum (referred to as the Access Group hereafter), which resulted in it being awarded "Excellent" in the Access Awards;
- Publication of an easy read version of the Disability Equality Scheme and Race Equality Scheme;

¹ Office for National Statistics Labour Force Survey, Jan–March 2009.

² Ibid.

³ Leonard Cheshire Disability, 2008.

⁴ British Council of Disabled People, 2007.

⁵ MIND, *Another Assault*, 2007.

- Improved disabled access and signage in the Town Hall and in public toilets inline with recommendations from the Access Group;
- Improved disabled access information on all publicity for leisure, recreational and cultural events;
- Improved access and facilities for disabled people in the Council's sheltered housing accommodation and at the cemetery as a result of the Access Group's access audit recommendations;
- Matching of social housing properties suitable for people with disabilities on a case-by-case basis;
- Improved hate crime reporting procedures to ensure any incidents of hate crime to staff and customers on Council property are reported and victims supported;
- Completion of equalities training by all Council staff which is refreshed every three years;
- The use of corporate disability symbols to publicly display information about the accessibility of commonly used venues in the Borough;
- Closer working between disabled people and planners to ensure all new developments in Gosport are fully accessible and comply with building regulations;
- The provision of Braille menus free of charge to cafés and restaurants throughout the Borough;

2.0 Development of this Scheme

This is an Interim Disability Equality Scheme covering the period from February 2010 to April 2011 when the full provisions of the public sector Equality Duty under the proposed Equality Bill are expected to come into effect.

This scheme follows on from the challenges and achievements of the previous scheme to ensure the Council remains vigilant in identifying and addressing any existing or potential areas of discrimination within its service areas against disabled people. The Council recognises this can only be done through the active involvement of local disabled people in service development and implementation.

The proposal for development of this interim scheme and the subsequent merger of the equality action plans from 2011 was approved by the Access Group at its November 2009 meeting. The draft scheme and action plan were circulated to the group in December and posted on the Council's web site. Additional consultation was undertaken with local disability groups to identify areas for improvement and possible new actions. Members were consulted on access throughout the Borough, communication and accessing Council services and community safety. Consultation results have been addressed by the Equality and Diversity Steering Group, and where appropriate have contributed to new actions in the action plan or been taken up with the relevant service area.

During 2010, continued involvement of and consultation with disabled people will

take place to establish local outcomes for disability equality and actions to be undertaken to achieve them over the next three years from 2011-2014.

3.0 Purpose

The purpose of this interim scheme is to ensure the Council is fulfilling its legal obligations under the Disability Equality Duty (DED) to address these issues and deliver real improvements to the lives of disabled people. All public authorities are subject to the specific duty to prepare and publish a disability equality scheme and to revise their schemes every three years to ensure they:

- set out their new disability priorities for the next three years, taking into account all the information they have gathered, any relevant changes to their business and what they have achieved so far, and
- have a new action plan to deliver these priorities over the next three years.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 made it unlawful to discriminate against a person because they have a physical, sensory or mental impairment. Organisations were required to make 'reasonable adjustments' to ensure that disabled people were able to access services and employment. The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 placed greater responsibilities on public authorities citing general and specific duties.

Under the General Duty, local authorities must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act;
- Eliminate harassment that is unlawful under the Act;
- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons;
- Take steps to take into account a person's disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

Under the Specific Duties, local authorities must include the following in their Disability Equality Scheme:

- Prepare, publicise and implement a Disability Equality Scheme which aims to ensure the appropriate standards are achieved;
- Monitor progress;
- Review the scheme every three years;
- Conduct and publish disability impact assessments on policies and functions.

This interim scheme is also intended to demonstrate the Council's commitment to its obligation under the Human Rights Act 2000 and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The scheme aims to ensure the full

participation of disabled people, promote equal opportunities and respect the rights of disabled people. The Council understands that disabled people have just as much right as everyone else to independence and to make their own decisions.

A new disability equality scheme will be incorporated within the Council's Corporate Equalities Policy to take effect from April 2011 to March 2014. The action plans for the statutory equality schemes for disability, race and gender and for those of the other protected groups under the Equality Bill will be merged into a Single Equality Action Plan 2011- 2014 to reflect the new public sector Equality Duty under the Equality Bill.

4.0 Scope

The Council is committed to a comprehensive scheme that mainstreams disability equality practices within human resource processes, service planning and delivery and democratic activity.

This Scheme applies to all employees, volunteers and placements and will be reflected in arrangements with contractors. Members of the Council have to comply with the Code of Conduct which covers equalities issues and by following this policy Members will be able to demonstrate compliance with the Code of Conduct.

Links to other plans, policies and schemes

This scheme reflects the Council's Corporate Plan core values:

- **People** - *“to ensure equal treatment and access for all and recognise the value of diversity. To invest in staff, using best recruitment, retention and development practices.”*
- **Participation** - *“to be a listening organisation which is open and responsive to community needs and provides a focus for community leadership. To value customer and public opinion and to deliver customer focussed services to clearly defined standards.”*
- **Performance** – *“to provide sustainable, efficient, effective, quality services whilst making best use of limited resources and maximising income streams. To ensure data quality, to underpin performance management, priority setting and risk management.”*
- **Partnership** – *“to work with other service providers and our community to share expertise to deliver an efficient co-ordinated approach. To increase access to funding opportunities.”*
- **Political Processes** – *“to use the political processes to constructively*

debate and develop sustainable solutions to long term problems and strategic issues which face the community and Council.”

This scheme is linked to the Council's other equality schemes for race and gender and its Corporate Equalities Policy which demonstrate the Council's commitment to mainstreaming equality for all protected groups through the following statement:

Gosport Borough Council is committed to equal opportunities for all and recognises the value of diversity.

As both a service provider and employer, the Council aims to mainstream fairness and equality into every aspect of its services and employment practices, and to remove barriers to ensure equal opportunity.

It aims to ensure that no person receives less favourable treatment on the basis of race, disability, gender, gender re-assignment, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief or marital status.

The scheme also links to the Council's commitment to strengthening community cohesion and reflects work to deliver the following strategic outcomes within the Community Cohesion Strategy 2009-2012 through its Local Strategic Partnership, the Gosport Partnership:

Outcome 1: *Everyone is treated fairly and has similar life chances.*

Outcome 2: *Everyone benefits from a safer, healthier environment and stronger local economy.*

Outcome 3: *Everyone is respected and good relationships between people are encouraged.*

Outcome 4: *Everyone can get involved locally and make a positive contribution to the Borough.*

5.0 The Local Impact of Disability

The following is intended to provide some information about the impact of disability on local people based on the latest available information.

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 defines a disabled person as “someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial, long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

Local Population

Gosport has a population of 76,415 people according to the 2001 Census, with 12,844 people registering themselves as having a limiting long term illness, including disability. This equates to 17% of the population in Gosport which is below the national for England of 18%.⁶

It should be noted, however, that this is based on a self-assessment in which people were asked whether they had a long-term illness, health problem or disability which limits their daily activities or work they can do, including problems that are due to old age.

Local Employment

The table below shows the economic activity rate in Gosport and England as a proportion of the total population of working age (16 – 74) at the time of the 2001 census. The employment rate in Gosport is higher than the England average. 2082 people said they were permanently sick or disabled, which as a percentage of the workforce is still below the England average.

Status	Number of Gosport	% of Residents in Gosport	% of Residents in England
In Employment*	36041	65.7	60.9
Economically inactive	15,932	2.7	3.4
Permanently sick and disabled	2,082	3.8	5.3

Source: 2001 Census.

* In employment refers to people in full time work, part time work and self employed. This table does not include the number of people who are students, retired, looking after home/family or economically active – other.

National employment statistics show there is an imbalance between disabled people and non-disabled people in employment. There are currently 1.3 million disabled people in the UK who are available for and want to work⁷. Only 50% of disabled people of working age are in work compared with 80% of non-disabled people⁶.

The rate of public sector employment growth for disabled people was four times the growth rate for their non-disabled counterparts⁸. The bulk of the job gains were in education and health. However, disabled people were less likely to be employed by the public sector than non-disabled people.

⁶ 2001 Census, Hampshire figures include Portsmouth and Southampton

⁷ Office for National Statistics Labour Force Survey, Jan – March 2009

⁸ Disabled people in public sector employment, 1998 – 2004 Michael Hirst and Patricia Thornton.

Council Employment

The Council collects and monitors information on the profile of its workforce and job applicants. The table below shows the number of disabled Council staff and their respective pay grades for the previous three years:

Year	Grade 1-3	Grade 4-6	Grade 7-9	Grade 10 and above
2009	4	13	4	2
2008	2	7	4	2
2007	3	9	3	2

In 2008/09, 23 Council employees classed themselves as having a disability, representing 5.9% of the workforce, an increase from the previous two years. It should be noted that a number of the employees declaring a disability have been with the Council for a number of years, but have only made the declaration recently, or have recently developed a disability.

A monitor is also undertaken of grievances lodged and disciplinary hearings held. In the last three years, there have been two disciplinary hearings relating to employees with a disability – these hearings involved issues unrelated to the disability in each case. No grievances have been lodged by employees with a disability in the last three years.

Gosport Borough Council promotes equality in its recruitment practices. Jobs are advertised on a Hampshire Portal, which has helped to attract a more diverse range of participants, including those with a disability. Short-listing panels are unaware of any personal characteristics of the job applicants including disability, so decisions are made solely on how well they meet the essential and desirable qualifications for the job.

The Council also works in partnership with the Shaw Trust, a national disability charity, and offers to try to provide non-paid work experience to disabled people on request.

Hate Crime

Disability related hate crime and harassment is a serious issue and has a major impact on the victim undermining their safety and security. Everyone has the right to live free from fear and harassment. The Disability Rights Commission's Attitudes and Awareness Survey (2003) revealed that 22% of disabled

respondents had experienced harassment in public because of their impairment.⁹ Incidents of harassment were also more acute among 15-34 year olds with 33% of this group of disabled people experiencing harassment.⁸

Reported incidences of hate crime are recorded nationally and data is collected at a local level. Incidences are also recorded by equality strand. However, it is recognised nationally that hate crime is often under reported and the motive of the crime is often ambiguous. Therefore, details of incidents of hate crime on the basis of disability collected by Hampshire Constabulary are not conclusive. Incidents of hate crime are discussed between members of the Task and Community Co-ordination Group (TCCG), an established forum within the Safer Community Partnership regularly to share information and provide a joined-up approach to dealing with all forms of hate crime.

Gosport Borough Council takes hate crime very seriously. The council revised its hate crime reporting procedures in 2009 and has a system in place to report any incidents of hate crime occurring to staff or members of the public on council property or experienced during the course of council business. Information about how to report hate crime incidents and the reporting forms are available on the staff Infonet and briefing sessions have been provided to line managers.

A member of the Community Safety Team follows up each report and liaises with the police, TCCG, or the Council's Equality and Diversity Steering Group to ensure appropriate action is taken. To date, no hate crime incidents where the victim or perpetrator has been known to have a disability have been reported by staff or members of the public.

Increasing awareness among Council staff of the kinds of harassment and abuse people with disabilities can face in their daily lives is a priority. In September 2009, the Hate Crime Group, comprised of members from a self-advocacy group for local disabled persons, produced a DVD depicting what disability hate crime looks and feels like, many examples based on their personal experiences. This DVD was shown to many Council officers as well as representatives from other local services to raise awareness of disability hate crime. The Council will build on this initial work to find meaningful ways to address disability hate crime with those who are experiencing it.

Satisfaction with Local Area and Services

National research suggests individuals with disabilities or long-term illnesses are more likely to have negative perceptions of community cohesion.¹⁰

⁹ Disability Rights Commission, Attitudes and Awareness Survey (2009)

¹⁰ Cohesion Delivery Framework Overview, Communities and Local Government, July 2008

The Place Survey is a national bi-annual measure to assess how people view their local area and services, and was introduced in 2008. A randomly selected target group in each local authority area in England was asked a series of questions about their local community. In Gosport, 1,451 people responded to the survey and these results were analysed by genders, ages, ethnicity, whether disabled or not and by the ward they came from, to determine if any of these factors affected local perceptions. 470 out of 1,451 respondents identified themselves as having a longstanding or limiting illness or disability and 264 of those said it limited their activities. These response figures are small, so analysis can be indicative only of perceptions of people with a long-standing or long-standing and limiting condition.

The most significant results were from people with long-term and limiting conditions. They were most satisfied with the way the Council runs things, slightly more satisfied with their local hospital than those with long-standing but not limiting conditions. They most felt that people not treating each other with respect was a problem, but most felt they were treated with respect by local public services.

Analysis of Place Survey responses from 2008 have been shared with members of the Gosport Partnership and used in the development of the Partnership's Community Cohesion Strategy and will be compared against Place Survey responses from 2010.

6.0 Involving Disabled People

Understanding the views and experiences of local disabled people are at the heart of the Council's approach to delivering disability equality. The Council is keen to work with local groups and networks to understand and to address their issues and concerns.

Gosport Access Group and Disability Forum

The Access Group formed in the early 90's and have had a close working relationship with the Council for many years. Their main aim is to create awareness about the effects of disability and promote better opportunities for disabled people in Gosport, particularly around access to the built environment. Direct involvement of this group and its links with other disability groups have helped develop our initial disability equality scheme and action plan.

The Access Group has been consulted on the development of this new scheme and has suggested actions where they believe improvements can be made.

One area of further development is the establishment of a regular disability drop-in session at the Town Hall which would enable local disabled people to meet

directly with the relevant Council officers to address any issues about Council services or facilities.

Fareham Disability Forum

An independent group called Fareham Disability Forum have recently formed. Members include individual disabled people and representatives from local disability groups with the aim of working together to improve the lives of disabled people and assist them to live as independently as possible. This group is attended by the Council's Access Officer, a shared post with Fareham Borough Council, and will act as a vehicle for wider consultation on disability issues as many local services operate across both Gosport and Fareham.

Connect Advocacy

This service works to enable people with learning disabilities in Gosport and Fareham to have a voice and be heard. The service is founded on Self Advocacy and its self advocacy group has over 60 members of all ages and representing a wide range of individual needs. Connect Advocacy challenges the view that self advocacy is only for people who use verbal communication and offers support to enable all members to participate.

Self Advocates are members of the Connect Board and are active representatives on Hampshire wide and local boards and forums, giving voice to needs of disabled people and challenging perceptions and practices about people with learning disabilities. Members choose what issues or projects they want to undertake. A recent project undertaken by this group has been the production of a DVD where they have portrayed their experiences of bullying and hate crime. The DVD has become a powerful tool to raise awareness of disability hate to a wide audience of both statutory and voluntary service providers. Connect works closely with the Gosport Access Group and Disability Forum to inform the Council's development and implementation of policies and practices.

Hampshire Independent Equality Forum

The establishment of Hampshire's first independent equality forum brings together individuals from special interest groups (e.g. race, disability, gender, transgender, age, lesbian, gay and bisexual, and religion and belief etc.), organisations and existing forums and networks/forums that represent these groups, and public sector organisations across Hampshire.

Its vision is to:

To improve the quality of life for all by providing a 'safe' space where all voices can be heard unconditionally to empower people and promote equality in Hampshire.

Its main aims are to raise awareness of equality and diversity, challenge discrimination and make real positive change happen.

The need to create a Hampshire Forum was identified during research carried out by the Diversity Network Project 2006-2008, a project led by Community Action Hampshire on behalf of the Hampshire Voluntary Sector Consortium. All 11 District Councils as well as the unitary authorities of Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight have endorsed the establishment of a Hampshire Forum to enable local groups and networks share ideas and issues across the county and engage with statutory providers across the county to help establish consistent good equality practice.

The Hampshire Forum will become active during 2010 when an initial steering group has been formed to set strategic priorities and Forum members have been confirmed. Its structure will also include a statutory bodies focus group comprised of representatives from statutory organisations and sub group to work on specific projects.

Future work involves working with local voluntary and community organisations and statutory partners to establish a Gosport Equality Forum which would serve to develop stronger communication links between local groups and service providers.

Crofton Activity Group

Crofton Activity Group is run by Adult Services for people with physical and learning disabilities that live in Gosport or Fareham. The group meets twice a week and is open to all age ranges. It operates as a day centre with activities organised for group members.

The group has been consulted on the development of this new scheme and has suggested actions where they believe improvements can be made.

Mystery Shopping and Access Audits

Local disabled people have been actively engaged in assessing whether public and commercial premises and services are accessible to a range of disabilities, through conducting 'mystery shopper' exercises and helping to conduct access audits. They provide local traders with practical advice and guidance to improve the accessibility of their shops and services, offering support e.g. one group providing Braille translations of café menus, and recognizing when improvements have been made e.g. local access awards.

They work with Council officers, police and others to improve the safety and accessibility of public areas. Their direct involvement has informed equality impact assessments of Council policies, strategies and services and challenged

service managers to make adjustments and improvements to meet the needs of disabled people.

7.0 Consulting with Disabled People

Council Consultation Activity

The Council's key consultation principle is 'inclusiveness' to ensure all sections of the community have an opportunity to express their views.

A comprehensive consultation policy was produced in 2007 to provide information and toolkits to ensure effective and meaningful consultation with stakeholders on proposed policies, services and quality of life issues.

The Consultation Policy also establishes standards for the collection of demographic data and requires all surveys to contain specific questions regarding accessibility of services. Data analysis requirements are stated as well to ensure that data is used to monitor trends in service delivery and customer satisfaction for equality target groups.

The Council has adopted a coordinated approach to consultations throughout its service areas by requiring all planned consultations to be registered with and approved by Council Management Team. A Consultation Finder can log all planned and completed consultations on the Council's web site in order to avoid duplication of effort, encourage joint working and share results to inform service planning and delivery.

The Council as an employer has a consultation agreement with UNISON and utilises both informal and formal consultation mechanisms to ensure their full involvement, on behalf of staff, in all relevant employment issues. UNISON is also represented on the Council's Equality and Diversity Group.

Consultation with Partners and Networks

The Council recognises its leadership role in promoting equality within any of the partnerships in which it participates, ensuring that the general duty of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 is applied to all aspects of the partnerships' work.

The Council, through representation by its officers or elected members, plays an active role in numerous partnerships, networks and specialist forums. These provide opportunities to share local knowledge and best practice with a diverse range of community groups and statutory and voluntary organisations that provide local services and support. Partnerships and networks also provide valuable vehicles through which the Council can consult with local people and organisations.

Key Partners and Networks

These include:

Gosport Disability Information Centre – The centre provides information on all aspects of disability including equipment, leisure facilities, support groups, training and legislation. The centre works directly with disabled people of all ages, carers, local business and both statutory. The centre also coordinates the Driving Force service where voluntary drivers provide transport to disabled people unable to access public transport. During its 2008-09 operational year, the centre received 456 referrals, 180 of which concerned transport enquiries and 83 concerned equipment enquiries.

Gosport BME Well Being Network – Established in 2008, members of this network includes approximately 20 different local service providers from both the voluntary and statutory sectors. The overall aim of the group is to promote positive well being within the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) community of Gosport by sharing good practice, information and understanding with a range of agencies in health and social care. This network works to increase the cultural capability of all services to meet the mental health and well being needs of the local BME community and to provide opportunities where members of BME communities can directly engage with local providers about their individual needs.

Hampshire Equality Network- This network is brings together officers with responsibility for equality and diversity policy development from statutory and voluntary sector organisations across Hampshire to support them in their work. The purpose of the group is to share information about diverse groups to better understand their needs, share current best practice in both employment and service delivery, ensure the diversity profile of our communities across Hampshire are understood and influence others at the strategic level both County wide and locally such as through the Hampshire Local Area Agreement and local strategic partnerships.

8.0 Access to Information and Services

The Council is committed to equal opportunities for all and to providing information and services to meet accessibility needs regardless of disability. The Customer Care Handbook is a corporate reference document providing guidance on communicating with customers through face-to-face contact, by telephone, email and letter and meeting their needs for interpreting and translation services, alternate formats for print and electronic information, and sensory and physical aids to access services and events.

The Council's web site and community magazine, Coastline, which reaches nearly all households in the Borough, are other vehicles through which the Council provides information and invites feedback on its services and performance. New information about services and events is also circulated through local libraries, community centres, and promoted through partner organisations.

The needs and views of staff are obtained through regular meetings between staff and managers, and through an annual staff survey.

9.0 Partnership and Procurement Arrangements

Working with Partners

The Council works closely with other public authorities and voluntary and community sector organisations in a variety of partnership arrangements.

It recognises its statutory obligations to comply with the duties of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 also apply to all aspects of partnership working. It also recognises its leadership role in promoting equal opportunities in all its partnership arrangements.

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 applies to public authorities but places 'indirect requirements' on contractors and organisations with which a public authority may work in partnership or fund.

Procurement

The duty to promote disability equality applies to procurement. Where an external supplier carries out a function on the Council's behalf, the Council recognises it remains responsible for meeting the duty. All contracted services and functions undergo the Equality Impact Assessment process.

Contractors who intend to supply goods or services on behalf of the Council must provide evidence that they have systems in place to ensure equal access and treatment in their own employment practices and in the services they provide. The Council provides information on its commitment to equality practices as contained within its Corporate Equalities Policy and Equality Schemes as part of its Invitation to Tender documentation and ensures these commitments are part of its Contractual Agreements.

Post-contract monitoring is undertaken to assess equality performance including reports of any complaints from service users (including any related to harassment) and service audits to check on any problems in relation to the equalities in the specification.

Funding to Local Groups and Organisations

A Funding Code of Good Practice has been developed between the Council and local voluntary and community sector groups in Gosport which have signed up to the One Compact for Hampshire. It establishes specific undertakings for voluntary and community sector groups with regard to any Council funding which include:

- adopt policies and practices to ensure equality in all activities and ensure the appropriate involvement of service users, and
- recognise that Gosport Borough Council applies equality standards to all of its activities and that it requires organisations with which it has contractual arrangements to do likewise.

10.0 Monitoring Progress and Achievements

As both a service provider and as an employer, the Council uses a wide range of tools for monitoring its policies, functions and services for compliance with the general and specific duties relating to disability equality and track equality improvements.

Equality Monitoring Framework

This framework establishes a corporate understanding and approach to equalities monitoring across its service areas. It establishes a corporate rationale and internal mechanisms to determine what should be monitored and where and how monitoring should be applied.

Effective equalities monitoring enables the Council better understand the different needs of different service users and who may not be using certain services. Regular monitoring and review of this information minimises the potential for discrimination against any group of people and informs the design and delivery of local services which are inclusive and fair.

The framework establishes a Corporate Equalities Monitoring Standard which requires the capture and monitoring of data compliant with current legislation. The standard provides a template for survey monitoring to ensure consistency across the Council.

Section managers are required to assess and report on their compliance to the Equality Monitoring Framework annually and to address any non-compliance found through actions tracked in their service improvement plans (SIPs).

Additionally, the Council adds a question to its surveys regarding accessibility of its services. This is used to measure satisfaction with access to Council services

and asks those who are dissatisfied to comment further. Qualitative analysis of any further comments and of all 'other comments' (which is generally the final question in the Council's surveys) is carried out. If there are any comments related to equalities or diversity these are specifically reviewed (even if they are not a key theme) and reported to the Corporate Policy and Performance Section in addition to being considered within the Service Unit. These comments are also reported to the Equality and Diversity Steering Group as part of its overview of equality monitoring arrangements.

Survey analysis is generally carried out either by consultants or the Corporate Policy and Performance Section. If it is carried out in the Service Units it is done in accordance with the Corporate Consultation Policy and can be subject to scrutiny by the Corporate Policy and Performance Section.

Equality Impact Assessments

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a tool to ensure that Council policies, strategies and functions are carried out fairly and without discrimination to anyone.

The EIA process helps the Council understand how what it does affects different groups of people. Inequalities still exist within society and there are certain groups which historically have experienced more disadvantage and discrimination than others.

Existing policies, strategies and functions are assessed at least every three years and planned ones undergo an EIA during their development to ensure their impact on all equality groups are adequately considered before adoption of the new policy strategy or function. The Council maintains a three-year rolling schedule of EIAs to be completed. They are reviewed by members of the Equality and Diversity Steering Group who may require actions to be completed before the EIA is finalized. Completed EIAs are posted on the Council's web site.

Service Level Equality Objectives

These are actions required at Section level for improving equality practice in some aspect of that Section's remit. Service level equality objectives may be identified from a number of sources. These include actions required as the result of an equality impact assessment of a policy, strategy or function; actions required to meet compliance to the equality monitoring framework; actions to address formal and informal consultation responses; and actions identified through compliments and complaints.

Section managers are required to identify their service level equality objectives and take actions, tracked through their Service Improvement Plans to achieve

them. Quarterly performance reports are presented to the Performance Sub Group and reports are prepared for the Equality and Diversity Steering Group. to review progress and achievements across all equality groups

Compliments and Complaints

Compliments and complaints received about services also help to identify the impact of good practices and any adverse impact of existing practices.

The Council is committed to providing excellent service to all of its customers and wants to know if any aspect of its service, procedures or performance is unsatisfactory. It responds to complaints as quickly and as efficiently as possible from customers and considers their suggestions for improvements.

The formal three-stage complaints procedure is detailed on the Council web site and available in print formats from the Town Hall.

In addition to the service areas responding to complaints, the Council Management Team regularly reviews summary reports on complaints received by the Council with a focus on any related to equality and diversity issues. These are then reported to Equality and Diversity Steering Group for further review and recommendations for corporate actions to address.

The Standards and Governance Committee also receives and scrutinises reports on complaints received to assess for further actions required to address them.

These corporate protocols for monitoring and review should ensure the Council is meeting both its statutory duties and organisational commitment to promoting equality and diversity throughout its services and practices.

External Accreditation and Assessment

The Council has attained external accreditation and awards that indicate high standards in performance or service delivery e.g. Investors in People, Charter Mark. The documentation required to prove the standard has been achieved can often include collecting evidence that a particular service area or the Council, as a whole, has demonstrated good equality practices. Collection of this evidence in order to maintain an accreditation or award can serve as an ongoing monitoring and assessment tool for equalities good practice.

Personnel Management and Information Systems

Personnel collect and monitor extensive information to ensure equality standards are maintained throughout its staff management processes. Profile information on the Council's workforce, including disability information, is routinely collected and monitored. Monitoring the staff grading structure through its Job Evaluation Steering Group and completing an Equal Pay Audit every two years help to ensure pay structure and grading of jobs are applied fairly.

Personal review processes and training assessment processes provide mechanisms for monitoring equality of opportunity in the development of the Council's workforce. Recruitment and selection data is also monitored, as are disciplinary and grievance issues. Information from exit interviews is also analysed to identify any employment issues.

Personal Reviews

Personal reviews provide an opportunity for managers to discuss with staff areas for performance improvement with respect to customer care, service delivery and any aspect of the Council's Corporate Equalities Policy. Each member of staff has his/her own personal training plan that is reviewed annually to help identify training needs and allocate training resources. Refresher training on the personal review process is offered regularly to managers. A range of training is available to staff from internal and external sources.

Team Meetings

Equal Opportunities – 'Employment and Service Delivery Issues' is a corporate standard item on team meeting agendas and acts as a vehicle for raising and discussing equalities issues identified within teams. Managers can seek further information or guidance from the Personnel Section, Equality and Diversity Steering Group, Council Management Team and the Corporate Policy and Performance Section, to address issues raised in team meetings.

11.0 Training and Awareness Raising

The Council's Corporate Learning and Development Group identifies corporate training needs and delivery mechanisms for Council staff and is involved in the delivery of training sessions and events for staff on a wide range of issues. The Equality and Diversity Steering Group liaises with this group to design and deliver training on equality legislation and corporate equality processes.

Specific guidance on undertaking equality impact assessments for developing and existing policies, strategies and functions is available on the staff Infonet and service managers and lead officers tasked with completing high priority assessments receive further support from members of the Equality and Diversity Steering Group and the Corporate Policy and Performance Section.

Staff and elected members also understand how this equality scheme furthers the Council's goal of mainstreaming good equality standards and practices throughout all of the Council's activity. The Equality and Diversity Steering Group review the completed training evaluation forms to determine and plan additional

training if needed and evaluation is also carried out on a more individual basis by managers.

All new staff receives induction training that includes information and advice about the Council's Corporate Equalities Policy, equal opportunities policy, and the Equality Schemes. All staff are required to complete at least two modules of equalities training and all people managers must complete a third management module. Staff must renew their training at least every three years.

The staff Infonet provides a vehicle for disseminating guidance and toolkits to promote equality and inclusive approaches to all Council activity. The Council's Customer Care Handbook has been updated to include guidance and resources for its staff for meeting the diverse communication needs of their customers.

Bi-annual personal reviews provide an opportunity for managers to discuss with staff individual training needs or areas of performance improvement with respect to any area of equality. Each member of staff has his/her own personal training plan that is updated annually. Individual training needs are met through a variety of internal and external providers.

12.0 Review of this Scheme

The Council considers its Disability Equality Scheme as well as its other Equality Schemes to be 'live' documents. This scheme will be adapted over the next year to incorporate the provisions of the single equality duty in the Equality Bill expected to come into force in 2011, but the action plan will still be monitored quarterly and reported on at the end of this scheme.

During 2010 the existing statutory equality schemes for disability, race and gender will be merged with the equality provision for age, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and religion and belief within the Council's Corporate Equalities Policy. It will have a merged three year action plan covering 2011-2014 and be updated every three years to ensure compliance with current legislation and responsiveness to local needs.

This single equality policy will still be consulted on with the local community and its action plan will be monitored quarterly and reported on to the Equality and Diversity Steering Group. An annual report will be made to both to Council Management Team and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

APPENDIX A

Action Plan 2010-2011

This action plan was developed as the result of consultation with disabled people, local voluntary and community organisations and public service providers.

1. OUTCOME: Improved access to Council buildings.

	What will we achieve	Whose job it is	When they will do it by
1a	Ensure continued compliance with the Disability Audit recommendations for the Town Hall in line with the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.	Central Services Section with support from Access Officer	Assess at checkpoint meeting June 2010

2. OUTCOME: Improve the safety and accessibility of disabled people in the urban environment.

	What will we achieve	Whose job it is	When they will do it by
2a	Improve awareness among local business and service providers about Disability Discrimination Act requirements and local access issues via business newsletter and website.	Access Officer	March 2010
2b	Consult with disabled people when compiling programmes of leisure and cultural activities to ensure they are inclusive	Leisure and cultural services officers in co-operation with Access Officer	September 2010
2c	Consult with disabled people over design and facilities at the new Holbrook Leisure Centre	Leisure and cultural services in co-operation with the Access Officer	March 2011
2d	Involve disabled people in the design stages of the new Rowner development to ensure it meets their needs	Access Officer and The Access Group in liaison with the Rowner Neighbourhood	Ongoing during 2010

		Manager	
2e	Promote GADSAD (Gosport and District Sports Association for the Disabled) and Adult Multi Sports sessions locally to increase participation	Leisure Development Officer	July 2010
2f	Promote existing local sports activities for children and young disabled people to increase participation.	Leisure Development Officer	July 2010

3. OUTCOME: Increased awareness and understanding of disability issues through training, awareness raising events and targeted communications.

	What will we achieve	Whose job it is	When they will do it by
3a	Set up a fortnightly drop-in sessions for disabled residents/carers/local organisations to discuss issues of concern and also act as a consultation group to ensure inclusive decisions/policies are made.	Access Officer	Assess in March 2010.
3b	Undertake an awareness campaign to help recruit new members to the Gosport Access Group and Disability Forum.	Access Group with support from Corporate Policy section and Access Officer.	Assess in March 2010.
3c	Remind staff to comply with corporate design guidance by placing a prompt on the Remote Printer electronic request forms.	Reprographics	June 2010

APPENDIX B

Action Plan 2010-2011

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GOSPORT BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 10th June 2010

ITEM FOR DISCUSSION

TITLE: Gosport's Sustainable Community Strategy – Progress Update

AUTHOR: Chief Executive

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with a progress update on Gosport's Sustainable Community Strategy and its Local Strategic Partnership.

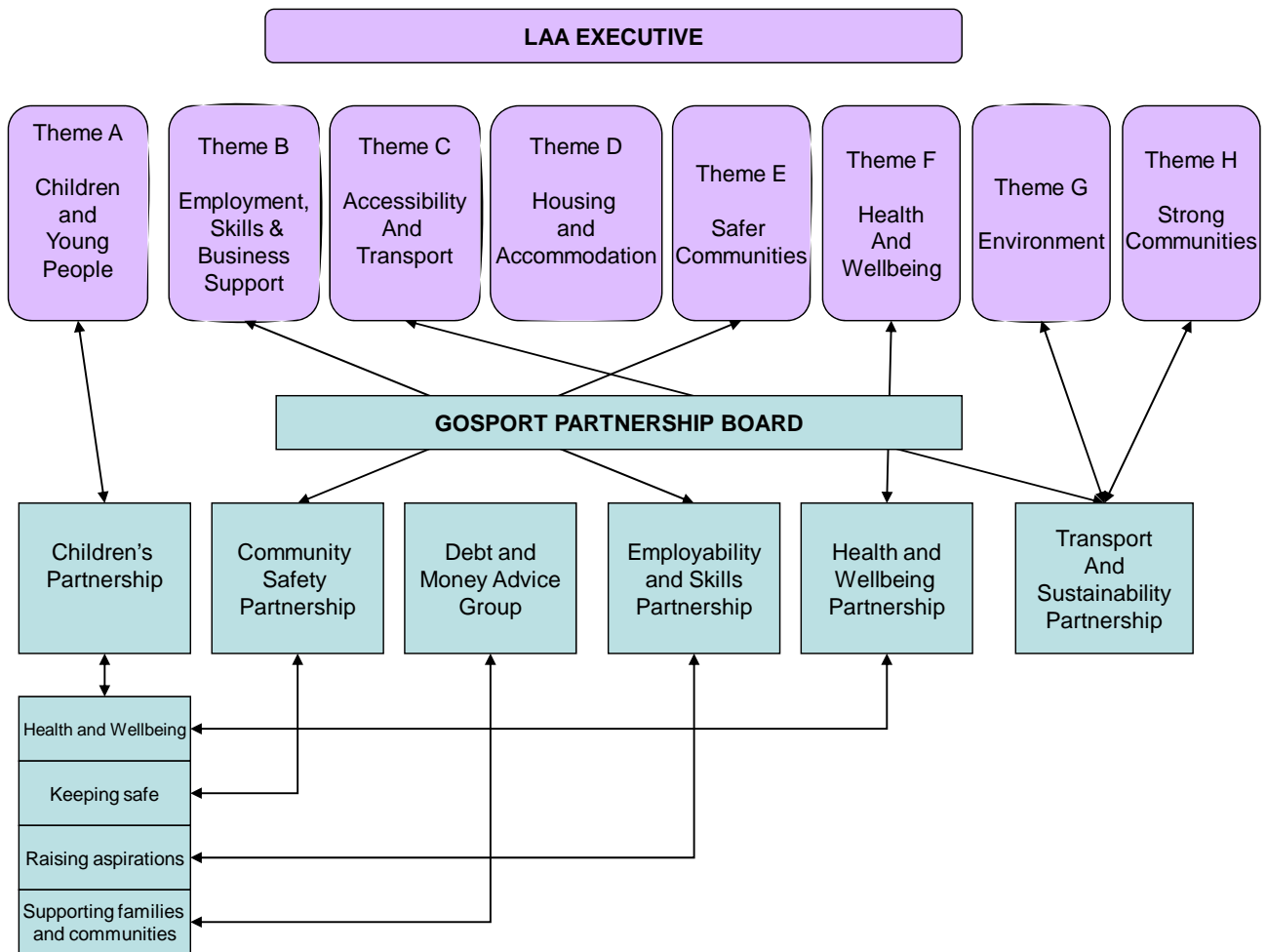
2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Gosport Borough Council has a statutory duty to prepare a Community Strategy through the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).
- 2.2 Gosport Borough Council is a key partner in the LSP, which is known as the Gosport Partnership. The Partnership also includes representatives from Churches Together, Gosport Voluntary Action, Government Office for the South East, Groundwork Solent, Hampshire Constabulary, Hampshire County Council, NHS Hampshire, Ministry of Defence, Portsmouth Housing Association, South East England Development Agency and St Vincent College.
- 2.3 A new Sustainable Community Strategy has been produced by the LSP and this has been subject to scrutiny as it is a policy framework document:
- The Overview and Scrutiny Committee scrutinised the approach and process for reviewing and revising the Community Strategy in October 2006.
 - The Committee then scrutinised the new Sustainable Community Strategy in September 2007 and also requested six monthly progress updates be provided.
 - The Council adopted the Community Strategy in November 2007.

3.0 REPORT

3.1 LSP Structure

3.1.1 The structure of the LSP showing links to Hampshire's Local Area Agreement is set out in the diagram below.



3.2 Action plan

3.2.1 An action plan has been developed to assist with the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

3.2.2 The action plan focuses on strategic priorities as identified from the 'Make your Mark' consultation in 2006 and baseline data evidence:

- Reduce traffic congestion
- Increase employment opportunities
- Health and Wellbeing

- 3.2.3 The strategic priority, reduce traffic congestion, is being underpinned by the work of the Gosport Transport and Sustainability Partnership (GTSP) which continues to work on its changing travel behaviour campaign to encourage people out of cars and on to more sustainable forms of transport. The GTSP has recently started to record hits to www.travelgosport.co.uk and within the past month there have been 278 visits. 85% of those are from new visitors and the most popular pages are the bus timetables, ferry information and cycle maps. The GTSP will continue to publicise the site and monitor usage. The GTSP has been successful in securing funding from Sustrans to create a new cycle path along Stokes Bay to improve access to Bay House School and therefore reduce school run congestion. The GTSP has also secured funding from the Local Area Agreement to improve cycle storage at the Gosport Ferry. Agreement has also finally been secured from Hampshire Street Lighting for the GTSP to place banners along the A32 on the new lamp posts when they are in place. The banners will promote sustainable transport and planning permission from the Council will be sought.
- 3.2.5 The strategic priority, increase employment opportunities, is being underpinned by the work of the Employability and Skills Partnership. The LSP Board has provided £4,750 funding towards an employability and skills research project to ensure that we have a robust and comprehensive evidence base of need and current employment and skills provision in Gosport. This is necessary to effectively identify and address gaps and influence local and sub-regional policy and interventions. The research project directly supports LAA Theme B - Employment, Skills and Business Support. One of the outputs so far from this funding is an online skills directory at www.go-gosport.co.uk. The Board will receive a report at its June meeting on other outputs from the research and what needs to happen next.
- 3.2.4 At its March 2010 meeting, the Board agreed that the newly reconfigured Children's Partnership should start to develop actions to tackle both teenage pregnancy and child obesity. The Board will receive an update at its June meeting.

3.3 Additional projects

- 3.3.1 The LSP, through its thematic subgroups, is also currently working on the following projects:
- 3.3.2 **Gosport Savers Project**
The Board has funded the continuation of the credit union service at Rowner 2010/11. At the last count in March there have been 105 and 43 joiners in PO13 and PO12 respectively, representing a growth in membership of 194% and 81%. These new people have taken a total of £25,249.17 in loans. This saved them £600 per £1000 borrowed when compared with the doorstep lenders, giving an investment in the individuals and area of £14,729. This project directly supports several LAA priorities including life chances for young people, fuel poverty and reducing health inequalities.
- 3.3.3 **Greening Campaign**

The GTSP has secured funding from Gosport Borough Council and Hampshire County Council to launch two greening campaigns in Gosport to help motivate people to reduce their energy consumption and therefore lower their personal and community carbon footprint. The first Greening Campaign is to be launched in Lee on Solent this autumn and the area for the second campaign is currently being reviewed. This also links in to the reduce congestion priority for the LSP and also the community cohesion work being developed by Gosport Borough Council and the LSP. This project will support several LAA priorities including Theme G Environment and Theme H Strong Communities.

3.3.4 Community Cohesion

The LSP Board has, through a community bidding process, allocated £27,800 funding to local projects so far. These projects include; more activities for older people; events for forces families; trips for blind and visually impaired residents; youth centres and the Summer Passport Scheme which provides free activities for 11-18 year olds during the summer holidays. This directly supports LAA themes A, E, F and H.

3.4 Performance management

3.4.1 The LSP has finalised its Performance Management Framework and conducts an annual review each September of its performance and its strategic priorities.

3.4.2 In order to facilitate this review, the LSP continues to provide resource into updating Gosport's Sustainability Profile in partnership with the Council's Planning Policy team.

3.5 Future challenges

3.5.1 The LSP's key challenges in delivering the Sustainable Community Strategy over the next year will be:

- Providing support to the LSP – public sector funding cuts could affect resources.
- Developing an approach to Total Place and seizing the opportunity to be the main driver of this in Gosport.

All information on the LSP can be found at www.gosportpartnership.co.uk.

4.0 CONCLUSION

4.1 An action plan for the Sustainable Community Strategy has been produced and tangible outcomes have already taken place and more are under development. A Performance Management Framework has been finalised and two annual reviews have taken place. It is recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes this report.

Supporting Information

Financial implications: None.

Legal implications: None.

Risk Assessment: Failure to deliver actions in respect of the Sustainable Community Strategy poses a risk to partnership working and reputation management.

Background papers including previous reports:

- A. PowerPoint Presentation to Scrutiny Committee October 2006
- B. Report to Scrutiny Committee September 2007
- C. Report to Scrutiny Committee March 2008
- D. Report to Scrutiny Committee September 2008
- E. Report to Scrutiny Committee March 2009
- F. Report to Scrutiny Committee November 2009

Enclosures/Appendices:

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GOSPORT BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 10 June 2010

ITEM FOR DISCUSSION

TITLE: Gosport's Cultural Strategy Planning

AUTHOR: Director of Planning and Economic Development Services

1 Purpose

- 1.1** The Cultural Strategy is a policy framework document and therefore subject to scrutiny. This report outlines the approach to the formation of the strategy and the work undertaken to understand the expectations and outcomes of the Strategy. The Cultural Strategy is a collaboration between Gosport Borough Council and Hampshire County Council using the services of Audiences of South.

2 Background

- 2.1** The existing Gosport Cultural Strategy expired at the end of 2007. The new cultural strategy will provide an audit of Gosport people's aspirations and cultural usage, identify cultural provision gaps, and suggest a strategic framework for the delivery of a number of emerging cultural opportunities throughout the borough in the period 2010 to 2020: 'The 2020 Vision'.

3 Proposal for the creation of a new Gosport Cultural Strategy

- 3.1** 'Culture' is a broad term that embraces many things. In relation to the proposed Cultural Strategy the term embraces the many detailed understandings of the term 'culture' such as photography, dance, public art, heritage, libraries, museums, and so on. However, in the light of sailing's predominance in the cultural climate of Gosport the Strategy will also

reference this activity. Sporting activities will be referenced by the Physical Activities Strategy.

3.2 The production of the strategy will be owned locally by Gosport Borough Council with input from Hampshire County Council - which has agreed to co-fund the initiative - and will be facilitated by Audiences South, the arts-audience development agency for south and south-east England.

3.3 Consultation will form the foundation of the creation of the Strategy, and the following groups will be consulted:

- Gosport residents
- Stakeholders, including:
 - Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust
 - Our Enterprise - Haslar
 - Thorngate Halls
 - Gosport Discovery Centre
 - Search Museum
 - Gosport's marina operators
 - Tourism South East
- Gosport Borough Council and Hampshire County Council councillors and officers

3.4 Audiences South's proposal is as follows:

3.5 "The aim of the overall research plan is to provide Gosport Borough Council with an up-to-date situation analysis of cultural provision in Gosport and its environs, notably Portsmouth."

3.6 Their proposal outlines a process as follows:

- 3.6.1** • An understanding of the cultural participation in Gosport
- 3.6.2** • An audit of current funded and other major cultural provision
- 3.6.3** • An understanding of latent cultural and tourism opportunities in Gosport

3.7 The new Cultural Strategy will be finalised by November 2010 and its associated production costs will be in the order of £20,000. Hampshire County Council has indicated that they will be able to contribute £10,000.

3.8 The Cultural Strategy will refer to the emerging Economic Development Strategy and the Tourism Strategy, and will present baseline data to enable prioritisation of Council resources.

3.9 The Cultural Strategy will also provide complimentary data to the PUSH/Tourism South East-funded Solent Corridor proposal the aim of which

is to audit and develop sailing's contribution to the visitor economy on the south coast, and the Cultural Conference which is planned for Gosport/Portsmouth Harbour in the latter half of 2010.

4 Corporate Plan Implications

- 4.1** The production and implementation of a Cultural Strategy will play a significant role in contributing to the delivery of the Corporate Plan as follows:

Places

'Regenerating Gosport's Town Centre and Waterfront' by highlighting opportunities for new cultural investment in that area;

People

'Improving Leisure Opportunities and Facilities' through the expansion of our programme of leisure and arts based events;

Prosperity

'Promoting Tourism Opportunities' by developing our assets and proactively raising the marketing profile of Gosport as a visitor destination.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1** That this Committee scrutinises the Cultural Strategy approach through this report. This Committee may then wish to review the draft strategy (when available) to conclude its scrutiny and recommend it to P&O Board and Council for adoption. Budget provision has been made for this study.

Supporting Information

Financial implications:

The Cultural Strategy will be facilitated through Audiences South, an external agency, at a cost of circa £20,000. Hampshire County Council has contributed £10,000 toward the cost along with significant officer time, and provision for the remainder has been made by Gosport Borough Council.

Legal implications:

None

Risk Assessment:

There are no significant business risks associated with this proposal.

Background papers including previous

Audiences South's proposal.

reports:

Enclosures/Appendices: Appendix A - Gosport Borough Council Cultural Strategy
Research Proposal

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APPENDIX A

Gosport Borough Council Cultural Strategy Research Proposal



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E: audiencessouth@hants.gov.uk
W : www.audiencesouth.org

1. Introduction and Background

Gosport Borough Council is preparing a new cultural strategy, looking to develop engagement in culture both for the residents and those who visit the area. Despite its maritime / military heritage and the presence of the county's first Discovery Centre, Gosport has few major culture and tourism attractions. However, it benefits from a very accessible waterfront with the potential to represent a 'window on Gosport'.

This eastern waterfront accessibility lends itself to complementary cross-harbour activity with Portsmouth, including Portsmouth Historic Dockyard via ferries, water buses and water taxis. In particular, the sale of Priddy's Hard and Explosion! Museum to the Naval Base Property Trust, which manages the Historic Dockyard, opens up large scale development potential for increased waterfront activity and possibilities for a joined up cultural offer for Gosport and Portsmouth. Consultants have already been engaged to explore potential for waterfront development.

Added to the sale of Priddy's Hard and Explosion! is the 2006 acquisition by SEEDA of part of the former HMS Daedalus site at Lee-on-Solent. It is uncertain at the moment what plans may develop for this site, but it is important as one of the largest brown field sites for regeneration in the Solent area, with the potential to provide business, leisure, employment, education and community facilities at some point in future.

In addition, on 19 January 2010, the Ministry of Defence sold Royal Haslar Hospital to social enterprise organisation: Our Enterprise. It is understood that the site development will be a cultural-led project, including arts and culture provision (with a strong focus on dance) and health tourism.

Gosport Borough Council intends to use the opportunity afforded by these potential developments to develop a cultural strategy that will provide a blueprint for future cultural development in Gosport and that will respond to a backdrop of potential developments of facilities such as a public sector village incorporating cultural facilities, a visible draw to the Borough through landmark art and architecture and waterfront resources such as a marina and associated infrastructure.

In order to inform the cultural strategy, this research proposal sets out a three stage plan to identify significant gaps in cultural and tourist attraction provision¹ in Gosport and the Greater Portsmouth area² and to see what demand exists for Gosport to fill gaps which Portsmouth does not fulfil. Fundamental to Gosport's future development is to understand what its residents value in relation to cultural and tourist activity and where they currently access it.

Many assumptions about Gosport are based on longstanding political and locally-held beliefs. What is required at Stage 1 is the creation of a rigorous and comprehensive, evidence-based benchmark to signpost development potential and against which to measure the changes that will occur during Gosport's long-term development.

The overview table on page 2 shows three stages of a proposed research plan, which has been designed to coincide flexibly with Gosport's long-term development plans as well as work alongside other County wide cultural infrastructure research programmes³.

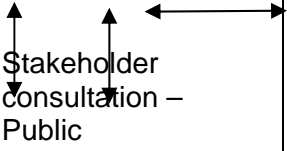
It is anticipated that, in future, at different stages of development, various consultants will contribute to local consultations on specific elements. This research proposal accommodates specific feedback on the cultural strategy.

NB: There is some scope within Stage 1 to explore Gosport residents' current cultural aspirations (as shown by the vertical dotted lines between Stage 1 and 2) but this is deemed to be solely for the purpose of the baseline benchmark, not to inform planning.

¹ Focus of the research will be on visitor attractions and, possibly, special events. It excludes tourism-related provision such as accommodation, travel, etc.

² To be defined, but will need to look not only at the relationship between Gosport Borough and Portsmouth Unitary to the East but also with the County to the West and North.

³ Specifically SEEDA funded work around mapping cultural infrastructure in Hampshire and the growth areas and the Building Schools for the Future programme

Gosport staged research plan				
		Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
		Baseline setting Quantitative benchmarks	Concept testing Qualitative feedback	Feasibility Analysis
	Enquiry	Information outputs		
A	Provision	What culture exists in Gosport	What are the gaps in Gosport and Greater Portsmouth area provision	What is the feasibility of filling gaps identified
B	 Stakeholder consultation – Public	How the public currently engage and where	What are the public's aspirations	Design strategy to engage the public (provision & promotion)
C	Stakeholder consultation – internal / external gatekeepers, local authority officers, groups	What culture means to them	Feedback from consultation on draft cultural strategy plans	Development of stakeholder engagement plan

2. Stages 1 & 2 Research Aims and Objectives

The aim of the overall research plan is to provide Gosport Borough Council with an up-to-date situational analysis of culture and tourist attraction provision in Gosport and its environs, notably Greater Portsmouth⁴.

Stage 1 seeks to do this in three parts: A, B and C as enumerated in the above table

Part A

The first phase seeks to begin building the situational analysis by establishing, through a process of desk research and consultation with appropriate local authority officers:

- i. who lives in Gosport,
- ii. what cultural and tourist attractions, including health tourism, are available to them and their visiting friends, relatives and others. (this audit will follow principles currently being established as part of SEEDA funded research into the cultural infrastructure of Hampshire)

Part B

External stakeholder consultation with Gosport residents, specifically to understand public awareness of current culture and tourist attraction offers by:

- i. gauging what type of cultural and tourist attraction (including health tourism) offers residents (and visiting friends, relatives and others) currently engage with
- ii. where engagement currently takes place
- iii. how residents engage – participation or attendance or both
- iv. how frequently engagement takes place
- v. what aspirations residents currently have for the development of culture and tourism in Gosport.

⁴ To be defined, but will need to look not only at the relationship between Gosport Borough and Portsmouth Unitary to the East but also with the County to the West and North.

Part C

Internal / external stakeholder consultation with local authority personnel and key local stakeholder groups and the wider public, specifically to:

- i. understand the context in which development will take place
- ii. explore the current take-up of current cultural and tourist attraction offer in Gosport
- iii. explore wider public aspirations for future cultural development
- iv. consult widely on cultural strategy
- v. explore joint working between County, Borough and Unitary cultural officers.

3. Methodology

Provision - Stages 1 and 2

Part A

The following methodology outlines how the two elements of Part A will be achieved and what outputs will be delivered.

i. Who lives in Gosport?

What are the key features of the demographic profile which may impact upon the take-up of cultural and tourist attraction opportunities in the borough?

Methodology:

- Produce Arts Council England's Area Profile Reports
- Produce maps of relevant data contained in Area Profile reports

Rationale:

Part i of the work, will describe the size and many features of the population of Gosport, and the extent to which it engages with a wide range of cultural activities – all in comparison with the with the same information for Hampshire and the national picture.

Part ii, the mapping element of the work, will clearly demonstrate where particular communities (based on various demographic features) are located, where the key demand for the culture is, and where propensity to attend is low, and how all these features relate to the present landscape of provision. From this overview it will be possible to begin identifying emerging strategic options and precisely where they should be targeted.

- Produce Arts Council England's Area Profile Reports

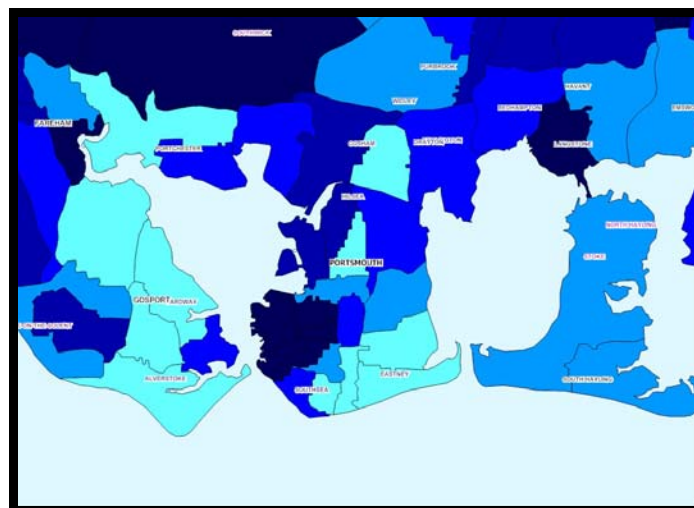
A detailed overview of the population of Gosport will be gained from the data contained in the Area Profile Reports, in terms of: total population, age profile,

socio-economic grade profile, ethnic make up and ACORN profile. Further information in the reports, gleaned from BMRB's Target Group Index (TGI) survey, describes the estimated levels of attendance to various artforms (such as plays, opera, classical music, art galleries, etc.) and the levels of visits made to various other cultural sites (such as museums, stately homes or castles, and archaeological sites). The reports also provide for all these features to be compared with the national average and also with, say, the averages for the administrative county of Hampshire.

- Produce detailed maps of relevant data contained in Area Profile reports

The Area Profile Reports will contain not only the data for Gosport as a whole, but data is also presented discretely for each postal sector within the Borough. This allows for the identification of peaks and troughs relating to any given feature. For example, it is possible to use that information to identify specific postal sectors based on their having a comparatively high (or low) proportions of young people, or households with dependent children, or Asian people, or “play” attenders. The simplest way to illustrate these peaks and troughs is through the use of mapping. The map below (Picture 1) shows the data relating to the propensity to attend museums; postal sectors shaded in the darkest blue are those with the greatest proportions of the population who currently attend museums, ranging down to the lightest blue where there is the least propensity.

Picture 1



The maps can then be used to swiftly cross-reference different variables. For example, it would be possible to identify areas where attendance to, say, Art Galleries & Exhibitions is low and to then see whether those areas coincide with areas where there are high concentrations of particular socio-economic grades, or young people, or ethnic minorities. It will also be possible to overlay the maps with sites of existing provision to show how provision matches propensity to attend, or to understand how the landscape of provision affects any areas where there might be particular ACORN or socio-economic grades who are known to have a high propensity to attend, but where the TGI data shows low levels of current attendance. In the first instance, maps will be produced for each of the TGI artforms and for museum attendance, but thereafter if there is a desire to analyse particular variables these can be swiftly produced.

ii. What cultural and tourist attraction opportunities are available?

Methodology:

- Audit of current funded and other major cultural and tourist attraction provision in the Gosport and wider Portsmouth area.
- Mapping of current funded and other major cultural provision in the Gosport and wider Portsmouth area.

Rationale

The audit will lead to the production of a map which clearly depicts cultural provision in and around Gosport. This map can be overlaid against the maps showing propensity to attend the arts so that any gaps may be identified. The audit will also lead to a clear understanding of which organisations currently collect visitor data that can be analysed in more detail later in the research process, as well as which organisations do not currently collect visitor data and need help to begin doing so.

- **Audit of current funded and other major cultural provision**

An audit of all funded (either by Gosport Borough Council, Hampshire County Council, or Arts Council England, South East) arts organisations, museums, libraries, archives and tourist attractions will be conducted. As part of the audit, Audiences South will investigate which organisations collect, or have collected, visitor data which may later facilitate further detailed analysis of current attenders to the arts.

- **Fitting audit to wider PUSH and Hampshire research**

This audit will also apply a typology (currently being developed as part of project work currently being undertaken by PUSH, SEEDA and Hampshire County Council) to the cultural provision and look to demonstrate to what extent there is or is not a cultural deficit in the current cultural provision. This work will also look at how cultural provision could benefit from investment through housing development over the next ten years in relation to developer contributions such as Section 106.

- **Mapping of current funded and other major cultural provision**

The results of the audit will be presented in a map, (see the example in Picture 2 below) in which the geographical distribution of the various types of cultural provision will be clearly depicted. It will be possible to overlay the demographic and cultural attendance maps produced in section 1 with this map of cultural provision so that any gaps or areas for potential development are clearly highlighted. The map will also look at the current and projected “reach” of the provision identifying where cultural need is and is not currently being met.

Picture 2

It is expected that the researchers will work closely with Gosport Borough Council staff to promote the survey among minority and seldom heard groups.

Schools and youth groups will be targeted to capture the views of young people although it is recognised that not all young people will be found within these institutions. Furthermore, historically, 16 to 24 year olds are less likely to complete postal surveys, not least because they are less likely to be householders. Therefore some scoping meetings will be necessary to explore suitable communication channels to reach these age groups. This is especially important for Gosport; given its residents' tendency to remain within the borough⁵, they are likely to become long term beneficiaries of development plans.

In order to ameliorate adverse impact on reliability of findings, the results *data* may be weighted. This will only be done if a demographic relevancy test shows a significant shortfall within particular demographic groups and this demographic data is used for cross-tabulation purposes.

The quantitative survey is only the first part of the consultation – throughout the strategy process the survey is expected to be followed up with qualitative consultation on the draft strategy plans. Indeed the initial postal survey will invite respondents to take part in further research in Stage 2.

Part C

Two specific sections of stakeholder consultation are identified as:

- Internal Gosport Borough / Hampshire County / Portsmouth local authority officers, gatekeepers / group leaders
- External key local Gosport stakeholders and group leaders / gatekeepers.

Prior to the commencement of this stage of the work, meetings with relevant Gosport Borough / Portsmouth / Hampshire County will be necessary to scope the parameters of the consultation.

Internal local authority officers, gatekeepers / group leader consultation will be carried out in a workshop setting.

⁵ Anecdotally from previous work in Gosport it is understood that few families relocate outside the borough.

The external stakeholder consultation will be a mixture of telephone interview and instances where several gatekeepers / group leaders can be brought together in a workshop setting.

For the purpose of this long term research plan, Audiences South and Gosport Borough Council will assume joint responsibility as data controllers.

Stage 2

Stage 2, (Parts B and C) seeks to bring together the context in which Gosport Borough Council and Hampshire County Council officers (and Portsmouth where appropriate) understand and are operating, together with internal local stakeholders' and the wider public aspirations for future development.

In the first instance, findings from Parts A (Provision), B (Public Consultation) and C (internal / external stakeholder consultation) will be presented at a workshop of interested parties from Gosport Borough Council and Hampshire Council (and Portsmouth where appropriate). It is anticipated that the workshop will highlight areas of enquiry that require in-depth exploration and testing with members of Gosport's wider community.

Stage 2 will explore, in-depth, issues highlighted in the first workshop above, by bringing together a focus group drawn from the wider public postal survey.⁶

This focus group(s) will be followed by a final Gosport Borough / Hampshire County Council workshop prior to the final report to inform first drafting of the cultural strategy.

Once the first draft of the cultural strategy is prepared, it is anticipated that it will be the subject of a borough-wide public consultation phase. Once details of the consultation are known⁷ appropriate feedback mechanisms will be designed. These are likely to take the form of quantitative feedback cards / online feedback and qualitative face-to-face, on-site interviews at exhibitions / presentations. Alternatively, if a public presentation is proposed, then a transcript of the presentation and question and answer sessions may be provided to provide headline issues.

⁶ The budget allows for one focus group, however, it is possible that a young person's group may be needed in addition or instead of a general group. This to be confirmed at the scoping meeting..

⁷ Exhibition, online, roadshow, public presentation, etc.

4. Budget and Timing

Activity / Information Output	No of units	Cost per unit £	Total £	Timing
Scoping meetings Stages 1 & 2	0.5 day	600	300	Jan 10
Part A - Stages 1 and 2				
i. Who lives in Gosport?	0.5 day	600	300	Late Jul-10
ii. Available cultural & tourism opportunities	2 days	600	1200	Late Jul-10
Part B - Stage 1				
Consultation with Gosport Borough Council on engaging young people and seldom heard community groups	2 days	600	1200	late Jul-10
Design postal / online survey / promotional material	1 day	600	600	Mar – Jun-10
Design and publish online version of postal survey	0.5 day	600	300	Late Jul-10
Design and publish young people's version online survey	1day	600	600	Late Jul-10
Source and prepare CACI mailing list	4,500		900	Jul-10
Printed promotional material	5,000		300	Jul-10
Printing A3 folded survey, covering letter, stationery, mail out survey	5,000		1115	Late Jul-10
Freepost return postage est. 20% return = 900	900	0.275	248	
Data entry (est.)	9 days	150	1350	Aug-10
Data analysis	5 days	600	3000	Early Sept-10
Part C - Stage 1				
Gosport / Hampshire project team meeting to scope parameters of internal / external consultations	1 day	600	300	Late Jul-10
Internal local authority officers, gatekeepers / group leader consultation workshop	2 days	600	1200	Late Jul-10
External stakeholder consultation, c. 25 telephone interviews	5 days	250	1250	Late Jul-10
Part A, B, C - Stage 2				
Workshop findings from Parts A, B, C with Gosport District Council / Hampshire County Council personnel	2 days	600	1200	late Sept-10
Focus group discussion derived from postal survey respondents on public's aspirations for future cultural development in Gosport	1	1000	1000	Sept-10
Report writing	3 days	600	1800	Oct-10
Stakeholder consultation on draft cultural strategy	3 days	600	1800	Late Oct-10
Headline feedback from stakeholder consultation	1 day	600	600	Early Nov-10
			20562	

5. Terms and Conditions

Audiences South is a business unit of Hampshire County Council and is covered by Hampshire County Council's own policies for insurance. Hampshire County Council covers its own damages and damages are unlimited.

Fees are inclusive of all out of pocket expenses (except where stated), including telecommunication, copying, printing, photography, materials, report preparation, publication and presentation material. **Under the current proposal mail out postage costs on the public survey will be covered by Gosport Borough Council.**

All prices are exclusive of VAT.

This bid is submitted on the basis that the offer herein will remain in force for a minimum period of three months from 16 November 2009.

Any adjustment to the specifications as laid out in the proposal may lead to review of the timetable and/or fee quoted.

A minimum of 25% payment to be made on agreement of the proposal.

50% payment on delivery of findings from Audience Research Stage 1.

Remaining 25% payment on completion of Report Stage 2.

Financial control comes under the auspices of Audience South's banking facilities held within Hampshire County Council. All fieldwork research costs and sub-contracting incurred in this work will be met by Audiences South.

Audiences South assumes the role of Data Controller with its attendant responsibilities under the terms of the 1998 Data Protection Act. Strict adherence to the Market Research Society (MRS) Code of Conduct is guaranteed with regard to all stages of the research process. These professional standards guarantee confidentiality and fair treatment for people interviewed.

Sub-contractors may be used for fieldwork, recruitment, data inputting, data processing and transcriptions. All sub-contractors, and their practice, will be expected to adhere to standards that conform to MRS guidelines. Face-to-face fieldwork would be sub-contracted to Tourism South East, under an existing relationship, guaranteeing local employment and fieldwork costs below commercial rates