

Addressing Inequalities and Deprivation in Gosport: A Neighbourhood Partnership Proposal



1. Introduction

This document provides an introduction to multiple deprivation in Gosport and presents a summary of the application and learning arising from the Rowner neighbourhood management pilot; which commenced in October 2008.

Progress to date and outcomes achieved are highlighted and precede the identification of actions that still need to be taken, both to fully embed good practice and allow for further inroads to be made in tackling the causes and symptoms of deprivation. **The latter forms the basis of this proposal to secure commitment and funding for a 12 month period, commencing in October 2010.** Consideration is given to the benefits, costs and risks associated with this and alternative approaches; as a basis for discussion and agreement with partners.

This proposal provides both Councils and partners the opportunity to fully engage communities in sustainable solutions that will help achieve the aspirations and targets associated with a range of strategies, plans; including the local area agreement. **In particular, a sum of £20,000 is being sought from Hampshire County Council; on the basis that it contributes to the preferred option for a twelve month, low-cost, effective approach to tackling inequalities in Gosport (see pages 7-9 below).**

2. Background

2.1 Deprivation in Gosport

Gosport has four Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) ranked in the top 20% most deprived in England and a significant proportion of the Borough's 52 LSOAs feature amongst the most deprived in the country for at least one domain of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2007. Between the publication of the 2004 and 2007 Indices, deprivation indicators in Gosport worsened significantly; as evidenced by the fall in the District ranking from 186 to 168 and a notable decline in the communities most affected by deprivation – namely, Rowner (Grange) and Town.

More recent analysis shows that, despite funding through small area-based programmes such as the Single Regeneration Budget, little has changed in terms of the number of people out of work and claiming benefits. Associated health, income, education and skills indicators have typically worsened, more recently exacerbated by the effects of recession which have hit those living in disadvantaged communities particularly hard.

2.2 Neighbourhood Interventions

It has long been recognised that addressing deprivation requires the ability to engage and involve individuals and families in need of support; both to understand barriers to participation and identify the causes of deprivation. Inevitably, this requires the establishment of trust and the ability to shape services around the needs of the community. Too often services are designed without ever engaging with hard-to-engage client groups; despite them often being the primary target market for many agencies.

Learning from the experiences of previous initiatives, and recognising that funding for area-based approaches had become increasingly scarce, the Council decided to explore alternative

approaches to tackling deprivation. Aside from the continuing need to support the most disadvantaged, there was a recognition that the plans to regenerate the southern area of the Rowner estate would not sufficiently address entrenched socio-economic issues and that the remaining 1,500 households (particularly the 600+ to the north of the estate) were becoming increasingly isolated and disenfranchised.

The need to address socio-economic needs on Rowner was also a priority for English Partnerships during the approval process for funding to support the Rowner Renewal project. A comprehensive report was submitted by the Council to English Partnerships summarising the relevant issues and outlining partners' commitment to investing in the neighbourhood management approach detailed below.

2.3 Neighbourhood Management

Following consultation and discussion with a broad range of partners and community representatives, agreement was reached to pilot a neighbourhood management approach; with the aim of tackling the symptoms and causes of deprivation in an effective, efficient and sustainable way.

It was agreed that the pilot would commence in Rowner, to build on previous and planned investment for this area, but with a view to applying learning and extending best practice to other areas of deprivation; in particular communities in Town Ward.

Figure 1 - What is Neighbourhood Management?

"Neighbourhood management is essentially an area based approach to service improvement. The aim is to make services, and public sector services in particular, more responsive to the needs and aspirations of residents and more effective in their delivery.

Achieving this good service provision is the core aim of neighbourhood management. The neighbourhood management approach is premised on several factors that allow it to realise value for residents, including:

- Actions are coordinated at a small area (neighbourhood) level which can be more effective through shared costs and the synergy of activities;
- Investment is made on a "invest to save" basis, eg through better demand management and/or service design up front savings can be realised and then invested in further innovation;
- The alignment of investment which can save costs and speed up the realisation of strategic developments;
- Investment in service models and developments which are tailored to local needs and aspirations, improving the 'match' of investment and impact, where better designed investments have a higher rate of return;
- Utilising mechanisms such as profiling and champions, increasing advocacy and absorption capacity will increase the level and effectiveness of investment.

Several factors have been identified for the successful implementation of neighbourhood management programmes, to allow their potential value to be realised. These include:

- A clear focus on (a few) key market and policy failures which effect the trajectory of performance in service delivery in a given area;
- A neighbourhood management capacity is put in place to be able to coordinate investment and service improvement activities;
- Buy-in from the key relevant services and support from senior managers and players;
- Focused community engagement and involvement, which assists in improving the design and responsiveness of services."

*Extract from: Becoming Normal? Neighbourhood Management in Rowner
Leigh Rampton, October 2007*

3. Rowner Neighbourhood Management Pilot

Taking heed of the aim and success factors identified at Figure 1 above, support was garnered from The Gosport Partnership and a two year neighbourhood management pilot commenced in Rowner in October 2008. This followed a period during which a small working group of key partners led on the identification of a number of broad priorities; namely: Environment, Youth and Working Age Adults; and secured sufficient funds from key partners to facilitate the appointment of a Neighbourhood Coordinator (see below).

Funding for Neighbourhood Coordination (Oct 2008-Oct 2010)	
Organisation	Total Funding
Gosport Borough Council	£56,000
Hampshire County Council	£30,000
Groundwork Solent	£10,000
Total:	£96,000

The above amount includes a delivery budget to cover actions, hospitality, stationery etc, with Gosport Borough Council providing office space and use of a laptop as an additional in kind contribution. Funding for delivery of specific initiatives has been largely secured through partnership working, including the pooling of existing resources and small funding bids.

Strategic management of the pilot has been facilitated through a Neighbourhood Management Board; reporting to the Local Strategic Partnership and chaired by County Councillor Margaret Snaith. A Steering Group, including representatives of funding partners, has provided operational support and guidance to the Neighbourhood Coordinator, who is employed through Gosport Borough Council and line managed by the Council's Head of Economic Prosperity.

4. Outcomes to Date

The primary role of the Neighbourhood Coordinator has been the engagement of local residents, identification of issues that cause or exacerbate disadvantage and coordination of actions and services in response. As a result, a significant feature of the pilot has been the successful involvement of residents in contributing to sustainable solutions; helping to both alleviate disadvantage and reduce long term dependency on public agencies and funding.

A summary of the progress made with community engagement, capacity building and direct action to address the causes and symptoms associated with the historic lack of investment in estate management and environmental services, is provided below.

(It should be noted that during the early stages of the pilot, efforts have been concentrated on the 600 dwellings to the north of the Rowner estate (for the reasons outlined earlier); although, more recently, there has been a broadening of engagement involving community leaders from the areas of social housing across the estate, as well as Ministry of Defence (MOD) and resident representatives from adjacent communities in Rowner & Holbrook.)

- 4.1 Community Engagement - effective resident-responsive engagement mechanisms have been established, where outcomes include:
- 20 community leaders and decision-makers engaged in a range of regular 1:1 and group meetings, providing access to a network of approximately 1,500 residents;
 - bi-monthly resident meetings (with an average attendance of 35), providing a forum for engagement between community leaders, representatives and service providers;
 - 150 households signed up to an email distribution list and regular information bulletins;
 - over 700 resident enquiries and requests for assistance dealt with to date.
- 4.2 Capacity Building
- residents are beginning to take responsibility for reporting of fly-tipping, graffiti, abandoned vehicles, noise and nuisance issues;
 - business support meetings have been established, providing advice and business coaching for residents who act as voluntary directors for local Resident Management Companies (via Business Link's Enterprise Gateway). These are helping to develop business skills, facilitate peer-to-peer information sharing and have led to thousands of pounds of savings that are now being reinvested to improve the estate;
 - residents are beginning to get involved in organising and managing meetings, including taking on chairing responsibilities;
- 4.3 Environmental Improvements – the actions below have helped to build confidence and address immediate concerns:
- negotiation with Gosport Borough Council to secure 'clean team' and enforcement services on private land;
 - sourcing and coordination of additional services from partner organisations, including the Probation Service, Police, PCSOs and Groundwork;
 - one day per month free grounds maintenance support from Enterprise plc guaranteed for 18 months.
- 4.4 Sustainable Improvements – these have been implemented in parallel with 'quick wins' as a route to securing long term change, reducing the need for ongoing investment and achieving self-sufficiency of estate management solutions:
- work has been completed to establish the requirements and costs of bringing unadopted roads up to the standard necessary for adoption. Discussions are now underway to enable implementation;
 - identifying and pursuing immediate and longer term action in relation to the Rowner Rec, to the extent that a permanent solution is being actively progressed;
 - developing joint contracting by resident management companies to achieve economies of scale;
 - exploring opportunities through the proposed community land trust to secure an estate management solution for the whole Rowner estate.

5. Embedding Change and Maximising Potential

5.1 Opportunity and Challenge

There is a need to both build on the success to date in Rowner and take advantage of the resident engagement and participation secured in order to tackle the more entrenched issues associated with negative youth norms, unemployment, low skills and health inequalities.

The recession has impacted negatively on Rowner and Town Wards, leading to a worsening situation in terms of employment prospects and associated income deprivation and child poverty. The Wards have the highest number of JobSeeker Allowance (JSA) (*May 2010*) and Out-of-Work Benefit claimants (*Nov 2009*). Collectively, the number of people claiming JSA, Lone Parent or Employment Support Allowance represents approximately 23% of the working age population; with youth unemployment higher in Rowner than anywhere else in the Borough. Over 90% of the working age population are estimated to have no, or low, qualifications (*Census 2001*) and the areas performs poorly against financial exclusion indicators. Teenage pregnancy and life expectancy outcomes are worse than in other areas of the Borough; with poor educational attainment contributing to the prospect of a perpetual cycle of disadvantage.

By building on the neighbourhood management approach, there is now a real opportunity to coordinate cross-cutting responses to these difficult issues; utilising the engagement and community networks that have been established to shape the development, communication and delivery of services that will connect with the hardest to reach. Securing resident communication and engagement is the most cited challenge of agencies and community groups operating in the area and one that must be overcome if partners are to achieve desired outcomes.

As the Rowner Renewal project moves into the delivery phase, opportunities to connect residents with pre-employment support and enable access to training and jobs need to be facilitated and the impact of the pending closure and disposal of the MOD-owned Royal Sailors Rest training facility later this year addressed. The Youth Service has identified improvements in information-sharing and engagement of young people as key priorities; and early progress in aligning community development activity needs urgent action to establish longevity of community capacity and joint solutions. Similarly, in Town Ward, there are opportunities to build on participatory budgeting activities and Quit4Life initiatives.

In addition to the opportunity to tackle some of the more difficult causes of deprivation, the existing environmental and community safety improvements have the potential to become self-sustaining over the next 18-24 months. Priorities include securing a permanent estate management solution that achieves a common quality standard across Rowner, irrespective of land ownerships and tenancies. A number of options are available at the present time, although each requires further work to ensure that residents in north Grange are willing, and able, to contribute financially to a preferred solution. Early success in providing business support to resident Directors needs developing to allow savings secured from peer-to-peer learning to be built on by facilitating joint contracting arrangements and achievement of economies of scale. Allied to this is the strengthening of developing community and agency networks in the adjacent Rowner & Holbrook Ward, building on emerging relationships between partners and the Ministry of Defence's community and housing teams.

Whilst much has been achieved; not least the recognition that adopting a neighbourhood management approach has succeeded in engaging the community in a way that the seven-year SRB programme did not, it would be unrealistic to expect the causes and symptoms of deprivation to be addressed in the lifetime of a two-year pilot programme. However, the pilot has

demonstrated the benefits that this approach offers and, with minimal financial support and the commitment of key partners, there are now opportunities to apply and extend the learning both in Rowner and Town Wards.

5.2 The Preferred Approach

Gosport Borough Council is keen to embrace the opportunities that neighbourhood management provides to identify the causes, barriers and solutions to deprivation in a radical and sustainable way. Internally, the Council is bringing together all aspects of community and neighbourhood engagement, to make better use of existing resources and expertise and provide the foundation for extending the neighbourhood management approach into other areas. Partners and residents have, and continue, to contribute to reviews and consultation on how best to embed achievements to date and further consolidate or shape services to continue to make progress in the future.

More recently, in discussions with the County Council, it has become clear that both authorities need to review how best to target mainstream resources in areas of deprivation; with the aim of minimising or eliminating the need for ongoing financial support. Whilst work is now underway, it has been acknowledged that neither the County Council nor the Borough Council (the two key funding partners for neighbourhood management and community development) will be in a position to establish new models for neighbourhood working in the current financial year.

With this in mind, and recognising the risk of undermining the progress and community confidence achieved in Rowner to date, the Council and its partners are seeking interim funding to support existing and new interventions in this area. In addition, and as far as resources will allow, early scoping work already undertaken in Town Ward as part of the neighbourhood management pilot will be built on to begin to address priorities of homelessness, health, environment and crime.

The proposal detailed in the table overleaf, sets out a 12 month action plan for neighbourhood coordination in Rowner and Town, including the alignment and incorporation of community development activity for the current financial year, which is presently separately funded by Gosport Borough Council and Hampshire County Council. (The community development activities identified form the basis of a Service Level Agreement between Gosport Borough Council and Gosport Voluntary Action for the current financial year. Funding from Hampshire County Council for the current year has yet to be agreed.)

Consideration is given to the actions and outcomes associated with the proposed action plan and the alternative 'do nothing' and 'maintain through partnership' options.

Neighbourhood Proposal 27/10/2010 – 26/10/2011

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
	Do Nothing Option	Maintain through Partnership Option	Preferred Option
Resources	Pilot and Neighbourhood Coordinator contract ends in Oct 2010	Neighbourhood Coordinator contract ends in Oct 2010	Neighbourhood Coordination sustains and develops community-led solutions to address causes and symptoms of deprivation in Rowner and Town; in particular, worklessness, low skills, poor housing/environment and associated health issues (notably mental health, addictions and teenage pregnancies)
	Community development activity continues, subject to additional funding being found to supplement Gosport Borough Council contribution for 2010/11.	Community development activity continues, subject to additional funding being found to supplement Gosport Borough Council contribution for 2010/11.	Community development activity aligned to support capacity building amongst existing and new resident groups established through neighbourhood coordination activity.
Actions	Limited contact and information flows maintained by mainstream providers.	Contacts and information flows maintained by mainstream providers as far as possible.	Annual programme of community engagement events in Rowner and Town, focused on the priorities of: health, worklessness, youth and environment planned and delivered in partnership with residents.
		Coordination and administrative support provided for resident and business support meetings	Community capacity building and service coordination developed further support resident-led and managed meetings in both Rowner and Town.
			Development of business support meetings in Rowner to facilitate joint contracting arrangements amongst resident management companies and explore potential for a unified management solution
			Progress options to secure resident agreement and funding to bring roads in North Grange up to adoptable standard and oversee implementation.
			Work with partners to agree programme of pre-

			employment training and support to facilitate resident uptake of job opportunities arising from development and similar opportunities in the Borough.
			Develop and implement a positive media campaign through partnership working and pooling of existing partner resources.
			Extend and coordinate resident networks across Rowner to facilitate improved engagement of young people and adults in shaping and participating in local provision; particularly addressing health and income inequalities.
			Alignment of all partner community development resources and coordination of activity in support of agreed priorities.
			Contacts and information flows maintained and developed.
			Ongoing evaluation, monitoring and review of progress to inform and identify areas for further action.
Outcomes	Additional short term savings may result if residents are able to sustain peer-to-peer network meetings.	Short term savings available from continued facilitation of business support meetings.	Regular resident-led meetings established in Rowner; engaging a minimum of 20 community leaders from across the Rowner estate and the adjoining neighbourhood of Rowner & Holbrook.
	Disillusionment with public and other services and potential resistance to future support/ interventions.	Dialogue and information flows maintained between residents and service providers through facilitation of resident meetings.	Community engagement increased in Town Ward; a minimum of 10 community leaders involved and a resident-led meeting established.
	Opportunities arising from Rowner Renewal fail to be maximised.	Opportunities to extend resident engagement will be limited and absence of active liaison and nurturing of relationships is likely	Minimum of 3 community engagement events held over a 12 month period to facilitate interventions in the areas of health, worklessness and environment. Target: 300 residents engaged, 50 residents

		to result in reduced participation over time.	participating in sustained activity to improve economic or quality of life outcomes (Rowner/Town)
	Community cohesion is weakened by continuing disparity between communities on the north and south of the estate.	Disillusionment with public and other services and potential resistance to future support/ interventions is likely to occur without the continuation and strengthening of trust and relationships brokered by the Coordinator.	Reinvestment of savings from joint contracting arrangements in securing road adoption and self-sustaining estate management solution (Rowner)
	Coordinated cross-cutting approaches to addressing socio-economic deprivation are absent or ineffective.	Opportunities arising from Rowner Renewal fail to be maximised.	150 residents benefit from pre-employment support, skills development and/or secure employment within a 12 month period (Rowner/Town)
	Rapid reversal of progress made to date.	Community cohesion is weakened by continuing disparity between communities on the north and south of the estate.	Effective partnership communication network established in Rowner. Minimum of 9 positive media stories (Rowner/Town)
	Reduced community engagement and ability of services to access hard-to-reach groups.	Reduced community engagement and ability of services to access hard-to-reach groups.	Identification and development of 2 resident-supported activities to address income and health inequalities. (Rowner/Town)
			25 residents active in community leadership roles within 12 months. (Rowner/Town)

6. Resourcing

The table below provides a breakdown of the costs associated with the Preferred Option and includes information on secured or proposed funding sources:

Rowner Neighbourhood Partnership (27/10/10-31/10/11)			
Expenditure	27/10/2010-31/3/2010	1/4/2010-31/10/2011	Total
Neighbourhood Coordination Proposal (costs of action plan, staff resource and delivery of outcomes)	£23,000	£27,000	£50,000
Income			
LSP Community Cohesion Funding (confirmed)	£1,500	£13,500	£15,000
GBC Contribution (confirmed)	£1,500	£13,500	£15,000
Hampshire County Council	£20,000	£0	£20,000
Total	£23,000	£27,000	£50,000

Gosport Borough Council will also provide in kind support by continuing to provide management support, access to IT and office facilities; as well as maintaining its current commitment to support the administration of community and partnership meetings.

7. Summary

The Neighbourhood Management has proven to provide many benefits and is particularly pertinent in an era of constrained public spending and a strong Government commitment to localism and Big Society. It fosters community engagement, allows for challenge and re-negotiation of delivery of public services, and offers a route to sustainable social, economic and environmental regeneration in deprived communities.

The need to design new models of neighbourhood working and resourcing presents partners with an opportunity to align resources more effectively and embed learning and success in mainstream provision. It is accepted that the cultural and operational shift required to achieve this will not result in an immediate solution, which puts at risk both the progress and engagement to date, as well as constraining opportunities to build on and extend good practice to support disadvantaged communities in Gosport over the next 6-12 months.

The County Council has been a supportive and active partner in neighbourhood management to date, and has recognised the continuing challenges facing disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Gosport in its recent publication of the draft Hampshire Economic Assessment. This proposal to the HAT is therefore an opportunity for the County Council to contribute to an interim solution, whilst working with the Borough Council and others to redefine and reshape support and resourcing for neighbourhood working in the future.