

**Report of: Corporate Director, Business Services and Assistant Chief Executive,
Strategy and Democracy, SMBC**

'Total Place' in Stockport - Enhancing Partnership Use of Resources

1. Purpose of the Report

This report outlines areas of work which are emerging as part of the development of a more coherent approach to use of resources in Stockport, aimed at achieving improved value for money and realising efficiencies across the Partnership

In summary the report:

- Provides an update on the national and sub-regional Total Place experiences and reports
- Considers the potential implications of Total Place locally
- Outlines an approach to strategic commissioning
- Seeks the Board's support to take forward work streams that will enhance partnership use of resources and further the development of a total place approach in Stockport.

2. Total Place: The National Policy Context

2.1 At the end of March the DCLG and HM Treasury produced a report entitled 'Total place: A whole area approach to public services' based on the findings of 13 local pilots including Greater Manchester. The report suggests that the learning from the pilots and the key principles and conclusions emerging from them should inform the future re-modelling of public services necessary to deliver efficient and effective outcomes in a time of severe resource constraint, breaking down barriers not only in localities but within Whitehall.

2.2 The Report contains a number of proposals for continuing the work begun by the pilots and locally there is a need to determine how best to take advantage of those which may be of most benefit to Stockport. The main proposals in the report involve the following:

- a 'single offer' for councils, with new freedoms
- 'total capital and asset pathfinders' in 11 areas
- five 'invest to save' pathfinders
- extended field trials for pilots
- 'social impact bonds' trials
- new children and young people's grant
- streamlined improvement bodies
- single gateway for data reporting
- Accelerated Development Zones for infrastructure investment
- de-ring-fencing of £1.3b of grants from 2011/12
- removal of 18 indicators from the national indicator set

- template protocols for pooled budget and joint working arrangements
- area based value for money assessment as part of streamlined CAA
- co-design of approaches to worklessness

(Of course, the aspirations and proposals contained in the report will no doubt be reviewed by the new Coalition Government and may well be subject to revisions)

- 2.3 In particular, the Total Capital and Asset pathfinder programme, involving Wigan, and the Manchester city-region cost benefit analysis are initiatives with which Stockport should be engaged. Furthermore, the Accelerated Development Zone pilot programme has already been included in the City Region Combined Authority discussions and locally with consultants.
- 2.4 Also of relevance to Stockport are the proposals on making savings as we seek to drive out efficiencies and a number of the areas put forward are already being progressed by the Council and partners, including through the Partnership Estates Group. Importantly, it is recognised that a ‘whole economy’ approach needs to be taken, with up front investment required to generate savings across partner organisations. Mechanisms and agreements will be needed to reconcile the differential requirements and impact of investments and savings between partners.
- 2.5 Another aspect which is of note is the importance given to commissioning and procurement around citizen needs, an area for which we have attracted adverse comment from the Audit Commission. This area is discussed further later in the report (paragraph 4).
- 2.6 Throughout the report a theme of partnership working is prevalent. Local authorities and their partners are encouraged to look at the cultural, organisational and capability barriers that limit the effectiveness of a ‘total place’ type approach. Traditional models of local leadership, governance and accountability are challenged and the redesign of services across the sector is encouraged.

3. The Sub-Regional Context

- 3.1 The Greater Manchester Total Place pilot produced a comprehensive report in February, focussing on Early Years. A number of recommendations were made and an action plan created which has ‘started to inform action at a local level’. We need to make sure that Stockport is engaged and benefits from as appropriate the continuing Total Place efforts at the sub-regional level.
- 3.2 While the city region pilot focussed on early years a number of the issues raised and conclusions reached are relevant to other areas. The report identifies a number of barriers, national and local, which limit the implementation of public service reform. The main themes identified which the report suggests will lead to improved outcomes for children and their families, efficiencies and long term social return on investment are:
- The case for prevention
 - The citizen at the centre of service design
 - Enabling self reliance
 - Pooled budgets
 - Reduce bureaucracy

- 3.3 The report emphasises the linkages between the total place pilots and the Statutory City Region strategy, agreement and spatial pilots. The case is made that the early years work is crucial to the long term prospects for improved economic growth. The seven early years' pilots will take forward various aspects of the total place conclusions and recommendations. In particular, the pilots are exploring the movement from a health care based system to one which is broader and more holistic.
- 3.4 Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) work will be taken forward following the initial pilot and will be tested within the early years' and other spatial pilots. It seeks to address the multi agency circumstances which prevent effective cross organisation investment decisions being taken and implemented. It will be important for Stockport to understand the CBA tool and consider its application within our neighbourhood management pilot and other aspects of our partnership work.
- 3.5 The recommendations within the report include calls on government departments to devolve more funding, reduce ring fencing and release savings for re-investment. It is recognised that the three major spenders, Local Authorities, Health and DWP should work together more effectively within the sub-region in producing shared outcomes, plans for more efficient use of resources and a common system of engaging with citizens.

4. The Local Context

- 4.1 The Partnership has already begun to discuss and develop a 'total place' type approach to the use of resources within the Borough. Many of the ideas and propositions contained in the two reports are being explored, and in some cases delivered, within Stockport. The establishment of both the Neighbourhood Management Board and the Public Services Resources Board are examples of this approach.
- 4.2 Within many partner organisations, including the Council, programmes are already underway to identify and realise efficiencies in anticipation of the challenging financial landscape of the coming years. These programmes will reflect the principles of Total Place - customer focus, putting customers first; end to end process review and redesign; collaboration with partners etc. Within the Stockport Partnership we are looking at new ways of commissioning and delivering services involving partners, particularly in more deprived areas under the auspices of the Neighbourhood Management Board. This will include greater customer insight and different resourcing approaches, including land and property considerations which have already begun in the Partnership Estates Group (as outlined in a report elsewhere on the agenda).

Strategic Commissioning

- 4.3 A key element in achieving successful outcomes and value for money is the development of a more strategic approach to commissioning. The 2009 CAA Use of Resources assessment of the Council and the Area Assessment red flag both highlighted this area as a weakness for Stockport, and fundamental for improving outcomes in our priority neighbourhoods.
- 4.4 In sourcing evidence for Use of Resources Assessment it was identified that within the Council:
- There is limited understanding of the distinction between procurement and commissioning, and awareness of a basic strategic commissioning model.

- Activity that could be labelled as strategic commissioning in nature was in the early stages of development, and proving that improved outcomes had been delivered by using this approach was difficult due to a lack of developed evidence.
- Where this strategic commissioning activity had occurred, it had happened as a result of good practice in service areas, rather than as the result of a co-ordinated, strategic approach.

4.5 The Council is, therefore, working on identifying and agreeing a model to develop a more strategic approach to commissioning, with partners, based on the definition that strategic commissioning is:

‘Commissioning through determining the best use of resources on the basis of the whole population needs for broad community outcomes and aspirations e.g. health inequalities; and by setting the strategy and structure of commissioning at other levels’

and that it includes four distinct stages:

1. Understand/ analyse
2. Plan
3. Do
4. Review

A more detailed description of the model is included at appendix one.

5. Next Steps

‘Total Stockport’?

- 5.1 The Partnership is encouraged to consider how best to reflect and include the relevant total place concepts, ideas and actions in organisational and Partnership plans, from local, sub-regional and national perspectives. In particular, the work of the Neighbourhood Management Board, Public Services Resources Board and the Partnership Board itself could usefully embrace and address many of the issues raised in the total place reports. The idea of a ‘Total Stockport’ approach to resource planning and management is considered fundamental to the achievement of our Community Strategy outcomes.
- 5.2 As mentioned in the PSRB update report It is intended to create a new finance post to work with the partnership office and support the financial and other resource management aspects of the Partnership, providing some capacity to take forward some ‘Total Stockport’ ideas and actions, with the potential to prioritise work in priority neighbourhoods linked to the Neighbourhood Management Board.

Strategic Commissioning?

- 5.3 To move towards a more strategic approach to commissioning it is suggested that there needs to be an understanding of and commitment to the following principles and practices:
- To approach the commissioning cycle from an imaginative rather than a compliance based perspective, focusing upon the understanding of the specific outcomes and improvements that commissioning is intended to achieve;

- That each stage in the cycle is integrated, which means that it is informed by the previous stage and drives subsequent stages in the cycle;
- Planning is based on evidence so that service design is not based on previous patterns of service delivery thus enabling the status quo to be challenged. This is to be achieved by clearly separating the outcomes to be achieved from the services to be provided;
- The cycle drives the design and delivery of procurement, funding and other related activities and intelligence from delivery feeds back into the cycle;
- The process is equitable and transparent and open to influence from all stakeholders via an ongoing dialogue with service users, communities, partners, the workforce and providers;
- The cycle is intelligent in terms of what drives commissioning decisions and the way in which commissioning is structured and executed;
- There is senior level buy-in across the Partnership.

This presents a series of challenges for the Partnership, in particular that of ensuring a robust evidence base underpinned by a effective analytical capacity to translate information into intelligence that can inform transparent decision making, It is recommended that the PSRB be tasked with developing an approach to strategic commissioning based on the outline model and the above principles.

Information

- 5.4 Total place and strategic commissioning activities are reliant on the availability of accessible, timely, accurate and robust information about service outcomes and customer needs that can be shared by all stakeholders. This factor, along with a number of other national and local drivers has led the Council to believe that we should explore the development of a 'Local Information System' (LIS) for the Council and its partners. In effect, an LIS would provide a single means of accessing the key datasets that are essential to partners. It is considered that Stockport would benefit from an LIS which could provide a better understanding of our local communities, so facilitating more responsive services and ultimately better outcomes for local people.
- 5.5 This can be achieved by having the information we need in the right place, at the right time for the right people to access, and it being accurate, resulting in:
- Ability to offset public perception against service delivery and outcomes by comparing quantitative data with consultation findings and so understand how to appropriately respond to community opinion.
 - Ability to compare our population and our outcomes with those of our statistical neighbours, bench mark performance and develop appropriately challenging performance improvement priorities and targets
 - Ability to understand the costs, impacts and outcomes of services and assess value for money
 - A reduction in duplication of data, and data analysis, which in the longer term has the potential to realise efficiency savings.
 - Enhanced data sharing and timely access to information
 - Ability to provide more early intervention and preventative services by analysing multiple data sets to identify related issues and root causes
 - A tool to support evidence based policy making and strategic commissioning
 - Supporting partners, particularly in the third sector to bid for funding and so maximise the external funding brought into the Borough.

- More accountable services as improved access to information will enhance local people's ability to effectively understand and challenge our priorities and our performance, and inform service delivery.
- Improved access to information also has the potential to create stronger communities who are better informed and so able to shape local solutions to local issues.

5.6 Partners currently have access to a wealth of information and data which whilst shared between services and organisations is often done so on an informal basis through personal relationships rather than in a consistent and systematic way. While systems exist which facilitate sharing of information, the resourcing and awareness of these systems is limited. This means that partners may not easily have access to, or even awareness of, valuable information and how to share this appropriately. The vast amount of information in any number of areas presents a number of possible variables for understanding a given issue. An inconsistent approach across the Borough to, say, how population data is accessed, could result in differing conclusions being reached on related issues.

5.7 The positioning of information systems is understandably dispersed, and without strategic direction and support there is a risk that the content of such systems is overly biased towards the information needs, access and resources of the 'host' area. It is considered that a more holistic approach is required to provide an effective strategic resource that would satisfy the information requirements of the Partnership as a whole organisation. The content of existing systems has evolved and it would be a valuable exercise to review the content of these systems and ensure it reflects what we actually want and need to know, and that we are not maintaining datasets that are of no use. Conversely it would be valuable to gain an awareness of any data gaps that exist, which could undermine understanding of issues and outcomes and in turn our use of resources.

5.8 It is proposed that a Project Board be established, led by the Council and accountable to the Partnership through the PSRB to take forward the development and implementation of an LIS for Stockport. As outlined in the PSRB update report it is suggested that a budget provision is made from the Partnership Support Budget to fund a time limited project manager position to work alongside resources that will need to be made available from all partners. Whilst systems developments will go some way to meeting information needs, training and capacity for the purpose of analysis were also identified as fundamental issues. A LIS should therefore not be seen as the complete solution, and any system would need to be supported by increased analytical capacity across the partnership.

6. Recommendations

That following comment and consideration the Partnership Board endorse and support:

1. The Strategic Commissioning model, appendix 1, and task the PSRB to consider how the model be taken forward and implemented on behalf of the partnership
2. The proposals to take forward a 'Total Stockport' approach and the recruitment of a Resource Manager to work with the PSRB,
3. The proposals to develop a Local Information System, including the use of the Partnership support budget