

# Calderdale Forward Annual Report 2009/10

## Introduction

This is the fifth annual report of Calderdale Forward. It provides an overview of the activities, key achievements and progress of Calderdale's Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) over the past year and looks ahead to some challenges and opportunities in the coming year.

The key aim for the LSP and its partners during this year has been to work effectively in partnership to achieve improvements for local people, particularly within the constraints and challenges of the current economic climate. Over the last year, the partners in Calderdale Forward have risen to the challenges presented by the introduction of a new national assessment framework, Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA). This increased expectations on the LSP as it assessed how well local services work together to improve the quality of life for local people.

## Background

Calderdale Forward has five key tasks, to:

- Set out an overall strategic vision for Calderdale and to secure partnership commitment and action to deliver the vision
- Develop and implement a sustainable community strategy and local area agreement (LAA) for Calderdale, identify and deliver the most important priorities, monitor and review progress and keep the strategy and LAA up to date
- Provide a forum that brings together plans, partnerships, and initiatives through which mainstream service providers can effectively work together to meet local needs and priorities, and generate added value as a result of joint working
- Support the development of a Community Cohesion Plan that builds relationships and understanding across our different communities
- Promote the interests of Calderdale outside its boundaries

## Progress and key achievements 2009 - 2010

### Calderdale Forward Board

The Board acts at a strategic level and has the following roles:

- To act as the policy development body of the LSP
- To agree and steer the updated Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)
- To endorse the Local Area Agreement and its annual refresh
- To monitor progress against the Sustainable Community Strategy outcomes
- To hold the LSP Delivery Group to account

- To ensure that the principles of sustainable development are at the heart of the LSP

During 2009 - 2010 the Calderdale Forward Board has continued to develop its local leadership role, and has considered ways in which it can improve its decision making, accountability and challenge. Progress reporting procedures have continued to be effective and where poor performance has been brought to their attention, the Board and Delivery Group have focused on issues of concern.

The Board met on five occasions during the year 2009 -10, at which it discussed and considered key issues affecting Calderdale. These included: the Economic Downturn and particularly the future of the Financial Services Industry in Calderdale; the pursuit of a University Centre for Calderdale; Calderdale's Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA); the review and refresh of Calderdale's Sustainable Community Strategy, the results of the 2008 Place Survey, and how the partnership can positively impact people's perception of the District; and, the Leadership Development Programme.

During the year the Calderdale Forward Board has overseen the review and refresh of Calderdale's Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), 'Working together for a place where Everyone different, Everyone matters'. The SCS describes the key challenges and opportunities for improvement in the quality of life for people who live, work, visit, access services and do business in Calderdale. It is the key document that informs Calderdale's other strategies and policies and considers the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of Calderdale residents. The strategy was signed off by full Council in February 2010.

The Board has played a fundamental role in the implementation of priorities set out in the Community Strategy, through the delivery of the Local Area Agreement (LAA). The Board has been closely involved in overseeing the delivery of the performance reward targets from Calderdale's first LAA (scheduled to run 2007-10), and the delivery of the 32 targets in Calderdale's second LAA (scheduled to run 2008-11). The Board has received updates on performance in relation to the LAA outcomes and was involved in the annual refresh of LAA2, which took place between October 2009 and February 2010 and was coordinated by Government Office Yorkshire and the Humber on behalf of Central Government.

In October 2009, following the publication of the validated results from the 2008 Place Survey, the Board discussed influencing factors including the effect of neighbourhood management on community cohesion and altering people's perceptions. The Board considered their collective role as a group in articulating change and agreed to seize opportunities to inform and influence each organisation's own workforce to act as ambassadors for the partnership when communicating with the public.

During the year the Calderdale Forward Board has committed to developing its leadership skills. Following a successful bid for funding to the Yorkshire and the Humber Support Framework, the Board has committed to undertake four leadership development sessions during 2010, focusing on real issues for Calderdale. The

sessions will include tackling barriers, whole systems working, taking a layered management approach to facilitate change, developing strong local leadership and ensuring a clear understanding of the objectives.

### Responding to the Economic Crisis

In April 2009 the Board considered the impact of the economic crisis on the future of financial services in the district and discussed the ways in which partners might help to manage and stabilise the effects of the crisis. Partners across the LSP backed a bid for Calderdale to develop a university centre. Whilst the bid was unsuccessful, partners have continued to explore and support further opportunities for the provision of higher and further education in Calderdale.

Discussions have taken place at the Calderdale Forward Board and Delivery Group regarding the Economic Downturn and its impact in Calderdale. The economic challenges have been considered and discussions have taken place regarding what the future of Calderdale's economy may look like, where gaps exist and where opportunities may present. In May 2009, the Delivery Group were provided with an overview of the work of the Council's Economic Task Force, outlining some of the new business support initiatives taking place. In September information was collected from partner organisations which summarised the actions being taken in Calderdale in response to the economic downturn and planning for recovery. Responses were received from organisations in areas such as payments, procurement and tackling worklessness.

### Comprehensive Area Assessment

Throughout the year the Calderdale Forward Board, LSP Delivery Group and the thematic partnerships were instrumental in helping to inform the Audit Commission's emerging picture of Calderdale through CAA.

In its first assessment Calderdale received no flags. The assessment identified that Calderdale is doing well across a range of issues including supporting older people, reducing teenage pregnancy, recycling, cleaner streets, reductions in crime, smoking-quitters, and supporting local people and businesses through the recession. Areas highlighted for improvement included partnership working to improve economic prosperity, investigating child protection cases, working with the voluntary and community sectors, tackling obesity, and narrowing the gap.

Partners agreed to continue to focus on existing priorities and upon evidencing the impact of their actions.

### Local Area Agreement 2009-10 – Key Achievements

LAA performance reward targets - The period of the LAA1 Reward Targets ended on 31 March 2010, although three of the 14 Reward Indicators are lagged by between 3 and 12 months and therefore final performance will not be known until later in 2010/11. A forecasted final performance position for Reward Element Targets in March 2010, based on the current performance at that time, anticipates a 70-75% success rate.

Over the course of 2009/10 there has been excellent performance improvement in relation to a number of LAA2 targets including: a decrease in litter levels on Calderdale's roads, falling crime levels, and increased rates of breastfeeding.

Obesity – Partners across the LSP have joined forces over the year to tackle rising obesity levels. Calderdale Community Forum has co-ordinated partnership working with NHS Calderdale and Calderdale Council, to provide weight loss and exercise classes in local community settings and Calderdale Council and NHS Calderdale have worked together to provide services to help members of staff, as well as members of the public, to improve their health and manage their weight. At the Calderdale Forward Board meeting in January 2010, partners focused on obesity, looking at the issues relating to family, work forces and the built environment, and considered how the partnership can support the efforts to tackle obesity. The information gathered will be used to support future work in this area.

Keeping Calderdale's roads safe - The Calderdale Safer Roads Group 'Seatbelt on?' campaign, aimed at improving seatbelt wearing and reducing the numbers of people killed and seriously injured on Calderdale roads, won a prestigious award in the 2009 NHS Leadership Awards. The campaign has significantly reduced serious injury and deaths on the roads of Calderdale, and three years into the project seatbelt rates are over 90%, with a 30% reduction in the number of people seriously injured and killed in Calderdale. The dramatic results have encouraged other areas of the country to roll-out the campaign.

CO<sub>2</sub> emissions – In February 2010 Calderdale Council received the Carbon Trust Standard after assessors identified a number of key projects which show how the Council is reducing its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions year on year.

#### Working better with the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS)

VCS Summit (June 2009) - The Calderdale Community Forum and LSP joint event was attended by around 70 representatives from voluntary and community sector, Calderdale council and public sector organisations. The aim of the event was to develop a VCS Framework for Calderdale to encourage better engagement and partnership working and raise the confidence levels of VCS organisations.

Third Sector Framework - Following work undertaken by an external consultant, a third sector framework, identifying the issues to be addressed in order to improve the relationship between the public and third sectors, was prepared. Further work was undertaken to translate key elements of the framework into an implementation plan.

LSP partners have agreed their support for the implementation plan which will be developed further over 2010.

Members of Calderdale's Community Forum have continued to make significant contributions to LAA activity across all themes, and particularly in the children and young people's and health agendas, for example: alcohol brief interventions, smoking cessation, participation in sport, weight management and breast feeding.

Compact Excellence Award – In November 2009 Calderdale received an award for making a huge difference to the impact of the Compact on local people and organisations.

Targeted Support Fund – During the year partners agreed to participate in a Targeted Support Fund (TSF) Commissioning Programme, facilitated by the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) and its delivery partners. The programme has been designed to allow local public bodies and Third Sector organisations to look at new ways of commissioning in their locality. An action plan will be developed and taken forward during 2010/11.

#### Locality Working

During 2009 a report into Locality Working in Calderdale funded by the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Programme (RIEP) provided information on what is working, resource requirements and suggested options for moving forward. Partners across the LSP considered options for moving forward and agreed that locality working should be mainstreamed in the Council in one directorate using an invest to save approach which re-designs services at no extra cost. This will be taken forward during 2010.

#### Developing the Economy

In May 2009 partners received an award from Yorkshire Forward 'Creating Better Futures Awards 2009'. Award winners Calderdale Cares, the RSA Group, Pennine Housing 2000, Marshalls plc, the Halifax and Calderdale College built on the work of 'Project Challenge' to develop an employer-led programme of volunteering in the community. The award demonstrated the true partnership working between the sectors to encourage the sharing and development of skills, knowledge and ability within the community economic development agenda, whilst also promoting best practice.

In September 2009 Calderdale Council and partners were successful in their application to the government's Future Jobs Fund - to create 162 jobs in the district for young unemployed people with local social enterprises, charities, community groups and public bodies. The programme is designed to help young people whose opportunities have been damaged by the recession, and helps them develop necessary confidence, skills and experience.

During 2009/10 LSP Partners have supported a new campaign which encourages residents to shop locally and support local jobs.

Calderdale Forward's engagement with the District's business sector has continued through the year. Business representation is taken up through Forward for Business with four places on the Calderdale Forward Board. Forward for Business also engaged with the theme partnerships, with representatives on both the Economy and Enterprise and Safer and Stronger Communities Partnerships.

### Narrowing the Gap

Calderdale Forward partners have identified opportunities for an innovative solution centred approach to improving outcomes and achieving objectives in narrowing the gap issues between different communities in Calderdale. The objectives of this approach are to develop and implement new solutions to existing problems through a wide process of approaching things differently, for example, moving from organisational silos to partnership-based delivery. A successful bid for funding to the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Programme (RIEP) will enable this approach to be taken forward in 2010.

### Partnership Development

Economy and Enterprise Partnership Review - During the year the Economy and Enterprise Delivery Partnership agreed on proposals to change its role and function, with changes to its structure and membership. A key factor influencing the changes was the need for business engagement in the Partnership and the development of a pro-active approach to the economic development of the District.

During the year the Children's Trust considered a number of different models for moving forward.

Also during the year the Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership reviewed its structure in order to reduce duplication between the Partnership's Executive and Delivery Groups.

### Performance Management

In February the Calderdale Forward Delivery Group issued a new protocol for Theme Partnerships and LAA Lead Officers in order to develop a more consistent approach to performance management. As well as identifying the Delivery Group's minimum performance management expectations, the protocol also clarifies the arrangements for escalating performance issues within Calderdale Forward.

All performance reports produced for and on behalf of Calderdale Forward are published on the Calderdale Forward website, [www.calderdaleforward.org.uk](http://www.calderdaleforward.org.uk).

## **Elected Member Involvement**

A key factor in the success of Calderdale Forward continues to be the involvement of the Leader of the Council as Chair of Calderdale Forward and senior Calderdale Councillors from the two main political parties. Elected Members provide an important linkage between the LSP and the Council ensuring that between the two there is good communication, clarification and support as appropriate. This has been important in ensuring Council approval for the Sustainable Community Strategy in February 2010 and in refreshing the LAA in March 2010. The role of Scrutiny Panels in monitoring progress on the LAA and calling delivery organisations to account has also developed further over the year.

## **LSP Communications**

### The Calderdale Forward Website

The Calderdale Forward website has been further developed over 2009/10 to provide more services for partners, stakeholders, members of the public and those interested in the work of the LSP. Partnership news, events and success stories are regularly reported. The website also provides:

- Information about Calderdale Forward; its purpose and structure
- Agendas, papers, and minutes of the Calderdale Forward Board, Delivery Group, and Theme Delivery Partnerships
- A calendar of key meetings
- Calderdale's Local Area Agreement
- Calderdale's CAA
- Calderdale's Sustainable Community Strategy (Working together for a place where Everyone different, Everyone matters)
- Documents and links to a wide range of issues related to Calderdale Forward's work
- Calderdale Compact Toolkit
- Briefings of key strategic documents

### The Calderdale Forward Bulletin

The Calderdale Forward Bulletin provides a channel for partners' news, events and examples of good practice, as well as local and national developments and features which may affect local partnership working. The bulletin is emailed directly to partners and elected members and on request to people with an interest in the work of the LSP. The Bulletin offers links to Calderdale Forward and relevant external websites.

## **Priorities and Challenges for 2010 -11**

The impact of the economic downturn and public funding crisis will continue to dictate much of the work of partnerships over the coming 12 months. With anticipated reductions in public sector spending and finances over the next few years, partners will need to work together even more closely and in different, innovative and aligned ways in order to continue to improve services, deliver better value for money and enhance the wellbeing of local people.

Total Place is a new initiative that looks at how a 'whole area' approach to public services can lead to better services at less cost. It seeks to identify and avoid overlap and duplication between organisations. How successful Calderdale Forward will be in responding to this initiative will depend upon strong leadership, innovation and a clear understanding of the needs of Calderdale residents and service users.

The solution centred approach to narrowing the gap, agreed by partners in 2009/10, will be implemented over 2010/11. However, partners will be faced with the challenge of tackling the issues and making progress in a climate of economic recession and reduced public spending.

A review of the role and function of Calderdale Forward – to ensure that the partnership remains effective and adjusts to both local and national circumstances and requirements.

## **Conclusion**

During 2009 - 2010 Calderdale Forward has continued to develop partnership working across the District. As the report illustrates, there have been many examples over the year of improvements in the delivery of services and outcomes for local people as a result of effective partnership working. It is imperative however, that we build upon and strengthen our partnership working, as we face the challenges and uncertainty, along with the opportunities, that the year ahead brings, to ensure that we continue to achieve improvements for local people.